

PhD Position Available to Study Fire Ecology in Mixed Oak-Pine Forests

A PhD research assistantship is available with Dr. Heather Alexander ([Forest and Fire Ecology Lab](#), College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment at Auburn University) and Dr. Jeffery Cannon ([Landscape Ecology Lab, Jones Center at Ichauway](#)). The successful applicant will conduct extensive field research investigating spatial drivers of fire behavior in relation to seedling and sapling oak individuals that manage to persist in longleaf pine ecosystems despite restoration of repeated fires. The research will combine field intensive fuel, fire behavior, and regeneration data collection, mapping and processing, and capitalizing on existing and new data from the Ichauway Forest Dynamics Plot at the Jones Center, a 28,500-acre research facility and preserve in southwestern Georgia. The student will be appointed as a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) but will assist with teaching undergraduate courses in Forest Fire Management and Forest Ecology. Although an PhD student at Auburn University, the student's work will be co-sponsored by the Jones Center at Ichauway, and much of the field work will take place in Georgia and other research sites throughout the eastern U.S. The student will be expected to spend time in residence at the Jones Center for field data collection where housing may be provided, and remaining portions of the academic year on the Auburn campus while completing coursework.

Required Qualifications: Applicants must have a Bachelor's degree in ecology, environmental sciences, forestry, wildlife sciences, environmental engineering, geography, geospatial science, or a related field. Applicants **must:** 1) be capable of working long hours outdoors exposed to harsh weather, biting insects, and thorny vegetation, 2) have demonstrated experience with data analysis using R, SAS, JMP, SPSS, and/or other statistical software, scientific writing for publication in peer-reviewed journals, and professional presentations to the scientific community, land managers, and landowners, 3) be a team player willing to mentor others and assist with lab members' research when needed, 4) at the time of employment, must possess a current driver's license valid in the U.S. and be able to drive a University state vehicle, which requires 2 years of driving experience, and a 4WD truck on both highways and dirt roads, 5) conduct ecological research creatively and independently, with guidance from mentors, 6) ability to travel out of state and country for overnight stays related to fieldwork and conference attendance, 7) ability to act creatively, confidently, and professionally when working with people from diverse educational and professional backgrounds. The successful candidate must meet eligibility requirements for work in the U.S. at the time the appointment is scheduled to begin and continue working legally for the term of employment.

Preferred Qualifications: A M.S. degree in ecology, environmental sciences, forestry, wildlife sciences, environmental engineering, geography, geospatial science or a related field.

If interested, please email to Dr. Heather Alexander (heather.alexander@auburn.edu) and Dr. Jeffery Cannon (Jeffery.cannon@jonesctr.org) (1) a cover letter discussing interest in our research, qualifications, and applicable background experience; (2) a resume/CV; (3) unofficial transcripts, (4) contact information for three professional references, and (5) a writing sample. Details on the full application process to the Auburn Graduate School can be found at <http://graduate.auburn.edu/prospective-students/application-instructions/>. Additional information on the Landscape Ecology Lab and the Jones Center can be found at <https://lab.jonesctr.org/cannon/>. Financial support is available for four years, starting in fall 2025, and includes a stipend (\$25,000/year) and tuition waiver. Review of applications will begin Friday, February 28, 2025, and followed up with virtual interviews.

Auburn University is an EEO/Vet/Disability Employer and committed to building an inclusive and diverse community. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply for this position.