

## POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

### PhD Assistantship – Distribution and dynamics of the northern long-eared myotis (*Myotis septentrionalis*) in Montana

Department of Ecology, Montana State University

The northern long-eared myotis, *Myotis septentrionalis* (MYSE), was listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act in 2015 and was uplisted to Endangered in 2023. We recently completed research characterizing summer roosts of this species in northeastern Montana, which is the western extent of the species' range in the United States. Many knowledge gaps remain, especially in Montana, where individuals occur in small habitat patches along riparian corridors that are atypical of much of the rest of the species' distribution.

The successful candidate will pursue a Ph.D. degree at Montana State University in the Department of Ecology (<http://www.montana.edu/ecology>), advised by Dr. Andrea Litt (<http://www.montana.edu/litt/>) and will develop a research project that can build on our understanding about MYSE and inform management and conservation. Focal research areas will include: 1) characterizing the known distribution of MYSE in Montana, 2) evaluating survey methods and levels of effort for this part of the species' range, and 3) collecting data that can contribute to detecting population changes due to effects of WNS and other threats on MYSE and other bat species. Specific research questions will be determined jointly by the advisor and selected candidate.

The project will be funded by the Bureau of Land Management (funding to be confirmed by 30 Sept), and we will collaborate with BLM, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Montana Natural Heritage Program, and the US Fish and Wildlife Services.

#### Required Qualifications:

- B.S. and M.S. in wildlife science, ecology, zoology, or closely related field.
- Applicants should have an average GPA of 3.0 in biology courses; 3.0 average in courses taken during the junior and senior years; and 2.5 average in chemistry, physics and mathematics courses.
- A strong work ethic, drive, and motivation to succeed
- Aptitude for modelling and quantitative ecology
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Ability to work independently and as a productive leader and member of a research team
- Ability to work under adverse field conditions

The Litt lab is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion, and strongly encourages applications from candidates from diverse backgrounds. Interested parties are encouraged to apply even if these minimums aren't met.

#### Preferred Qualifications:

- Background or interest in mammalogy, quantitative ecology, and habitat selection.
- Experience capturing, handling, and identifying bats, especially the focal species or other listed bats.
- Experience working and communicating with other biologists, landowners, and the public.

**Stipend/Salary:** The student will be supported by research assistantships (\$2800/month). Insurance and tuition/fees also will be covered.

**Start Date:** January 2025

**Application Deadline:** We will begin reviewing applications on 30 September 2024 and will continue until a candidate is selected.

**To Apply:** Please send: (1) a cover letter focused on the listed qualifications, as well as how the opportunity would help further career goals, (2) resume/cv – listing presentations and publications, (3) unofficial copies of transcripts, and (4) contact information for 3 references to Dr. Andrea Litt ([andrea.litt@montana.edu](mailto:andrea.litt@montana.edu)).