



USDA Forest Service Resource Assistant Program

Position. Climate Change Communications Fellow

Duration. 8 Month Fellowship (32 weeks): Starting June 2023 – February 2024 (dates are dependent upon the start date)

Location. Inyo National Forest, Bishop, CA

Reports To. The Climate Change Communications Fellow will report to the Inyo National Forest Climate Change Coordinator.

Job Overview

The Resource Assistant (RA) will work with the Inyo National Forest and Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association to lead production of an educational video to inform visitors how climate change is affecting the Sierra Nevada, White Mountains and Inyo mountain ranges and the adjacent high desert sagebrush ecosystems. The RA may also lead other climate change work, such as developing interpretive programs for visitors or assisting forest specialists in climate resiliency projects.

The Inyo National Forest, located in California on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, is experiencing dramatic impacts from loss of snowpack, increased wildfires and loss of biodiversity related to climate change. The Forest attracts nearly 3 million visitors annually, many of them repeat visitors, and there is a need to be able to communicate how climatic changes are affecting the resources that attract tourists to this area such as ancient bristlecone pines, fishing for Golden Trout, and enjoying winter snow sports.

The RA will work with Forest resource specialists, regional scientific experts, and nonprofit partners to create a narrative story of climate change in the Inyo National Forest. The RA will work with a local video producer to coordinate interviews, capture footage and assist in developing a final video product. The RA will coordinate among the Inyo's four visitor centers to create a plan for showing the video in each visitor center.

This position is part of a cohort of 20 climate change-focused internships that will receive specialized training and opportunities to engage with other members of the cohort.

Responsibilities and Duties

- The Resource Assistant (RA) will develop a narrative story of climate change in the Inyo National Forest that will serve as the basis for an educational video.
- The RA will review existing literature, interview local and regional experts, and internal historical documents to create the narrative story for the climate change video.



- The RA will spend time in the Forest with resource specialists working on projects related to climate change such as riparian restoration projects, endangered species surveys, or invasive species treatment.
- The RA will lead coordination of video production, working with the video producer on scheduling interviews and capturing footage on the forest.
- Depending on the RA's interests and time available, they may be able to develop and lead interpretive programs related to climate change at various Forest campgrounds and facilities.
- The RA will spend up to 10% of their time completing a carbon white paper for the Forest from an existing template. This document will outline the Forest's carbon footprint using existing data and may require some basic research and collaboration with Forest specialists.
- As needed and depending on the RA's interests, the RA may assist in other duties on the Forest, including staffing visitor's centers, assisting specialists with field work, and aiding implementation of other priority Forest projects.
- Opportunities for professional development, shadowing and mentorship related to the RA's specific career interests will be made available.

Qualifications

- Background in natural resources, environmental sciences, biology, ecology, rangeland sciences, environmental policy or similar disciplines preferred but not required.
- Specific skills or experience in science communications preferred.
- RA should be comfortable working outdoors, sometimes in remote environments with limited or no cell reception or services. Opportunities for overnight backcountry travel are expected though not required.
- Strong research skills and ability to read and interpret scientific literature related to climate change.
- Strong written and interpersonal communications skills.
- Familiarity with digital media preferred, but not required.
- RA should have a willingness to learn and an interest in science communication, education and natural resource management.

Minimum Requirements

- Completion of 2 years at an accredited university, an Associate's degree, or higher
- US citizenship or permanent residency. RAs must undergo a government background check if selected.
- Participation in US Forest Service Orientation Training scheduled for June 2023