



Ph.D. Opportunity in Forest Ecology

A Ph.D. student is sought to work with Hall Cushman (University of Nevada, Reno) and Stephanie Yelenik (Rocky Mountain Research Station, USFS) on the long-term responses of forests in the western U.S. to anthropogenic climate change. Our research is exploring the population ecology of whitebark pine (WBP, *Pinus albicaulis*), a high-elevation conifer that has undergone high levels of mortality over the past few decades. In December 2022, this species was listed as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is now protected under the Endangered Species Act.

Working in montane ecosystems in California and Nevada, this project is funded by grants from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE), Nevada Division of State Lands, the Tahoe Fund, and USFS (Forest Health Protection). The overarching objective of this research is to determine the climatic, topographic and forest structure variables that best predict WBP mortality and recruitment across landscapes of varying aridity and wildfire history. The project also hopes to evaluate how current forest-thinning practices influence recruitment of this imperiled conifer.

The selected Ph.D. student will join the Cushman-Yelenik group via UNR's Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology (<https://www.unr.edu/eecb>).

Qualifications. Strong training and experience in research, forest ecology, climate change, and statistics using R are desired. Applicants with Master's degrees are preferred but individuals with undergraduate degrees and substantial experience will be considered.

Compensation. \$24,000/year plus tuition waiver and health insurance. All research costs will be covered.

Start Date. August 1, 2024. Preference will be given to individuals who can join the lab group the summer prior to starting in the Ph.D. program at UNR.

Applications. To apply for this position, asap send a letter of interest and CV to Hall Cushman (jhcushman@unr.edu) and Stephanie Yelenik (stephanie.yelenik@usda.gov). In addition, completed graduate school applications are due December 15th of this year. Details on the application procedures can be found at <https://www.unr.edu/eecb/prospective-students>.

About UNR. Founded in 1874, the University of Nevada, Reno is a land-grant public institution with ~20,000 students. The university is classified as an R1 institution by Carnegie, in recognition of its "very high research activity."

About Reno. Reno is located on the western edge of the Great Basin and the eastern slope of Sierra Nevada Mountains. With its elevation ranging from 4,400 to 6,000 feet, the city has a population size of ~270,000 and is home to a diverse cultural and artistic community. Reno offers exceptional access to outdoor activities including skiing, climbing, hiking, and mountain biking. It is located ~45 minutes from Lake Tahoe, 3 hours from Yosemite National Park, and 3.5 hours from San Francisco. Outside Magazine included Reno in its list of 12 Best Places to Live in the U.S. (2019) and 15 Happiest Places to Live in the U.S. (2023).