Environmental Science and Natural Resource Journalism
Student Internship at the Flathead Lake Biological Station

Background

- The Flathead Lake Biological Station (FLBS) is a University of Montana Center of Excellence that conducts ecological research with an emphasis on fresh water, particularly Flathead Lake and its watershed. Located on the east shore of Flathead Lake at Yellow Bay, our facilities are housed on 80 acres and include research laboratories, housing (lodge and cabins), dining hall, museum, and motor pool (including multiple boats).
- Over its history, the Bio Station has led numerous efforts to understand and conserve Flathead Lake’s water clarity, cleanliness, and fish and wildlife. FLBS scientists regularly engage and inform the local community, agency managers, elected officials, and business leaders with their scientific expertise to foster informed decisions and conservation outcomes. Past successes include preventing large-scale coal mining in the North Fork Flathead River watershed, promoting upgrades to wastewater treatment facilities, supporting a ban in Phosphorus containing detergents, and the creation of the world’s first Pacific salmon reserve.
- Summer is a vibrant time at FLBS. Students and scientists from around the country and the world come here to learn firsthand about biology, freshwater ecology, Flathead Lake, and the
Northern Rocky Mountains. Students, interns, and visiting researchers live in cabins or a lodge along the lakeshore, dining together and with FLBS faculty and scientists.

- Today, our eight-week summer field ecology classes enroll 50+ students and our multidisciplinary internship program brings another 8-12 students to our campus. We regularly have visiting researchers collaborate with our renowned faculty and scientists.
- At the Bio Station interns are introduced to the work of our permanent faculty and scientists, attend seminars, audit select class presentations, participate in field work, and complete independent projects. Interns engage each other, learning from their diverse backgrounds and interests, and have the opportunity to interact with students and researchers from other disciplines, other institutions, and even other countries. To foster community and cross-disciplinary interaction, the entire group of interns takes several research field trips and assists at the Bio Station’s public events.

**Job Description**

- Science in a file cabinet does not benefit society very much. Only through the widespread communication of scientific discovery to a range of audiences can impacts of scientific research be maximized. Unfortunately, many scientists do not have the time, skills or occasionally the desire to bring their work to audiences beyond their peers and the scientific literature.
- At the Flathead Lake Biological Station we are proud of the fact that our faculty, scientists and students regularly engage the local community and non-scientific audiences. We are very fortunate to have a dedicated local community who care deeply about Flathead Lake, are interested in our research, and understand the importance of our scientific efforts to protect Flathead Lake and other aquatic ecosystems. FLBS scientists regularly engage local media, but will benefit from additional assistance in telling our stories to broad audiences.
- This internship provides an opportunity for a UM graduate student in the Environmental Science and Natural Resource Journalism program to work with FLBS scientists, learning about the breadth of research at FLBS, and gaining experience in the communication of specific science and its importance to the public through a variety of media outlets.
- Potential topics for articles include:
  - The Bio Station serves as the ‘Sentinel of the Lake’ and our Flathead Lake Monitoring Program has been documenting water quality, ecological conditions and changes to the biological community in Flathead Lake for over 40 years.
  - Aquatic Invasive Species (e.g., zebra/quagga mussels) are one of the greatest threats to the aquatic ecosystems of Montana. The Bio Station has been on the front lines of the AIS issue for decades, most recently developing and implementing new environmental DNA early detection techniques.
  - Environmental sensors are the future of science. FLBS researchers in the new SensorSpace laboratory are inventing, building, testing and deploying new technologies to advance measurement and scientific capabilities.
  - River ecology has been advanced dramatically by Bio Station science in the Flathead that shows the ecological importance of shallow groundwater. Riverine organisms such as
stoneflies are often found in the aquifer adjacent to the river, driving overall ecosystem production and diversity.

- Since the watersheds of Northwest Montana begin in Canada, the Bio Station has been involved with transboundary watershed research and conservation efforts for decades, including using science to prevent mining north of the border.
- The Bio Station has several new faculty members. Profiles on their wide range of expertise and research are needed to introduce them to the local community and convey the relevance and importance of their work.

**Supervisors**
- Tom Bansak, Freshwater Ecologist and Assistant Director, Flathead Lake Biological Station
- Nadia White, Director Environmental Science and Natural Resource Journalism Master’s Program

**Employment Type and Duration**
- Full Time (40 hours/week)
- 6/25/2018 to 8/17/2018

**Compensation**
- $8.30/hour
- Room and board at FLBS provided ($2500 approximate value)

**Required Documents:**
- Resume
- Cover Letter
- Unofficial transcript

**Qualification**
- Have completed at least one year of UM’s Environmental Science and Natural Resource Journalism graduate program

**To Apply**
- Send your application materials to Tom Bansak, Assistant Director, Flathead Lake Biological Station at:
  - tom.bansak@umontana.edu; or
  - 32125 Bio Station Lane, Polson, MT 59860

**Application Deadline:**
- February 12, 2017

**For More Information:**
- Tom Bansak, Assistant Director, Flathead Lake Biological Station
  - tom.bansak@umontana.edu; 406-982-3301 x229
- Nadia White, Director, Environmental Science and Natural Resource Journalism Master’s Program