

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT:

GEORGE MELENDEZ WRIGHT INITIATIVE FOR YOUNG LEADERS IN CLIMATE CHANGE

The National Park Service (NPS) is pleased to announce the *George Melendez Wright Initiative for Young Leaders in Climate Change* (YLCC) to provide a pathway for exemplary students in higher education (graduate students and advanced undergraduate students) to apply their skills and ideas to park-based challenges and solutions. The Initiative offers 12-week paid internships which allow students to gain valuable work experience, explore career options, and develop leadership skills through mentorship and guidance while helping to advance the NPS response to climate change. Successful students may be eligible for non-competitive hire into federal positions for which they qualify following completion of all academic requirements.

Planning for Adaptation and Resilience of NPS Coastal Assets

WASO Park Planning and Special Studies Division
Washington, DC

INTERNSHIP PROJECT BACKGROUND

NPS coastal units contain some of the last remaining large stretches of relatively undeveloped shorelines in the nation. These parks contain a wide range of natural resources, cultural resources and recreational facilities. Over the next century (and beyond), more NPS resources will be exposed to and threatened by rising ocean waters. Numerous coastal units, particularly low-lying barrier island parks, are increasingly feeling impacts from climate change, including sea level change, shoreline erosion, ocean acidification, warming temperatures, salt water intrusion, and changing precipitation patterns. Projected vulnerability data related to these potential impacts is emerging and many parks are taking innovative actions to prepare for--and respond to--climate change. However, parks need assistance in analyzing available data, seeking additional data and incorporating appropriate strategies into park planning, facility design, historic preservation and other management actions.

The NPS is at a key juncture in rolling out a new planning framework that is opportune for parks to set a course towards more climate smart decisions and investments. The NPS planning framework begins with the foundation document, which describes the park purpose, significance, fundamental (and other important) resources/values. The document includes an assessment and prioritization of park planning and data needs to guide park priorities. By summer 2016 nearly all foundation documents will be complete or nearing completion. Climate change needs are embedded in many foundation documents; however, as more data become available and guidance on the topic continues to evolve, there is variation and/or ambiguity around climate change related planning and data needs. The intern's work will help parks update previously identified planning and data needs in their foundation document.

INTERNSHIP PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Emerging climate change data and coastal adaptation case studies are available to support National Park Service (NPS) planning in vulnerable coastal areas, specifically the recently released Coastal Assets Report, Coastal Adaptation Strategies Case Studies Report, and an ongoing sea level and storm surge impacts study (all available at <http://www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/coastaladaptation.htm>). However, park managers and planners need assistance to better understand and utilize this information. This internship will attempt to break down the information in these and other available resources to help parks prioritize planning needs, additional data needs, and to make meaningful decisions in the short term.

One or more coastal parks will be selected for the intern to conduct site visits/field work. This will include meeting and working with park staff and leadership to better understand what additional analysis is needed to address the results of the Coastal Assets report. There is potentially flexibility in park selection to suit the selected intern's area of expertise or geographic preference.

The intern will identify opportunities to "cluster" parks or resources with similar climate change related threats to target efficiencies in addressing issues (for example, conducting a scenario workshop with several parks together who have the same issue) and to prioritize projects with high potential for replicability.

The intern will work across various NPS divisions to seek ways to better align resources across various NPS programs. The intern will also assist in implementing the recently released and soon to be completed NPS Climate-Smart Guidance. Conclusions of the intern's work will help ensure coastal parks appropriately utilize available climate change related data. This will benefit the parks, as well as the regional and national office in prioritizing planning project proposals that demonstrate the greatest need and preparedness.

Internship Tasks

- Analyze climate change related data available to coastal NPS units, particularly the above mentioned Coastal Assets and Coastal Adaptation Strategies reports and storm surge/sea level project, to help parks prioritize planning needs, additional data needs and to make meaningful decisions in the short term.
- Coordinate with regional planners and park contacts to assess the accuracy of planning needs in select coastal parks.
- Assist in bringing Foundation Document planning and data needs in line with NPS Climate-Smart Planning Guidance.
- Continue work with members of the team that produced the Coastal Assets and Coastal Adaptation Strategies reports to facilitate continued enhanced collaboration with park planning programs.
- Identify examples of best practices applying climate change related data in coastal parks.
- Identify commonalities of need among various parks that could lead to projects that benefit multiple parks.

Internship Products

- Analysis of NPS Coastal Assets Report and Coastal Adaptation Strategies Report to determine how findings can be incorporated in park planning and data needs/priorities.
- Inventory (potentially in map format) parks with common climate change related needs that could lead to park collaboration and projects that benefit multiple parks.
- A project report including suggestions of how to bring foundation documents and prioritized planning and data needs into alignment with best available climate change science and emerging NPS best practice on adaptation and resilient design.

QUALIFICATIONS

We are looking for graduate students who have experience with climate change science as it relates to urban and regional planning and/or resource management. The following qualifications are desirable:

- Degree and/or coursework in Natural Resource/Cultural Resource Management, Urban/City/Regional Planning, Civil Engineering, Landscape Architecture or similar;
- Knowledge of climate change adaptation strategies and options;
- Knowledge of vulnerability assessments and other climate change related data;
- Strong communication skills (ability to set up surveys, organize and lead meetings/conference calls, etc);
- Web-based or GIS mapping skills (use of ESRI products);
- Familiar with Adobe Creative Suites; and
- Ability to work independently once a direction and plan are developed.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The mentor and the Chief of Park Planning and Special studies will work with the intern to develop a work plan and will meet on a regular basis to advise, evaluate progress, and discuss ideas. The intern will work closely with other professional staff at the national, regional and park level interested in this project. The intern and mentor will work in consultation with Coastal Geology & Coastal Adaptation Climate Change Coordinator, Rebecca Beavers, and Sustainable Operations and Climate Change Branch Chief, Shawn Norton, to integrate insights from current servicewide coastal adaptation efforts. There will be an opportunity at the end of the internship to present the intern's work to the NPS Planning Leadership Group and the Associate Director for Park Planning Facilities and Lands.

Working together, the intern and mentor will vet ideas and develop solutions to complex issues and details. Upon completion, the intern is expected to have developed the skills needed to lead a project team.

DATES OF POSITION

The dates of the position are flexible. Ideally the intern will work 480 hours between June 1, 2016 and September 30, 2016. However, the project could occur during April - November 2016.

COMPENSATION

This initiative supports one student at \$15/hour for 12 weeks, or 480 hours.

HOUSING

NPS housing in the area is limited, but if available, the intern could stay in housing managed by Rock Creek Park in Northwest Washington, DC. If not, alternative housing will be arranged. All housing options will be in locations in or just outside DC with easy access to public transit (Metro), a full range of urban amenities and within a 30-min commute to intern's work location.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Professional office environment in downtown Washington, DC with periods of field work in one or more coastal park units.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Park Service Supervisor:

Thomas Sheffer

Thomas_sheffer@nps.gov, 202-354-6901

Project Advisor:

Patrick Gregerson

Patrick_gregerson@nps.gov, 202-354-6972