



**Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Sciences**  
Oregon State University, 104 Nash Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331-3803  
T 541-737-4531 | F 541-737-3590 | <http://fwcs.oregonstate.edu>

## **Master's of Science on Equitable and Inclusive Conservation**

Oregon Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit and Human Dimensions Lab  
Oregon State University Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Sciences

**Position description:** The Oregon Coop Unit and Human Dimensions Lab at Oregon State University are seeking a highly motivated Master's student to contribute to applied research on narratives of inclusion and equity in fish and wildlife conservation. The Master's student will help design and conduct a study using social science approaches to examine how long-established conservation institutions work to recruit and retain Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) conservationists.

The student will work closely with research partners in the US Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct interviews and analyze discourses within organizational materials. The student will be expected to play an active role in collaborative research and project management. They will receive 2 years of funding and will develop and implement a project-related thesis in collaboration with their graduate advisor (Dr. Megan Jones) and research partners. The student will also work closely with the OSU chapters of the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) and Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS), under the supervision of Wanda Crannell, the OSU MANRRS faculty advisor.

**Start date:** September 27, 2023

**Core Location:** Corvallis, OR (the traditional homelands of the Mary's River or Ampinefu Band of Kalapuya; <https://asosu.oregonstate.edu/land-rec>)

**Funding:** Two years of support, including 1.5 years as a graduate teaching assistant (GTA) and 0.5 years as a graduate research assistant (GRA). Support includes an annual salary (~\$27-30k) and covering the costs of tuition, fees, and benefits.

### **Expectations:**

- Be a current national MANRRS or SACNAS society member OR be eligible and willing to join MANRRS or SACNAS before starting the position, including joining the OSU chapter when enrolling at OSU. Please visit <http://www.manrrs.org>, <http://www.sacnas.org>, and <https://agsci.oregonstate.edu/manrrs> for more info.
- Design and conduct original, empirical research using quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.
- Build and sustain partnerships with agency and nonprofit stakeholders.
- Serve as GTA student co-adviser to OSU MANRRS and SACNAS chapters (see below).
- Co-author 1-2 manuscripts with Dr. Jones.
- Submit proposals to obtain addition research funding support as needed.

- Contribute to a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion and justice in the graduate student community.
- Share research results through professional oral presentations (e.g. at conferences) and outreach materials.
- Follow departmental guidelines to meet graduation requirements in about 2 years.

**Minimum requirements:** Applicants must meet the OSU Graduate School minimum requirements for admission (found at: <https://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/admissions/academic-requirements>). Qualified applicants will have a Bachelor's degree in a conservation social science field (e.g. psychology, communications studies, anthropology, geography, sociology, political science, human dimensions of natural resources) by the expected start date. Students will also be considered who have a degree in fisheries, wildlife, biology, ecology or allied fields and who have taken coursework in conservation social science methods or theory, or have worked on conservation social science projects in the past. This position requires strong verbal and written communication skills, and the ability to effectively collaborate with agency and nonprofit stakeholders.

The Oregon Coop Unit, HD Lab and partner agencies are dedicated to supporting the diverse needs of our students and employees. Applicants from historically excluded groups (e.g., Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, LGBTQ+, women, first-generation college students, and those from underserved communities) are strongly encouraged to apply.

**Additional preferred qualifications:**

- Background and participation in a national club and/or college leadership organization
- Work and training with youth education K-12, including safety, risk mitigation and mandatory reporter responsibilities
- Demonstrated commitment to promoting and enhancing diversity, including the ability to work effectively with a diverse student population and college faculty members and corporate/industry professionals
- Good computer and marketing skills
- Ability to plan, implement, evaluate and report activities
- Ability to be flexible and maintain a dependable work schedule

**To apply:** A complete application packet includes:

1. A cover letter addressing your qualifications for this role and what interests you about this research topic,
2. A current resume or Curriculum Vitae,
3. Transcripts (unofficial copy accepted), and
4. Three (3) reference contacts, including name, mailing address, telephone number, and email address.

Please email your application packet to Dr. Megan Jones, [Megan.Jones@oregonstate.edu](mailto:Megan.Jones@oregonstate.edu), and Wanda Crannell, [Wanda.Crannell@oregonstate.edu](mailto:Wanda.Crannell@oregonstate.edu). Priority will be given to applications received by Sunday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, and applications received after that will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions.



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## **Additional Project Background**

### **About the Project Team**

Dr. Jones' personal website: <https://www.megansjones.com/>

Oregon Coop Unit website: <https://www1.usgs.gov/coopunits/unit/Oregon>

The Human Dimensions Lab website: <https://kellybiedenweg.weebly.com/>

Dr. Hams' USFWS staff profile: <https://www.fws.gov/staff-profile/nicole-hams>

USFWS Science Applications Program website: <https://www.fws.gov/program/science-applications>

### **About the Research Project**

Since 2020 there has been rejuvenated attention within fish and wildlife conservation towards making the field more diverse and inclusive. Much progress has been made in recent years around gender diversity, specifically the inclusion of women in conservation. However, the recruitment and retention of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) staff lags behind. There are many possible reasons for this, including many challenges that cut across sectors, such as implicit biases in hiring, pay inequity, and lower rates of sponsorship by leaders for BIPOC staff. Some inequities may arise earlier in the career pathway, such as admission into and experiences in graduate school experiences.

