

## **San Juan Collaboratory Natural Resource Internship Program 2009 Sponsor/Mentor Information**

2008 was the inaugural year for the internship program. We received very good reviews overall and view the program as a success. Please see the 2008 report at [www.mountainstudies.org/Research/Internship\\_Program.htm](http://www.mountainstudies.org/Research/Internship_Program.htm). We are planning a second year of the internship program. The 2009 program is expected to be similar to last year, but with a few differences. One difference is that, unfortunately, we will not have funding from CU Boulder to subsidize the cost of interns. Therefore, the cost of sponsoring an intern has gone up. We hope in the future to receive grant funding to help reduce the cost again. On the positive side, we are planning to make some improvements. These include advertising and selecting interns earlier in the year; providing better descriptions of the program and individual projects in the advertisements; providing more information regarding responsibilities of mentors, interns, and the program coordinators; and improving avenues for communication and feedback during the program.

### Main program components:

1. 10 week length: June 8 to Aug 14 (although earlier start and later end dates are possible for individual projects).
2. Program-wide orientation, field trips, and presentation finale for interns & mentors. Occasional informal gatherings.
3. Each intern participates in a project (or projects) with a mentor (or mentors).
4. Opportunities for interns to work on other projects

### What does the program provide for interns and for mentors?

The program provides interns with a broad introduction to natural resource issues in the San Juan Mountain region and the western US more generally. It provides interaction with the program coordinator, several scientists and managers who serve as mentors, and the other interns. The program also provides an orientation/field trip, a mid-program field trip, and program finale/field trip. Importantly, the program links each intern with a mentor who will oversee the intern's day-to-day experience. It also provides the administrative framework for applying for an internship, getting paid, obtaining housing, and communicating feedback on performance of the intern, mentor, and program.

The program takes care of the hiring process: advertises the intern positions in ways to attract high caliber candidates, screens the applicants, provides top choices from which the mentor selects, takes care of hiring and payroll tasks, provides workers compensation insurance, and provides an evaluation format for interns, mentors, and the program in general. Mentors may elect to conduct interviews of screened applicants themselves if they chose but must do so in a timely manner.

If the mentor is not providing housing, the program either provides housing or reimburses the intern with a housing stipend. The program provides events for both the intern and the mentor and reimburses for intern travel to these events if needed. Importantly, the program provides an avenue for the mentor to become part of something larger than their project and enables the mentor to provide a broader educational experience for their intern.

What do mentors provide for interns and for the program?

Mentors essentially sponsor their intern and supply the funds outlined below. Mentors provide a project for the intern to do. The project can range from management to research across a broad array of issues related to natural resources. The mentor must provide an accurate description of their position and the skills that their intern needs. This allows the program to attract qualified candidates and screen them appropriately. An intern is not just a laborer, however. Mentors are expected to offer a learning atmosphere for the intern. They should encourage the intern to ask questions, think critically, and make connections among various components of their experience. Mentors are responsible for training the intern in the special skills they need to acquire to do the project (including safety). Mentors also are responsible for day-to-day supervision of the intern, although they do not need to accompany the intern themselves every day. Interns can work daily with other team members, graduate students, and other interns. In special circumstances, they can work on their own. Importantly, the interns need to check in daily with mentors or another appointed team leader for safety. Mentors provide feedback to the intern on their performance. They allow interns to attend program events and provide opportunities for interns to gain additional experience on other projects occasionally. They may also welcome another intern to experience working on their project for a day or more. Mentors are highly encouraged to attend program events and interact with all the interns.

Costs: Total per intern

*If mentor provides housing for intern:*

Intern pay (\$2,700) + 12% (payroll tax and workers comp)	\$3,024
Field trip expense/intern travel reimbursement for program events	\$200
Program coordination	\$175
Indirect Costs (13.5% - half of MSI's actual overhead rate)	\$459
TOTAL	\$3,858

*If program provides housing or housing stipend for intern:*

Intern pay (\$2,700) + 12% (payroll tax and workers comp)	\$3,024
Field trip expense/intern travel reimbursement for program events	\$200
Program coordination	\$175
Intern Housing	\$1,000
Indirect Costs (13.5% - half of MSI's actual overhead rate)	\$594
TOTAL	\$4,993

If you propose a longer internship, the additional costs of intern pay, housing, and overhead will be calculated using the same rate.

**Important Note: If you would like to sponsor an intern and will likely have a project and funds but are not 100% sure of your funding situation yet, you should indicate this on your information form. We will advertise the position, but will not hire anyone if the funding doesn't materialize.**

## Tentative 2009 Internship Schedule

January 20 – Mentor Info Form turned into MSI.

February 16 – Positions are posted (advertised) by this date.

March 16 - Application deadline.

April 13 – Interns are selected by this date.

April 20 – Interns must accept or decline position by this date (verbally/email).

April 21 – Position offered to second candidate if first declined.

April 27 – Runner-up interns must accept or decline position by this date. (verbally/email).

May 4 – More detailed program information and the contracts and forms sent to interns by this date. Mentors also receive this information.

May 18 – All intern paperwork received by MSI.

May 25 – Mentors provide funds to MSI by this date.

June 8 – Program orientation day

July 13 – Mid-program field trip and evaluations

August 13 – Mentor and intern must complete evaluation forms and must to discuss them by this date.

August 14 – Program finale: field trip and intern presentations. Evaluations are turned in by this date.

October 14 – Annual report posted on MSI website.

### **\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*\*\***

If your intern position starts earlier, you will need to work with the coordinator to accommodate this in the schedule.

### **Questions?**

Contact Koren Nydick, [Nydick\\_k@fortlewis.edu](mailto:Nydick_k@fortlewis.edu) or 970-247-7071.