

Dark Skies Public Lands Student Researcher

All majors welcome. \$13.65 an hour.

Project Description and Job Duties:

Going Public with the Conservation in the West Poll Public Lands Survey of Visitors and Dark Skies: Phase II

Passionate about the outdoors? Care about protecting our public lands? Think Dark Skies are a conservation concern? Interested in Anti-racism, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion issues?

The **State of the Rockies** is HIRING student researchers for phase II of the student-led Public Lands Visitors Survey project.

The student research team will work with the CC's State of the Rockies, Journalism Institute, Outdoor Education, and Anthropology departments, and the Chaplain's Office Edler-in-Residence to conduct in-field interviews of visitors to four popular national parks in the Rocky Mountain West. The team will use *Conservation in the West* Poll-based interview [questions created by the 2023 project team](#) to build on summer 2022 survey results.

Project description and Job Duties:

Original People's Attitudes toward National Public Lands

The 2023 Public Lands Visitors Survey will focus the second phase of this student-led conservation inquiry on Original Peoples' perceptions of federal public lands. Students will travel to regions in the Rocky Mountain West to conduct in-person interviews with indigenous people who live in proximity to federal and state public lands. In addition to the collection of attitudes toward public lands, the 2023 summer student research team will incorporate additional interview questions about dark skies conservation issues.

Dark Skies Matter: Indigenous Perspectives

We will ask two to three additional questions addressing dark skies conservation issues. Concerns illuminated by the interviews conducted this summer by the 2022 Dark Skies student research team will be used to formulate these questions – questions we hope will be included in the 2023 Conservation in the West poll.

Our summer 2022 visits to five of the region's most popular national public parks and nearby areas supported our hunch that few BIPOC would be present reflecting the challenges reported by our polling partners, New Bridge Strategy and FM3, of reaching

and thereby fully representing in the poll Indigenous peoples', Blacks', and Latinos' attitudes toward federal public lands. We suspect that BIPOC are more likely to visit public lands other than national parks, (e.g., state parks, national monuments, US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands). Because of the reported difficulties (i.e., access and cost) with the current polling method, we propose to send four Colorado College students into national public lands adjacent Native Lands to interview residents with questions asked in Phase I of this project during (summer 2022).

Dark Skies Star Stories

State of the Rockies + Physics + Chaplain's Office Elder in Residence + Religion + Anthropology Collaborative

Rationale:

"Why do dark skies matter? Should this topic be one of conservation concerns? What can be done?" are the central questions of the 2022 State of the Rockies Dark Skies/CC After Dark project which launched this spring. Students' preliminary findings show strong community and individual support for dark skies conservation. Voices missing from the conversation are those of Indigenous residents of the region. We continue to work to connect with the sources that have been shared by CC staff and faculty, a professional journalist, and others, and in spring 2023 and summer 2023, we plan to gather field interviews by visiting national public land locations in the Rocky Mountain West proximal to areas where Native American populations reside (i.e., reservations; nearby communities/towns).

The significance of the cosmos to humans can be traced across the millennia of human history. We evolved into diurnal beings; our brain development and function shaped by the rhythm of daytime and nighttime patterns and processes. Our perception of ourselves as Earthlings in relation to the universe helped mold our religious beliefs, lifeways, and the location, re-location, and planning of societies, among other important aspects of human life throughout the ages.

We aim to include in the second phase of this project the voices of Indigenous groups whom we recognize and value as the source of original knowledge. Our intent is to share our research findings with conservation and policy decision-makers. CC will work with the Center for Western Priorities to plan student presentations with various stakeholders and interest groups.

What to expect:

This position begins Block 7 2023 and ends Block 3 2024. Student researchers will complete IRB documents, plan their site visits and travel schedules (by car) to four of the most popular national parks, forests, and monuments in Rocky Mountain West to survey park visitors, and arrange special interest interviews. The student researchers'

primary role will be to visit the identified parks' nearby campgrounds and trailheads, local area visitors' centers, etc., and while doing so, interview visitors to the park areas. Students will investigate individual characteristics of park attendees, how they recreate in the parks, attitudes toward climate change, and other conservation topics.

This position is ideal for students with experience in the outdoors and interests in journalism, conservation, and the environmental impacts of human activity. Demonstrated experience in outdoor recreation, interest in conservation, and qualitative analysis preferred.

Students will perform qualitative analyses of the survey and report findings using various delivery platforms: film; podcasts; reporting; photography.

How to apply:

Please visit Handshake during Block 4 W2 to apply to this position.

Deadline to apply FEBRUARY 1, 2023 11:59 PM

Required application materials:

resume; cover letter; outdoor education certification or personal reference.

TIMELINE

Spring 2023

Review 2022 methods, research findings

Complete IRB

Choose public lands to visit

Learn, practice journalistic methods of interviewing and reporting

Complete permit applications if applicable

Get certified to drive and complete First Aid training (or proof of recent certification)

Arrange for motor pool transportation

Plan interviews with special interest groups, experts, tribal members, etc.

Plan reporting method(s): video, photography, podcasts, written

6 weeks Blocks 7-8 (5-10) hours per week

Summer 2023

Conduct in-field interviews

Record interviews (note taking; audio/visual recordings; photos, etc.).

Input interview response data

This is a 10-week summer internship. Start date: June 5-Aug 10, 2023 (appx dates).
10-week summer intern * 37 hours per week

Potential Areas to Visit

Chaco Canyon
Canyon of the Ancients
Window Rock
Southern Ute Mountain Ute country, Ignacio, CO
Antonito, CO
Crow Country, Wyoming
Black Foot country, MT
Shoshoni country, ID
Schitsu'umsh country, Coeur D'Alene, ID
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Fall 2024

Present findings at SCoRE conference.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Adventurous spirit
- Student Outdoor Ed Leaders
- Skilled Outdoor Recreationist
- Photography, Film, Journalism competencies
- Excellent written and verbal communication; strong work ethic; ability to work on a team and independently
- Social media publishing experience
- Interest in finding balance between human activity and the impact of human activity on the environment

Essential Duties: Create survey questions based on the State of the Rockies Conservation in the West poll and interview visitors to public lands and proximal areas to find out who is using our public lands, how they are using them, and record their attitudes about the condition, accessibility, and climate change. Provide written reports and other documentation to compare survey results to 2021 and 2022 Conservation in the West Poll findings.

Additional Duties: Create social media content (ex: videos, Instagram stories, Facebook posts, newsletters, etc.)

Learning Competencies:

- Work Ethic
- Time Management
- Work Quality
- Initiative
- Technical Knowledge
- Problem-Solving
- Analysis
- Ethical Behavior
- Appreciation of Diversity
- Communication Skills
- Teamwork

For more information visit stateoftherockies.com or contact Cyndy Hines chines@coloradocollege.edu