

Opportunity Title: USDA-FS Rural Economies and a Changing Primary Timber Products Industry

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-FS-SRS-2024-0244

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-FS-SRS-2024-0244

How to Apply *To submit your application, scroll to the bottom of this opportunity and click **APPLY**.*

A complete application consists of:

- An application
- Transcript(s) – For this opportunity, an unofficial transcript or copy of the student academic records printed by the applicant or by academic advisors from internal institution systems may be submitted. Click [here](#) for detailed information about acceptable transcripts.
- A current resume/CV, including academic history, employment history, relevant experiences, and publication list
- Two educational or professional recommendations. At least one recommendation must be submitted in order for the mentor to view your application.

All documents must be in English or include an official English translation.

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Application Deadline 11/22/2024 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description **Applications will be reviewed on a rolling-basis.*

USDA Forest Service Office/Lab and Location: A fellowship opportunity is available with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (FS) within the Forest Service Southern Research Station (SRS) located in Knoxville, Tennessee.

The Forest Service is a federal agency under the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The agency was established by congress in 1905 with the aim to provide quality water and timber for the nation. The aim was later broadened to include the management of the nation's forests to provide for multiple uses and benefits, including sustained yield of renewable resources. Within the Forest Service, the Forest Inventory and Analysis program (FIA) provides the information needed to assess the status of the Nation's forests. The FIA program is the primary source of authoritative information on status, condition, and trends of U.S. forests and the products and services they provide. FIA's Resource Use Monitoring component consist of two data collection efforts- the Timber Products Output (TPO) and the Harvest Utilization (HU) studies. Through TPO (mill surveys) tree removals from timberland can be disaggregated to track the portion of total removals used for specific primary wood products and the amount of mill residue produced. Through HU, FIA generates estimates of harvested volume left on site (logging residue). These two data collections help provide key timber production estimates to inform a variety of analyses, including wood basket, wood markets, sustainability, wood supply and





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demand, etc. This information is used by customers in both the private and public sectors, including State agencies, forest industry, the Federal Government, and other researchers.

Research Project: Forests provide a range of goods and services, including primary timber products such as saw logs for lumber production and pulpwood for paper and paperboard production, among others. Primary wood processors generate significant economic activity, providing markets for timberland owners and a source of income to those directly or indirectly associated with wood processing. Primary wood processing facilities locate primarily in proximity to the forest resource (minimizing log transportation costs), which results in economic activity often centered within rural communities. Therefore, changes in distribution and capacity of primary wood processing mills (resulting from closures, openings, expansions, and contractions) can likely lead to changes in economic activity around rural communities. This project aims to explore the impact and extent of those changes over the past decade, assessing the interaction between shifts in land parcel-size, population demographics, and primary wood industries. The participant will help in the analysis of trends and status of the U.S. primary forest industry with attention to industry, and population dynamics.

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of a mentor, learning activities include:

- Catalog existing information on primary wood producing mills,
- Analyze spatial distribution of changes in mill distribution and size, evaluating spatial patterns in time,
- Assess significance of industry to local economies,
- Evaluate impact of land fragmentation on timber prices and mill dynamics, and
- Assess changes in wood market availability on forest conditions.

Mentor: The mentor for this opportunity is Consuelo Brandeis (consuelo.brandeis@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor.

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: November 25, 2024 or January 6, 2025. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for one year but may be extended upon recommendation of USDA Forest Service and is contingent on the availability of funds.

Level of Participation: The appointment is full time.

Participant Stipend: The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **The annual stipend range is \$50,000 to 75,000.**

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR), and foreign nationals. Non-U.S. citizen applicants should refer to the [Guidelines for Non-U.S. Citizens](#)

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[Details page](#) of the program website for information about the valid immigration statuses that are acceptable for program participation.

ORISE Information: This program, administered by ORAU through its contract with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to manage the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), was established through an interagency agreement between DOE and USDA Forest Service. Participants do not become employees of USDA, USDA Forest Service, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits. Proof of health insurance is required for participation in this program. Health insurance can be obtained through ORISE.

Questions: Please visit our [Program Website](#). After reading, if you have additional questions about the application process please email ORISE.USFS.SRS@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a master's or doctoral degree in the one of the relevant fields.

Preferred skills include:

- Knowledge with SQL strongly desired
- Demonstrated statistical skills including econometric analysis and data management of quantitative datasets
- Experience using statistical software, including Stata and R, and using visualization tools (e.g., Excel, Tableau)
- Strong organizational skill and demonstrated ability to perform both independently and as part of a team

Eligibility • **Degree:** Master's Degree or Doctoral Degree.

Requirements • **Discipline(s):**

- **Computer, Information, and Data Sciences** ([2](#))
- **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([5](#))
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences** ([6](#))