One challenge in particular may be unique to natural resource conservation: the impact of historical legacies from the founding of the conservation movement. Contemporary approaches to fish and wildlife management are rooted in paradigms that first arose over a century ago, and that excluded the needs and values of Indigenous and Black Americans. This means that some of the United States' oldest conservation organizations may be the least attractive workplace environments for conservationists from racially marginalized communities. Federal agencies like the National Park Service and large nongovernmental organizations like the National Audubon Society and Sierra Club have been reckoning with this legacy in recent years. As the federal agency responsible for fish and wildlife conservation in the United States, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is at the heart of this evolution of the conservation sector. In recent years, USFWS staff have engaged in a variety of internal efforts to prioritize diversity and inclusion. However, there has yet to be a concerted cross-program assessment of how the Services is reconceptualizing conservation to be more inclusive of BIPOC communities. To help address this need, this research project will pursue the following objectives:

- (1) Conduct a discourse analysis of conservation narratives in the USFWS that might include or exclude conservationists from historically underrepresented and underserved groups.
- (2) Identify how efforts to recruit and retain staff from historically unrepresented groups might scale up across multiple initiatives and programs to create organizational change.

## About the OSU MANRRS/SACNAS Graduate Teaching Assistantship

Position Summary: The GTA serves as student co-adviser to OSU MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences) and SACNAS (Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science) Chapters; OSU and CAS Sponsored student organizations. In this role they will:

- Provide leadership and advising to 50-60 MANRRS and similar SACNAS club members and work to expand capacity and membership.
- Attend weekly meetings and assist with leadership, professional development, recruiting and community service activities.
- Assist in internship support, scholarship, grant and job applications, and ensure fulfillment of the club's University reports, responsibilities and regulations.
- Teach workshop and support and enhance the academic, career and personal development of Chapter student members.
- Contribute to College of Agricultural Sciences' Academic Programs Office mission of offering quality undergraduate and graduate student programs including recruitment and retention of multicultural and first generation students by
  - Advising MANRRS/SACNAS
  - Organizing and assisting CAS diversity recruitment activities
  - Connecting employers and industry contacts to the student organizations
  - Hiring and overseeing graduate assistants
  - Serving as liaison for fund-raising and grant writing, and
  - Serving on University and National boards and committees.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities include:

1. Assist the faculty advisor with various assigned duties and serve as a role model and in mentoring capacity. Provide leadership and advising to OSU-MANRRS Chapter members and interested contacts while creating an active sense of community and participation at the local (chapter), regional and national levels
2. Help conduct chapter and officer meetings allowing for respectful inclusion of various views and using parliamentary procedures
3. Assist the president and other undergraduate officers in developing recruitment goals and a vision for the chapter
4. Help the chapter with fundraising activities including: working with officers to secure grant support, obtaining corporate supporters, and assisting the chapter in promoting the national MANRRS and SACNAS societies on campus and obtaining support by informing and working with college deans, and other university officials
5. Help students register on-line as national members, including helping students in preparing their resumes for the MANRRS Student Directory as well as helping students prepare for internships, job interviews, and graduate schools
6. Attend college and university recruiting events with members and present programs, outreach and advising to potential new students and members (i.e. new student orientations, K-12 schools, community colleges, cultural and/or community centers). Actively work to develop, lead, present and evaluate new Jr. MANRRS Leadership Institute



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7. Assist chapter members in developing, organizing, advertising, and participating in club agreed upon professional development, leadership and community service activities. Actively recruit and engage student members in professional development, leadership, educational outreach and community service activities
8. Help the president and student officers to complete paperwork and meetings to maintain Student Leadership and Involvement with Sponsored Student Organization membership, CAS Club Leadership Team participation, and required Chapter Packet (Community Service Activities, Chapter Fundraising Activities and Chapter Roster) to maintain national chapter in good standing status
9. Attend and participate in the national conference with your chapter as an advisor and assistant
10. Encourage student participation in the national contests including reviewing abstracts, oral research presentations, and essay contest papers

Mission/Purpose: Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) and Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS) are national societies welcoming membership of people of all racial and ethnic groups. The purpose of MANRRS/SACNAS organizations are to provide a framework for the academic, professional and social development of underrepresented STEM students within the fields of agriculture, forestry, natural resources, life sciences and related fields through leadership, scholarship, research, community service, and professional development activities.

The OSU-MANRRS Chapter maintains membership in a national society fostering the professional involvement of minorities in agriculture, natural resource sciences, and related sciences with over 70 collegiate Chapters in six regions across the nation. The OSU MANRRS Chapter is highly successful and nationally-ranked having won more than 15 regional and two national titles for high achievement, leadership development, and promotion of the national society. Locally, we provide mentoring and networking opportunities, connect students to available resources, conduct workshops for professional development to help students define and achieve their goals, provide community service opportunities to promote active citizenship, and support OSU and the College of Agricultural Sciences in meeting their diversity related goals.

The OSU SACNAS Chapter is one of more than 125 National Chapters in the US and was re-established on the OSU campus in 2012. In 2015 and 2018, the OSU SACNAS Chapter received National Chapter Role Model Awards for Outstanding Development and Outreach activities. At the 2018 National Conference OSU SACNAS provided an invited workshop presentation titled "Motivating the Middle: Lessons Learned from a Re-Established Chapter." Presenters were advisor, and panel of OSU student leaders. Students prepare abstracts and present undergraduate research posters and oral graduate research presentations. As advisors, a large function of our role is to assist and prepare students to attend and make the most of the conference, review abstracts and resumes, and provide research presentation training. We further develop and train students in fundraising and serving as Chapter representatives and ambassadors.