

JOB DESCRIPTION/ANNOUNCEMENT

- Position Title:** Forest Program Director
- Location:** Durango or Silverton, Colorado
- Supervisor:** MSI Executive Director
- Salary & Benefits:** \$60,000 - \$85,000 based upon experience and qualifications. Full benefit package including health, dental, vision, and life insurance; paid vacation, holidays, sick leave, and an opt-in 403(b) retirement plan with employer match after one calendar year of employment. This is a full-time exempt position.
- Timeline:** This position will begin in August 2023 with a six-month evaluation period and review.
- To Apply:** Please submit cover letter, resume, and three references as a single PDF document titled "LastName_MSI_ForestDirector" to apply@mountainstudies.org by July 30, 2023.

Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) is a 501 (c)(3) non-advocacy, mountain education and research center established in 2002 to develop the capacity of southwest Colorado mountain communities to thrive and live sustainably. To accomplish MSI's mission and vision, we engage scientists, citizens, and land managers in collaborative efforts to put science into action. As MSI is a growing research and education center, we are looking for candidates with the ambition and passion for mountain research to help grow the Institute, explore new ways to communicate and share information, and apply our research for the betterment of the region and the world.

Position Summary: MSI is looking for a creative and strategic natural resource professional to lead MSI's Forest Program. As the Program Director, you will lead the Forest Team in implementing a suite of collaborative, research, and monitoring projects in the San Juan Mountain region, and will develop new initiatives to lead the program into the future. You will supervise and mentor a team of 3-4 full-time staff, plus seasonal field crews as needed, and will work closely with the Executive Director on strategic direction and funding for the MSI Forest Program.

A successful Forest Program Director will actively engage with the network of stakeholders working in forest management in the Southwest (and the San Juan National Forest specifically), will have a pulse on current forest science & management, and will work to find the niches where MSI can act as the bridge between science and management in this collaborative setting.

JOB DUTIES

- Maintain and grow MSI's position as a trusted partner in forest science and management. Build rapport with partners and funders & navigate stakeholder relationships in a collaborative way.
- Develop and maintain a portfolio of monitoring and research projects that meet stakeholder needs and inform adaptive management, leveraging past MSI research and data where possible. Oversee/hire staff necessary for implementation, analysis, and quality control/quality assurance. Advance publication of research where appropriate.
- Maintain, grow, and diversify funding for the Forest Program via grant applications, cooperative agreements, and donor/funder relationships.



- Manage MSI’s participation in forest collaborative groups & regional initiatives that overlap with our mission. Promote the incorporation of science in the collaborative process, and plan projects and MSI involvement to best meet the needs of the stakeholders. Current partnerships include:
 - 2 States - 3 Rivers - 2 Watersheds (2-3-2) Cohesive Strategy Partnership and Rio Chama Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP)
 - Southwest Colorado CFLRP
 - Four Rivers Resilient Forest Collaborative
 - San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership
 - Dolores Watershed Resilient Forest (DWRF) Collaborative
 - Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative
 - La Plata County Watershed & Wildfire Protection Fund (WWPF)
 - Rocky Mountain Research Station
 - Adaptive Silviculture for Climate Change
- Lead a team that maintains up-to-date skills in relevant technologies including GIS tools for map development and spatial analysis, digital data collection platforms and management, data modeling and statistical analysis methods including R or other programming languages, remote sensing, forest mensuration techniques, identification of Rocky Mountain flora, etc.
- Work with ED to develop annual organizational work plan and budget. Lead Forest Program fund development and grant writing, budgeting, personnel management, and responsibility for contract deliverables and reporting. Implement organizational policies within your team.
- Help develop tools for communicating the science behind forest health issues: forest ecology, wildfire, prescribed fire, insects and disease, smoke, wildlife, etc.
- Participate in organization-wide communication and coordinate projects with other MSI programs as needed.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

This position will reward systems thinking – learn a system and understand how it works, then identify intervention points that treat root causes and catalyze needed change. You will enjoy this position if you like the idea of creatively applying your skillsets in forestry, ecology, & natural resource management to find solutions to community needs across multiple scales.

The successful candidate will be driven by a passion for mountains, mountain communities, and solution-oriented science; adept at both field and office tasks; and demonstrate the ability to make sound decisions in a mountainous field setting across all seasons. They will desire to work with a diverse group of people and ages in isolated small mountain communities. They will thrive in situations where multiple and diverse demands are involved, adjust to changes in a growing organization, and be comfortable with an evolving list of job duties in many facets of non-profit function. Occasional long days, evenings and weekends are required. A successful candidate will be a highly organized, detail-oriented, self-directed, team player, and resourceful with ability to take initiative and follow-through on independent projects.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Education: Bachelor's or Master's degree in Forestry, Ecology, Geography, Environmental Science, Natural Resources, or other relevant field.
- Professional Experience: 4+ years of project management experience in a relevant field, with experience managing budgets and supervising teams at increasing levels of responsibility.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, ability to represent MSI in the community and communicate effectively across cultural boundaries and to a variety of audiences.

- Demonstrated experience working with diverse range of forest and natural resource managers and stakeholders on collaborative planning, analysis, and adaptive management projects.
- Demonstrated experience planning and executing complex projects from start to finish, including grant reporting, deliverables, and budgets.
- Competency collecting, organizing, managing QA/QC, and analyzing ecological & forest monitoring data and/or supervising others in doing so.
- Experience hiring, training, managing and leading other employees in a field or office setting.
- Competency creating and/or contributing to technical and scientific reports.
- Ability to carry a 30+ pound pack while hiking in elevations ranging from 5,000 to 12,000 feet.
- Experienced in Microsoft Office Suite, and workflow programs such as Teams, Asana, Dropbox.
- Must have a valid driver's license or the ability to obtain a driver's license and auto insurance per Colorado State requirements, by the employment start date.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience and/or current relationships with network of forest management stakeholders active in Southwest Colorado.
- Local knowledge of the San Juan Mountains landscape.
- Demonstrated ability to facilitate/coordinate collaborative groups around natural resource issues.
- Grant writing experience and track record of success.
- Knowledge of southwestern US forest and fire ecology and management, landscape ecology, forest-watershed nexus, forest interactions with climate change, and restoration concepts.
- Non-profit, business management, or leadership experience in addition to forest specific and natural resource science experience.
 - The Program Director's leadership, strategic vision, and ability to manage a team to accomplish program and project goals will be as important as technical skills, though specialty skillsets of the Program Director may serve as a door to further funding & project opportunities and/or serve as a mentoring resource to junior/technical staff.
- Experience conducting independent research, including literature review, experimental design, and publication in peer-reviewed journals.
- Experience with forestry, ecological, and fuels field sampling methods, including plant identification and experience with Rocky Mountain flora, sampling equipment, procedures and QA/QC protocols
- Experience with ArcGIS Pro, ESRI ArcOnline WebMap. Experience generating code and analyzing data in R or other statistical programming language. Familiarity with the analysis and processing of remote sensed datasets.

Note that experience includes lived experience, traditional knowledge, volunteering, school or coursework, work experience, and other related experience. No candidate will meet every requirement – if you're excited about the position and think you may be a good candidate, we encourage you to apply.

Equal Opportunity Employer: All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, gender identity or expression, or any other basis protected by local, state, or federal law. This policy applies to all aspects of one's employment, including hiring, transfer, promotion, compensation, eligibility for benefits, and termination. MSI is a drug free workplace and complies with ADA regulations as applicable. MSI believes in a collaborative and supportive work environment that encourages and inspires professional growth.

For questions about this position, contact Melissa May at melissa@mountainstudies.org