

MS Graduate Research Assistantship Focused on the Application of Virtual Fencing Technology in Environmental Conservation, University of Wyoming

Laramie, WY

Job Title: Graduate Research Assistantship

Organization: University of Wyoming

Location: Laramie, WY, with occasional regional travel

Overview: Dr. Drew Bennett and Professor Temple Stoellinger are recruiting a Master of Science (MS) student(s) to join the 2026 cohort of Environment, Natural Resources, and Society (ENRS) graduate students in the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Wyoming. The student(s) will collaborate with landowners, natural resource agencies, and/or not-for-profit organizations on research focused on the application of virtual fencing technology to environmental conservation. The student will also be a member of the MacMillan Private Lands Stewardship Program, an applied research and outreach program that supports private landowners in Wyoming and the Intermountain West by encouraging collaboration across a number of fields critical to the conservation and stewardship of private lands. Additionally, students will provide support to the MacMillan Program as needed (<http://www.uwyo.edu/haub/ruckelshaus-institute/private-lands-stewardship/index.html>).

Duties: The Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) will contribute to an interdisciplinary project examining the application of virtual fencing technology to achieve environmental conservation outcomes. The project will investigate specific pilot projects through case studies, involving semi-structured interviews with ranchers, conservationists, and agency personnel, as well as review of project reports and other documentation. The GRA will assist with developing and organizing a stakeholder workshop, research meetings, and outreach events with a network of partners.

Ideal candidates for this position will possess outstanding communication skills, have experience collaborating or working as part of a team, have experience conducting research or stakeholder outreach, and an interest in social science, policy, or human dimensions research. A background or experience with agricultural and land management in the American West is a plus. Candidates should have an interest in rural communities, appreciation for agricultural livelihoods, and a desire to work with diverse stakeholder groups. Candidates should show creative and flexible thinking, be self-motivated, and able to work independently with guidance and support from project collaborators. Preferred candidates will have knowledge or experience with applied conservation efforts, ranching, natural resource law and policy, land management in the American West, finance or economics, and/ or social science research methods.

The GRA will pursue a MS degree in Environment, Natural Resources & Society within the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources. The GRA position is for roughly 21-24 months and requires the equivalent of 20 hours of work per week. The GRA will cover a living stipend, 9 credits of tuition and fees during the fall/spring semesters, and student health insurance.

Qualifications: Preference will be given to applicants with interest and / or experience in interdisciplinary research; applied conservation; ranching; land management; and/or working in rural communities. Applicants who have a BA or BS in any field will be considered, with preference given to social science, agriculture, business, or interdisciplinary fields. Applicants should have an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher. Standardized test scores (e.g., GRE) are **not** required. Candidates from backgrounds underrepresented in higher education, conservation, and other natural resource fields are especially encouraged to apply. Formal application to the ENRS graduate program at the Haub School at the University of Wyoming is required subsequent to selection of the successful candidate(s). Inquiries about the position are welcome. The anticipated start date is summer or fall 2026.

Funding Package: Stipend of \$22,584 over 12 months + tuition and fees + health insurance (\$36,685 total benefit annually).

Application Deadline: February 1st, 2026.

How to apply: Please send the following materials as **one** PDF document to Dr. Drew Bennett at drew.bennett@uwyo.edu with the subject “**Your Name MS Position**”. This packet should include:

- (1) Cover letter/narrative (roughly 2 pages) that explains your desire to pursue graduate education, how your research interests relate to the focus of the project described in the announcement, your career goals, and should highlight your relevant skills and experience;
- (2) Resume or CV including degree(s) earned, GPA, and contact information for at least three references; and
- (3) an unofficial copy of your transcript.