Collaborative Forest Management Apprenticeship  
May/June 2021 – November/December 2021

The Sierra Institute for Community and Environment (Sierra Institute) is looking for one motivated individual to fill the position of Collaborative Forest Management Apprentice. The selected applicant will work at the intersection of community and natural resources on collaborative forest and watershed restoration. Work will include both applied research and capacity-building work to promote resilient forest ecosystems and rural communities. Occasional travel to rural communities throughout the state to conduct related work and research will be required. Apprenticeships will last a minimum of six months, but may be extended up to nine months, with potential for a transition to full time, regular employment. Review of applications will begin on March 22, 2021, with an anticipated start date of late May/early June.

Job Duties: The selected candidate will have the opportunity to advance their knowledge and professional skills while contributing to meaningful outcomes for rural communities and landscapes through involvement with a suite of Sierra Institute projects. Project areas described below provide an overview of the core efforts the selected apprentice will contribute to. These are meant to provide a general understanding of the position, and may not capture all responsibilities.

Collaborative Restoration Planning and Implementation (~50%): The Sierra Institute in partnership with the South Lassen Watersheds Group, a collaborative group planning for the future of forest management, climate resilience, and economic development in critical upper watersheds, to accelerate restoration across an 850,000-acre landscape. In support of this work, the apprentice will work with staff on numerous projects. Active projects include large landscape restoration planning on a 150,000-acre multi-jurisdictional restoration project, planning for reintroduction of prescribed fire in a recommended Research Natural Area, implementation of fuels management in preparation for prescribed fire in wilderness areas, and integrated forest-meadow-stream restoration across several project areas. Activities may include, but are not limited to, providing planning process support, conducting background research for environmental planning, and engaging in an array of field activities including forest monitoring and inventory, project preparation work, and implementation of fuels reduction and forest restoration on public and private lands.

Collaborative Natural Resource Management (~25%): The Sierra Institute is actively engaged with a number of collaboratives working to advance landscape scale, cross-boundary forest restoration while improving local socioeconomic conditions. Our work includes facilitation and coordination of individual groups, research to identify and address shared barriers to success among these groups. Apprentice duties related to this work may include forest and watershed management research, collaborative forestry policy analysis, interview assistance, and extensive meeting coordination support.

Small-diameter Wood Utilization (~15%): In concert with our restoration efforts, Sierra Institute is pursuing an array of local small-diameter wood utilization opportunities. Selected candidates will work alongside Sierra Institute staff to identify opportunities to promote the utilization of small-diameter wood from restoration projects.

General Organizational Support (~10%): As a member of Sierra Institute’s professional staff, the apprentice will contribute to the organization’s overall pursuit of its mission. Responsibilities may include participating on field trips with youth, assisting with administrative duties in the main office, or other organizational support activities.
Qualifications

Required

- An undergraduate or advanced degree in the social science, natural resources or related field;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills;
- Basic understanding of land management policies, and natural resource issues such as wildfire forestry, and ecological restoration;
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel);
- A willingness to work and live in a rural, mountainous area that receives snow and ice in winter;
- A team-oriented perspective with a productive level of self-guidance and initiative;
- An ability to bring critical thinking skills, creativity, and laughter to the workplace;
- A personal vehicle for transportation outside of work;
- Experience living and/or working in a rural setting and a strong desire to learn about rural issues.

Preferred

- Demonstrated knowledge of collaborative resource management and community involvement;
- Experience with qualitative and/or quantitative social science research methods;
- In-depth experience conducting community surveys and/or stakeholder interviews;
- Experience with online surveys, webinars, website management, and/or utilizing other computer software programs;
- Experience using ESRI ArcGIS.

Please note these qualifications are what we believe is necessary to ensure the selected applicant is successful in this position, however we encourage all who are interested to apply and highlight how their experience and background will make them successful.
More Details

About the Sierra Institute: The Sierra Institute promotes healthy forests, watersheds, and communities by investing in the well-being of rural communities and strengthening their participation in natural resource management. Our work is grounded by the concept of triple bottom line values, supporting initiatives that simultaneously benefit the environment, economy, and equity within a given landscape. Sierra Institute strives to cultivate innovative projects through a collaborative-minded office culture—staff often work on interdisciplinary projects both internally and with external partners. Sierra Institute staff must be adaptable, finding their roles must expand to fit the needs of specific projects and partnerships. The diversity of our work provides opportunity to think critically about how communities engage with natural resource management, from workshops to assess community capacity to field trips with high school students to marking timber. Staff routinely draw on the expertise and background of others to improve our collective work, and applicants should expect to be an integral member of this team. In addition, Sierra Institute supports a flexible work schedule that encourages employees to take advantage of our location by getting out to exercise in the sunshine mid-day. A close-knit staff will provide a welcoming sense of community to ease the transition to our rural county.

Location: Sierra Institute is located in Taylorsville, CA (pop. 154) and lies within a large mountain meadow referred to as “Indian Valley”, which includes the communities of Greenville and Crescent Mills. Taylorsville is an historic small town, with a long history dating back to the construction of first flour mill in the Pacific Northwest in 1856. Downtown Taylorsville is home to two historic establishments, the Taylorsville Tavern, a favorite watering hole for loggers, and Young’s Market, a revitalized country store and sandwich shop that first opened its doors in 1862 that is – debatably – home to the oldest working cash register in the nation manufactured in 1914. The community of Taylorsville has long been a blend of long-time residents, ranchers, loggers, and newcomers drawn to the area for its beauty. Taylorsville offers unique, rural community events that bring the community together, such as the Silver Buckle Rodeo held over the 4th of July, the Holiday Light Parade the Saturday after Thanksgiving; and New Year’s Eve fireworks in the fields across from the Tavern. Taylorsville is surrounded by many outdoor recreation opportunities such as Lake Almanor, Plumas and Lassen National Forests, and Lassen Volcanic National Park. These adjacent public lands feature untouched backcountry routes in winter, and endless, empty dirt roads to explore in summer. Adventures that lie just out the back door of the office.

Compensation: The apprentice will receive approximately $1,800/month, plus shared housing and the option to participate in the organization’s health insurance benefits. The Sierra Institute will provide fully furnished, utilities-paid accommodation.

How to Apply

Please send your resume, cover letter, and contact information for three references as one pdf to jobs@sierrainstitute.us with “Collaborative Forest Management Apprenticeship Summer 2021” in the subject line. Please include where you heard about the job in the text of the email (please be as specific as possible). Review of applications will begin on March 22, 2021. Please email Kyle Rodgers at krodgers@sierrainstitute.us if you have questions.