

Department of Rangeland Ecology and Management
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Graduate Research Assistantship in Sagebrush Habitat and Species Distribution Modeling

We are seeking a graduate student at the Master's or PhD level interested in landscape ecology, spatial analysis, sagebrush habitat mapping and species distribution modeling beginning January 2009. The student will work collaboratively with faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, in the College of Natural Resources departments, and with the National Gap Analysis Program (GAP: <http://gapanalysis.nbi.gov>). Gap analysis is a method of assessing biodiversity based on the distribution of native vegetation and vertebrate species in relation to land stewardship. GAP is a federally funded program under the Biological Resources Division of the United States Geological Survey. GAP's main objectives are to: map current land cover, predict species distributions, assess current land management, and conduct a gap analysis to assess the long-term maintenance of biodiversity.

This project involves an evaluation of the influence of spatial and thematic map resolution on the accuracy of vertebrate species habitat models in sagebrush steppe habitats of Idaho, ranging from generalists to specialists. Much of the spatial data, such as land cover maps at 3 and 30 m spatial scales and most of the species occurrence data, are already obtained through GAP and other projects, however some field work for collection of ground reference data and species occurrence information will be required. The goal of the project is to improve the efficiency and accuracy of predictive species distribution modeling by better matching the scale of the spatial data with the species habitat requirements. For more information please contact Eva Strand (evas@uidaho.edu, 208-885-5779).

The assistantship will provide an annual stipend of \$16,712 for MS and \$19,063 for PhD plus tuition and fees. Competence in spatial analysis (GIS and remote sensing) is required and experience with GAP data is desirable. Students with exceptional academic credentials may also be eligible for other University fellowships. Interested applicants should send: 1. Letter of interest; 2. Resume; 3. Official transcripts; 4. GRE scores; and 5. Three reference letters. More complete information about the application to the University of Idaho, College of Graduate Studies can be found at: <http://www.grad.uidaho.edu/>

Contact: Dr. Eva Strand (e-mail: evas@uidaho.edu), Department of Rangeland Ecology and Management, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho, PO Box 441135, Moscow, Idaho 83844-1135. (www.uidaho.edu/range)

