



POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

POSITION TITLE: Research Technician I

SUPERVISOR: Scott Roberts, Director of Water Programs

TERMS: Part-time (Irregular) \$20.00/hour

LOCATION: San Juan Mountains, reporting office Durango, or Silverton, CO

TIMELINE: Looking for candidates able to start immediately. Start date may be as early as August 17, 2026 with work through March 2027 (approximate, start / end date negotiable); part-time hourly project support; flexible schedule; amount of part-time work and end date contingent on project needs.

About MSI: Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) is a 501 (c)(3) non-advocacy, mountain education and research nonprofit established in 2002. MSI was created to increase knowledge of our unique mountain environments, deepen our understanding of the issues that affect them, and develop solutions for the benefit of our vibrant mountain communities. We build partnerships to steward natural and cultural values by engaging scientists, community members, and land managers to innovate solutions through advancing research, promoting education, and developing best practices to put science into action.

Position Overview: Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) is seeking a motivated individual to serve as a Research Technician I on a part-time irregular basis in MSI's Water Team supporting aquatic ecology, snowtopography, and other water team initiatives. Work will primarily focus on two main research initiatives:

- Processing and sub-sampling benthic macroinvertebrate (aquatic insect) samples, and
- Assisting with field work and data analysis on a project investigating how wildfire mitigation and forest management activities (thinning, prescribed fire) affects snowpack and water resources.

Qualified candidates will have an interest in aquatic ecology, snow science, and forest management with experience working in field and lab settings. A qualified candidate must be able to thoroughly follow detailed inventory and safety protocols.



MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- 1-2 seasons of ecology, snow science, or forestry-related field and/or lab experience
- Ability to follow written and oral instructions, including ability to consistently follow and adhere to detailed field sampling protocols
- Strong attention to detail
- A high school diploma or GED

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience using dichotomous keys to identify insects, plants, and/or other organisms
- Familiarity with aquatic insects
- Experience using a dissecting scope
- Competency in traveling off-trail on mixed surfaces including snow
- Experience collecting basic water quality field measurements (e.g., pH, temperature)
- Willingness and ability to work with volunteers and crew members of all age ranges and a spectrum of interests
- Self-driven and willingness to work autonomously at times
- Associate's or Bachelor's degree in ecology or related field

Note that experience includes lived experience, traditional knowledge, volunteer experience, school or coursework, work experience, and other related qualifications, skills, and experience.

No candidate will meet every requirement. If you're excited about the position, passionate about wetlands, and/or think you may be a good candidate, we encourage you to apply.

TRAINING PROVIDED

MSI will provide training relevant to specific methods used for project work and data management including processing, sorting, and identifying aquatic insect samples to the order-level; snow stake photo processing; etc. Support for Wilderness First Aid training will be available on an as-needed basis. MSI and project staff will provide guidance and support throughout the season.

EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

All employees qualify for paid sick leave as mandated by the Colorado Healthy Families and Workplaces Act.



BACKGROUND CHECK

Candidates offered this position will be required to successfully pass a background check prior to their start date.

TO APPLY

Please submit resume, cover letter, and contact information for three references (including email, telephone number, and relationship to applicant) as a single PDF document to apply@mountainstudies.org with LastName_Technician as the document title. Please submit applications prior to August 10th.

DIVERSITY MAKES US STRONGER

MSI aims to build a welcoming, inclusive team that is as diverse as the many mountain communities we serve. We seek a broad range of perspectives and backgrounds to achieve our mission and maintain an environment where all staff are valued and respected.

As an equal opportunity employer, we are committed to employment practices that ensure that employees and applicants for employment are provided with equal opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, religion, physical or mental disability, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, or any other factor that is not related to the position. This policy applies to all aspects of one's employment, including hiring, transfer, promotion, compensation, benefits, and termination.