

## **MS Research Assistantship in *Environment and Society*, *Geography* or *Recreation Resource Management***

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The Department of Environment and Society at Utah State University is seeking a highly qualified candidate committed to pursuing a MS focused on understanding how the local meteorological conditions (temperature, precipitation, etc.) affect recreation use patterns in the North Fork of the Virgin River Wilderness Study Area (WSA). The WSA is part of the upper access to the deep and very narrow Zion Narrows gorge, which is a major attraction for visitors to Zion National Park.

Depending upon the student's background, interests and future career goals, he/she will have the opportunity to pursue a MS degree in *Environment and Society*, *Geography* or *Recreation Resource Management*. The successful candidate will work with Dr. Jordan W. Smith. The successful candidates should have a strong desire to engage in rigorous research that couples social science methodologies (e.g., interviews, focus groups, survey methods) with biophysical models of environmental change (e.g., watershed hydrological transport models).

The assistantship is a 12-month 20-hour per week position. The position includes a competitive stipend, tuition and health insurance benefits. Funds for professional development purposes (e.g., conference presentations) are available. This position is funded annually and is renewable each year based on satisfactory progress.

The successful candidate will work out of the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism. The mission of the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism is to conduct a program of research, extension and teaching focused on outdoor recreation and tourism management. The Institute's research and extension programs concentrate on: 1) tourism and outdoor recreation use within Utah; 2) the social and economic tradeoffs faced by communities who manage outdoor recreation resources and tourism destinations; and 3) the relationship between outdoor recreation and tourism and public land management practices and policies. The Institute's academic program offers both bachelors and master's degrees in Recreation Resources Management. The Institute's academic program also contributes to a doctoral program in *Environment and Society* offered within the S. J. and Jessie E. Quinney College of Natural Resources at Utah State. Since the Institute was founded in 1998, it has been awarded several million dollars in externally funded research grants, maintained an active extension program with communities and outdoor recreation managers and trained some of the nation's leading outdoor recreation resource managers.

### ***Responsibilities***

- Actively engage with interdisciplinary research teams that include natural, social and spatial scientists to develop new areas of inquiry in collaboration with Dr. Jordan W. Smith
- Conduct literature reviews, collect and analyze data and disseminate results through academic (peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations) and non-academic (websites, web-services, etc.) outlets
- Maintain good graduate standing and make satisfactory progress toward completion of the MS degree

### ***Qualifications***

Potential candidates for the assistantship must meet admission standards and be fully accepted into one of the Department of Environment and Society's MS programs (*Environment and Society*, *Geography* or *Recreation Resource Management*). Candidates must have highly positive recommendations from previous positions. Prior undergraduate research experience is preferable as are GIS, project management and communication skills.

### ***Start Date***

August 15, 2016

### ***Application Process***

To apply, send a current CV and 1-page letter of interest by **July 1, 2016** to:

Dr. Jordan W. Smith  
Director, Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism  
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Environment and Society  
Utah State University  
[jordan.smith@usu.edu](mailto:jordan.smith@usu.edu)

*Utah State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Utah State University welcomes all persons without regard to sexual orientation or genetic information.*