Title: Effects of Fire on Residual Timber Quality

Contact: Dr. Mike R. Saunders, Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration Center, Department of Forestry and Natural Resources (FNR), Purdue University

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I am seeking an M.S. or Ph.D. students for a long-term research project investigating the influence of prescribed fire on the quality of residual overstory trees. This work, funded by the U.S. Forest Service – Northern Research Stations, will take advantage of >15 prescribed burns being conducted over the next two years on studies at the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (www.heeforeststudy.org) sites and study sites at NSWC – Crane, both in southern Indiana.

Specifically, the incumbent will be responsible to select a variety of trees of differing species and tree grades within each burn area, install fire monitoring equipment on a subset of individuals, and document fire damage to these individuals. This long-term project will then relate fire temperatures, fuel levels, and other environmental variables to declines in tree grade over repeated fires and time. The incumbent will also install a retrospective study of fire damage over 20+ sites at the nearby Hoosier National Forest.

All candidates must be U.S. citizens due to security restrictions at NSWC – Crane. Work will be on remote field sites and in harsh environments typical of southern Indiana. To meet FNR departmental requirements, candidates must have a B.S. or M.S. degree in forestry, wildlife or a closely related field, a minimum GPA of 3.2 and GRE scores above the 50th percentile on verbal and quantitative sections and above 4.0 on the analytical writing section. Departmental assistantships are awarded at $18,329 (M.S.) and $21,020 (Ph.D.) per year, and include a subsidized insurance plan.

This position is for either Fall 2015 or Spring 2016 admission. Interested individuals MUST CONTACT Dr. Mike Saunders prior to formally submitting materials.

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