FERGUSON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Environmental Science
323 Agricultural Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078
405.744.2288

Position Announcement – Graduate Research Assistant (M.S.)

Two Graduate Research Assistants (GRA)
M.S. in Environmental Science
Ferguson College of Agriculture – Oklahoma State University
Project Area: Conservation planning and watershed analysis in the Neosho River Watershed, northeastern Oklahoma

Position Description: The Environmental Science Graduate Program at Oklahoma State University is seeking two motivated M.S. students to participate in an interdisciplinary watershed conservation project in the Neosho River Watershed of northeastern Oklahoma.

This project integrates ecology, rangeland science, watershed hydrology, and nature-based solutions to support conservation planning across a region that includes tallgrass prairie ecosystems and the Tar Creek Superfund Site, one of the most historically significant mining-impacted landscapes in the United States.

The two assistantships will focus on complementary components of the project:

• Ecology / Rangeland Focus: assessment of wildlife habitat, rangeland ecosystems, and species of greatest conservation need.
• Hydrology / Nature-Based Engineering Focus: watershed hydrology, site suitability modeling, and conservation planning.
Graduate research assistants will contribute to several aspects of the project, including:
• Creating an inventory of completed, in-progress, and proposed conservation projects within the project area.
• Confirming the location of species of greatest conservation need within the watershed.
• Developing hydrological analyses to support the selection and siting of conservation projects.
• Conducting site suitability analyses (SSA) to identify locations where conservation efforts are most likely to improve wildlife habitat and meet community goals.
• Supporting restoration planning for woodland and tallgrass prairie ecosystems.
• Identifying conservation strategies to mitigate impacts of legacy mining waste associated with the Tar Creek Superfund Site.
• Evaluating conservation approaches that may help reduce flooding and improve watershed resiliency.
• Assisting with development of a watershed conservation and resiliency plan informed by hydrological analysis, watershed planning, flood mapping, and site suitability assessments.

This project provides opportunities to gain experience in applied watershed science, ecological restoration planning, GIS analysis, and interdisciplinary conservation research.

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The students will work under the supervision of Dr. Scott Stoodley and Dr. Jaime Schussler in the Environmental Science Graduate Program. More information about the Environmental Science Graduate Program: https://agriculture.okstate.edu/departments-programs/environmental-science/graduate-program

Required Qualifications: B.S. in Environmental Science, Ecology, Rangeland Ecology, Hydrology, Geography, Environmental Engineering, or a closely related discipline. Admission to the OSU Environmental Science M.S. program. Ability to work in outdoor environments and conduct field assessments. Valid driver's license.

Preferred Qualifications: Experience with GIS (ArcGIS or QGIS). Experience with watershed analysis, ecological assessment, or hydrologic modeling. Experience with environmental data analysis.

Oklahoma State University is located in Stillwater, Oklahoma and has an enrollment of over 36,000 students. This assistantship includes a stipend, health insurance, and a tuition waiver. For more information visit our website at: https://agriculture.okstate.edu/departments-programs/environmental-science/graduate-program.

Tentative Start Date: Summer 2026

Application Procedure: To apply, please email a letter of interest, resume, and unofficial transcripts to Dr. Karen R. Hickman esgp@okstate.edu.