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**Physical Science Technician (GS-1311-7)**

**USDA FOREST SERVICE NORTHERN RESEARCH STATION**

**About the Position**

The Northern Research Station is announcing an upcoming vacancy for a ***Physical Sciences Technician (GS-1311-7)*** position that will provide science and science support to the Center for Research on Ecosystem Change in the Northern Research Station. The position is a permanent appointment with a full-time tour of duty, stationed in Grand Rapids, MN.

**Job Description**

The primary duty will be to operate, maintain, troubleshoot, summarize data, maintain the highest level of QA/QC procedures in a soil, water and plant chemistry laboratory. Secondary duties will include field support and cooperation with Forest Service and collaborating scientists from universities and other agencies. The individual will perform or supervise laboratory preparation of field samples and field data collection. The individual will assist scientists in the preparation of manuscripts, proposals, study plans and presentations as needed. They will coordinate the work of technicians, temporary employees, and graduate students.

**Knowledge Required**

Knowledge of operation and maintenance of the instrumentation of a soil, water and plant chemistry laboratory is essential. Instrumentation includes an Inductively Coupled Plasma Optical Emission Spectrometer, Total Elemental CHN Analyzer, Autoanalyzer, TOC Analyzer, Ion Chromatograph, UV-Vis Spectrometer, and Alkalinity and pH meters. Knowledge of computer functions related to data input, retrieval, analysis of data, and management of resulting datasets is required. The individual must have the ability to operate motor vehicles and other motorized equipment, and to use hand tools and field research equipment such as GPS, soil corers, and water samplers.

**Other Information of Interest**

* The area of consideration is all United States citizens
* One position will be advertised
* Work will include overnight travel
* Basic entry qualifications for this series are a bachelor’s degree in chemistry, natural resources, soil science, water resources, ecology, atmospheric sciences, hydrology, biology, agriculture, or related disciplines appropriate to the position.
* Experience with the operation of chemistry laboratory equipment
* Good written and verbal communication skills are essential
* An ability to work both independently and in a team setting is necessary
* United States citizenship required

**The Research Environment**

The focus of the research program in Grand Rapids is on 1) understanding ecosystem processes and functions at multiple scales; 2) predicting ecosystem responses to disturbance and change; 3) assessing management approaches to address factors that change ecosystems; and 4) evaluating long-term responses to change and management utilizing our experimental forest. We manage the Marcell Experimental Forest, a site of long-term collection of data on hydrology, water chemistry, soil, climate and ecosystem biogeochemical fluxes in upland/peatland watersheds in northern Minnesota. Many of the samples that are analyzed in the chemistry laboratory are a result of studies the Marcell Experimental Forest as well as soil samples generated nationally from the Forest Service’s Forest and Inventory and Analysis Program.

**The Grand Rapids Community**

The community of Grand Rapids is a city of about 10,000 located in the north-central part of Minnesota in the heart of lake country. Grand Rapids has a rich history in logging, iron mining, and year-around recreation. There are more than a million acres of forests and over a thousand lakes in the Grand Rapids area. The city is a regional center for education, recreation, commerce, and culture. The Reif Center for the Performing Arts and the Itasca Community College contribute greatly to the cultural and educational opportunities within the community. The Forestry Sciences Laboratory is located on the campus of the Itasca Community College and the University of Minnesota’s North Central Research and Outreach Center. The Chippewa and Superior National Forests are nearby, as are numerous State and County forests. A Regional Office for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is located in Grand Rapids as well as production facilities and land management offices for the UPM Blandin Paper Company. The Duluth, Hibbing, and Bemidji airports serve the community with connections to Minneapolis. Grand Rapids is a full service community with an abundance of medical, dental, and legal services. Housing for either renting or buying in a broad range of price categories is readily available. For more information about Grand Rapids see <http://www.visitgrandrapids.com>.

## To Express Interest

To learn more about the job duties or other questions about the position, contact Randy Kolka at (218) 326-7115 (e-mail: rkolka@fs.fed.us)

**If you are interested in this position, please fill out the enclosed outreach notice by January 31. Once the position is advertised in USAJOBS, we will notify you by email.**

Candidates will be considered without discrimination for any non-merit reason such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, politics, marital status, physical handicap, age or membership in any employee organization. The USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

**OUTREACH NOTICE**

**APPLICANT REPLY FORM**

If you are interested in this position, please complete and submit this form to **Randy Kolka,** Team Leader, Grand Rapids, MN, **rkolka@fs.fed.us; FAX 218-326-7123.** This will help us determine the level of interest of prospective candidates and establish the area of consideration. **Please respond by January 15, 2016.**

Title of Outreach Position: **Physical Science Technician**

Name:

Email Address:

Mailing Address:

Telephone Number: Work:       Home:

Agency Employed with:   USFS  Other (Please list):

Type of appointment currently under (please check one):

Permanent  Temporary  Term  Other (Please list):

Current Region/Forest/District:

Current Series and Grade:

Current Position/Title:

If not a current permanent (career or career conditional) employee, are you eligible to be hired under any of the following special authorities:

Persons with Disabilities

Veterans Recruitment Appointment

Disabled Veteran w/30% Compensable Disability

Veteran Employment Opportunities Act of 1998

Former Peace Corp Volunteer

Student Career Experience Program

Other (explain):

How did you hear of this position?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN OUR VACANCY**