



PO Box 705
Cordova, AK 99574

907.424.5800
pwssc@pwssc.org

www.pwssc.org

5 November, 2024

Position Announcement – Research Scientist

The Prince William Sound Science Center (PWSSC) in Cordova, Alaska, is seeking applications for a Research Scientist (equivalent to a principal investigator/faculty at a university). At PWSSC, each scientist leads an externally funded research team, with opportunities to pursue research, educational outreach, and initiatives that align with our mission. Our scientists focus on understanding the unique ecosystems of Prince William Sound, coastal Alaska, and beyond. This includes research that addresses critical environmental challenges and contributes to sustainable management of coastal and marine resources. We welcome applicants at all career stages, from early-career researchers to those with established programs.

PWSSC is dedicated to advancing scientific knowledge about the ecosystems of the North Pacific and Alaska's coastal communities. Our research spans diverse areas such as fisheries, climate change, ecosystem monitoring, avian ecology, mariculture and oceanography. Our collaborative environment fosters innovative research, and our team enjoys access to research vessels, analytical and wet lab facilities, a running filtered seawater system and laboratories, and extensive long-term datasets from our regional monitoring programs. As a community benefit nonprofit, PWSSC is committed to supporting groundbreaking research while fostering work-life balance and providing an inclusive, supportive atmosphere for all team members.

We are particularly interested in applicants whose work complements and expands our research focus areas, including:

- Marine ecology, fisheries biology and fisheries oceanography
- Geochemistry and biogeochemistry, including mCDR
- Microbial ecology
- Ocean-climate interactions
- Ecosystem-based management and conservation science
- Coastal and watershed research
- Community resilience and subsistence harvest in coastal Alaska

Our team values interdisciplinary approaches, and we encourage applicants from diverse scientific backgrounds -- applicants who work in areas not listed above are also strongly encouraged to apply. PWSSC offers the chance to collaborate on impactful research and address the pressing environmental issues faced by coastal and marine ecosystems in Alaska and beyond.

PWSSC operates as a soft money institution, meaning that the majority of its research funding is secured through competitive grants and external contracts. The institution applies a 35% overhead rate to cover administrative and operational costs. For onboarding this position, PWSSC will provide 100% salary support during the first year to help establish research activities. This support will taper off over the following two years (dependent on grant funding success), with the expectation that the successful candidate will secure external funding to cover their salary and research program costs beyond the initial period. Salary level and startup funds are dependent on career level and are negotiable. PWSSC is committed to supporting its scientists in building sustainable, funded research portfolios that align with our mission. PWSSC provides a competitive salary and a benefits package that includes a medical plan, 403(b) retirement plan, paid leave, and some institutional salary support.

Background - PWSSC

PWSSC is an Alaska non-profit that was incorporated by commercial fishermen and community leaders in 1989 in the wake of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill, our mission is to advance community resilience and the understanding and sustainable use of ecosystems. We work to improve the understanding of the ecosystems of Prince William Sound, the Copper River watershed, Bering Glacier, and the northern Gulf of Alaska. PWS is located in the northeast corner of the Pacific at 60°N and includes an intricate network of maritime glaciers, rain forests, offshore and barrier islands, wetlands, and freshwater and marine systems. PWS has 4900 km of shoreline and is surrounded by the Chugach Mountains, and contains the most extensive system of tidewater glaciers in North America. Most of the land area is in or adjacent to the Chugach National Forest. Of the five PWS communities, only Valdez and Whittier have highway access to the main road system.

Cordova Alaska, is a small coastal town of 2500 people located in the southeastern part of Prince William Sound. The commercial salmon fisheries of the Copper River and PWS are the cornerstone of the local economy. Outdoor activities like boating, fishing, hiking, skiing, birdwatching, and exploring the Copper River delta draw nature enthusiasts year-round, and there are numerous facilities (a ski hill, community center, fitness center and pool) servicing the community. Cordova is off the road system, which helps preserve its unique character; access to Cordova is by boat or plane. The community is served regularly by Alaska Marine Highway System ferries and an airport that receives daily commercial jet airline traffic. Cordova is family-friendly with award-winning elementary and junior-senior high schools. Work at the Science Center is very flexible, and offers an excellent work-life balance.

Requirements

The ideal candidate will be a motivated, self-directed researcher with a Ph.D. in a relevant scientific discipline. Candidates should demonstrate a strong record of, or potential for, independent externally funded research, with a proven ability to lead collaborative scientific programs. Experience in interdisciplinary research and a history of publishing in peer-reviewed journals is essential. Strong applicants will have a track record of successful grant writing and project management, as well as the ability to mentor junior scientists, students, and staff.

Why Join Us?

- The opportunity to live in Cordova, a small, vibrant community surrounded by the natural beauty of Prince William Sound, with access to stunning outdoor activities year-round.
- The chance to contribute to self-directed, meaningful, cutting-edge research in a region recognized for its ecological significance.
- A supportive and passionate team dedicated to making a difference in science, conservation, and community engagement.

Application Process

Interested candidates should submit the following to president [at] pwssc.org:

1. A cover letter describing their research vision, how their expertise complements PWSSC's work, and why they are interested in this position.
2. A curriculum vitae (CV).
3. A statement of past research accomplishments and future directions.
4. Contact information for three professional references.

Review of applications will begin December 1, 2024. Start date: ASAP, negotiable.

Individuals seeking more information about this opportunity are welcome to contact Rob Campbell, Chief Scientist, at rcampbell [at] pwssc.org.

EO/AA Employer

Applicant must be authorized to work in the United States for any U.S. employer.

Job Type: Full-time, exempt.

The Prince William Sound Science Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, changes in marital status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, status with regard to public assistance, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, parenthood, sex, or age, or other legally protected status. PWSSC's commitment to nondiscrimination applies to employees and applicants for employment.