



Research Fieldwork Volunteer Job Description

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Research volunteers assist with local fieldwork tasks including raptor nest monitoring, nest searching, deploying audio recording units (ARUs) to detect forest raptors, surveying for prey species, and snow measurements. These tasks are related to local long-term research projects involving forest raptors including great gray owls and goshawks. There are two tiers for fieldwork volunteer jobs based on the accessibility of field sites and level of physical activity required to conduct the fieldwork. Tier 1 fieldwork tasks are located close to roads and can either be conducted from the roadside (e.g., osprey nest platform monitoring) or involve traveling for short distances (< ½ mile) off trail and/or over the snow by snowshoeing or cross-country skiing to reach field sites (e.g., snow measurements). Tier 2 fieldwork tasks involve over the snow travel by snowshoes or cross-country skiing and/or hiking off-trail for up to several miles a day. Tier 2 fieldwork volunteers need to be comfortable navigating with a GPS unit off-trail to access remote field sites. Tier 2 fieldwork tasks include deploying audio recording units, nest searching, nest monitoring, and conducting prey surveys.

Tier 1 Fieldwork Volunteer: Assists with tasks that can either be conducted from the roadside or tasks that involve snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, or hiking short distances (< 1/2 mile) off-trail to reach the field site. Examples of Tier 1 fieldwork includes osprey nest monitoring and snow measurements.

Tier 2 Fieldwork Volunteer: Assists with audio recording unit deployments, nest searching, nest monitoring, and/or prey survey tasks. These tasks involve over-the-snow travel during the early season (March – May) and off-trail hiking during the late season (June – July).

TIME COMMITMENT

Fieldwork volunteers will be given tasks that can involve anywhere from ½ day to a full day in the field. Ideally a fieldwork volunteer will be available to commit to assisting for at least 1 day every 2 weeks to allow them to become familiar with study systems, data collection protocols and gain ample field experience to be comfortable working on their own.

JOB DUTIES

Tier 1 Fieldwork Tasks

- Osprey nest platform monitoring (April – August)
- Snow measurements (January – April)
- Data collection associated with field tasks



Tier 2 Fieldwork Tasks

- Deploying audio recording units to detect forest raptors (March – July)
- Nest searching for great gray owls and goshawks (March – July)
- Nest monitoring for great gray owls and goshawks (April – July)
- Prey surveys for great gray owls (July – August)
- Data collection associated with field tasks
- Assisting with other field duties as assigned (e.g. sage-grouse lek monitoring)

QUALIFICATIONS & SKILLS

- Eagerness to learn
- Positive attitude
- Ability to collect field data with exceptional attention to detail
- Enthusiasm for TRC's work and raptor conservation
- Experience using binoculars to find and identify raptors for nest searching and monitoring
- Tier 1 – If assisting with snow measurements - the ability to conduct physical activity to snowshoe or cross-country ski short distances off-trail
- Tier 2 – Ability to snowshoe, cross-country ski and/or hike off-trail for several miles in variable snow and terrain conditions
- Tier 2 – Ability to identify forest raptors by sight and sound for nest searching and monitoring
- Tier 2 – Ability to navigate to field sites using a GPS unit

GEAR REQUIREMENTS

- Binoculars
- Snowshoes and/or cross-country skis (we have some snowshoes available to borrow)
- GPS unit – will be provided
- Bear spray – will be provided if volunteer does not have own
- Hiking footwear and clothing
- Daypack with water and food

EXPECTATIONS

- Fieldwork volunteers will be given tasks by the research team staff based on their



- availability, interests, and research project needs during the time of year they are volunteering
- Close communication with research staff will be required for all fieldwork tasks that involve off-trail snowshoeing, skiing, or hiking (ex: snow measurements, ARU deployments, nest searching and monitoring) in order to check in and out from the field for safety protocols
 - New Tier 1 volunteers will be responsible for reviewing data collection protocols provided by research staff prior to collecting data and reach out to research staff with any questions beforehand
 - New Tier 2 volunteers will be required to either attend a formal training beforehand or join an existing research team member in the field during their first fieldwork assignment
 - For fieldwork that is conducted in locations where bear safety is a high concern volunteers will be required to work in pairs or small groups, these locations will be determined beforehand by research staff and include northern Grand Teton National Park and Togwotee Pass
 - Data collected during fieldwork is crucial for TRC's scientific research. Volunteers are expected to record data and observations in field notebooks and/or datasheets, which will be shared with research staff for data entry. Additionally, data are considered sensitive and volunteers are expected to not share data outside TRC.