

**Position Title:** John L. Kemmerer Jr. Graduate Assistantship Innovative Thinking for Wyoming Public Lands

**Job Category:** Graduate Research Assistantship

**Start Date:** August 22, 2024

**Apply By:** March 1, 2024

**GRA Salary:** \$12,825 stipend; health insurance + tuition and fees + research funding | Total Package: \$28,910

**Location:** Laramie, Wyoming

**Duration:** Two-year position, dependent upon satisfactory performance.

Overview: Dr. Melanie Armstrong and the Ruckelshaus Institute at the University of Wyoming are seeking applicants for a master's level Graduate Research Assistant position to investigate groundbreaking ideas for recreation and tourism from key thought leaders in public lands. The selected student will support a multidisciplinary research project to investigate the potential for out-of-the-box policy and management actions to shape the lands upon which Wyomingites work and play.

Description: US public lands have been lauded as one of the great democratic ideas, yet the agencies that manage them must operate in a decision space shaped by politics and bureaucracy. This research project asks how transformative thinking can take hold to ensure more just and resilient landscapes that can withstand the dynamic ecological, economic, and social contexts of our day. The Graduate Research Assistant will pursue expert insight and conduct in-depth research to make big ideas more concrete and actionable. The research product will present case studies revealing real possibilities for new futures for resilient public lands, spotlighting Wyoming's potential to innovatively respond to land management dilemmas, ensuring its future as a global tourist destination and haven for outdoor recreation.

This fellowship will afford a master's student the opportunity to study public lands, recreation, and tourism issues in Wyoming, while developing familiarity with qualitative research methods and a national network of experts. The Graduate Research Assistant will learn and deploy multiple research approaches including historical investigations into past cultural influences, policy reviews and study of current legal frameworks, and analyses of models that seek to predict future ecological conditions. During the first year, the selected candidate will provide research support via interviews, textual analysis, and archival inquiry. As they narrow their own interests and approach, the student will take a deeper dive into a chosen case study, which will form the basis of their master's research. In partnership with the Ruckelshaus Institute, the research will be enhanced by an applied product, such as hosting a forum, writing an article, or staging an art exhibit featuring portraits of radical thinkers.

Qualifications: Applicants should demonstrate their experience with or desire to obtain experience with ethnographic research methods, as well as interest in working on public lands, recreation, and tourism issues in the American West. In addition, the following qualifications should be addressed in the application materials:

- Strong written and oral communication skills, including effective internal team-oriented communications, as well as thoughtful external communications with stakeholders, project partners, and community members.
- Intellectual curiosity and motivation to investigate questions and seek answers.
- Reliable team member, outcomes-oriented and organized.
- Interest in interdisciplinary, applied research and community engaged scholarship.
- Experience or interest in studying or working on issues of social and environmental justice.
- Experience conducting research at the undergraduate level or interest in conducting research at the graduate level.
- Commitment to work on this project as the center of a master's program of study.

Candidates from backgrounds underrepresented in higher education, conservation, and other natural resource fields are especially encouraged to apply. The selected candidate must also meet qualifications for and be successfully admitted to the MS in Environment, Natural Resources, & Society at the University of Wyoming. This is an in-person, on-campus position that will include some regional travel for place-based research.

To apply: Send the following materials as one PDF document to Dr. Melanie Armstrong at [melanie.armstrong@uwyo.edu](mailto:melanie.armstrong@uwyo.edu) in an email with the subject line “[Your Name] MS Position.”

- (1) Two-page cover letter with a narrative explaining your desire to pursue graduate education, research interests, career goals, and relevant experience skills and experience pertaining to the qualifications above;
- (2) Resume or CV including contact information for at least three references;
- (3) An unofficial copy of relevant transcripts.

Priority deadline: March 1, 2024, at 5:00p.m. MST.