



## Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex Position Description

### Program Description

The 2023 Public Lands Transportation Fellows Program provides paid opportunities to advance the transportation workforce by attracting our next generation of public stewards to the field of transportation—through unique opportunities for career development and public service on key visitor transportation issues. Fellows work closely under the coaching and mentoring of staff of Federal Land Management Agencies (FLMAs), *such as the National Park Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*, to facilitate transportation planning or implementation projects for transportation solutions that preserve valuable resources and enhance the visitor experience. Through service at a unit or region/field office, fellows are invited to incite innovative change in our transportation systems and environmental lands management through significant contributions that advance cost-effective sustainability

### FLMA Description

This fellow position will work with the National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) System of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service). The mission of the NWR System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management and, where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

### Location Description

This transportation fellow position will be stationed at the Service's [Desert NWR](#), part of the Desert NWR Complex based in Las Vegas, Nevada. Desert NWR is the largest wildlife refuge outside of Alaska encompassing six major mountain ranges and seven distinct life zones, showcasing the abundance and variety of nature that can be found in Southern Nevada, all just a short drive from Las Vegas. The office for Desert NWR is located a short drive northwest of Las Vegas at the Corn Creek Visitor Center.

Desert NWR Complex includes four refuges: Ash Meadows NWR, Moapa Valley NWR, Pahrnagat NWR, and Desert NWR and the Ash Meadows Fish Conservation Facility. Desert NWR was created in 1936 to provide habitat and protection for desert bighorn sheep and other desert wildlife. At 1.6 million acres (643,000 hectares), the refuge can cover Rhode Island twice - and still have enough room left over for a quarter of a million football fields.

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### Job Description

As a fellow, you will be an employee of the Western Transportation Institute (WTI) at Montana State University (MSU) Bozeman. Through WTI, you will be provided with an orientation, professional development opportunities, the ability to attend conferences to build a professional network, and a transportation mentor to provide you with guidance. Through the Service, you will be provided with an onsite supervisor as well as a workspace and computer at Desert NWR.

At the start of their assignment, fellows are provided with a detailed scope of work (SOW), including tasks, deliverables, and approximate work schedule to guide them throughout their assignment. This SOW includes the transportation priorities outlined by staff at the Desert NWR complex. Within the first few months of their assignment, fellows will be able to work with staff to suggest updates to this SOW based on their expertise, passions, and exploration of the complex.

Some of the potential projects that the transportation fellow will provide support for during this assignment at the Desert NWR Complex include:

- Work to identify issues with motor vehicles breaching the boundaries and potential solutions
- Assist with plans for the I-95 interchange with Nevada Department of Transportation for access to the Corn Creek entrance to Desert NWR and a FLAP project at Ash Meadows NWR to improve access
- Assist with plans for improving wayfinding and decreasing illegal off-road driving (e.g., maps and signage)
- Work to increase car-free options of access to the units
- Work to increase mass transport options for the complex
- Plan and implement ideas for increased resilience/maintenance of the road infrastructure for monsoon season
- Plan and implement safety countermeasures to reduce speed for the entrances and access roads at Pahrangat NWR from I-93
- Engage in the regional open space and trails working group
- Plan and implement ideas for the Urban Refuge Program
- Conduct stakeholder outreach in the area
- Opportunity to work with Tribal, Hispanic, and other traditionally underserved partners

More detailed information about the potential projects will be provided upon request.

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### Fellow Expectations

- Commit to an eighteen (18) month fellowship term.
- Report to duty at the Desert NWR.
- Attend an in-person orientation at Montana State University in Bozeman at the beginning of the fellowship (date TBD).
- Complete a rotational assignment (at both the USFWS Headquarters Office and the regional office) for a total of two months.
- Attend twice monthly transportation fellows' group video conferences, twice monthly individual phone calls/video conferences with your WTI mentor, and USFWS Regional Transportation Coordinators (RTC) video conferences as needed.
- Host a 1-3 day site visit for your mentor and provide them an agenda with an update on initiatives.
- Attend 1-2 conferences (TBD).
- Present at a poster session during the [Transportation Research Board](#) (TRB) in Washington, D.C. (January 2024).
- Complete a final report and a webinar that discusses the work completed during the fellowship.
- Travel for occasional business as needed as part of the effort.

### Skills and Qualifications

1. Strong oral, writing, and graphic communication skills to interact with federal, state, and local agencies, interest groups, partners, Service regional staff, and Service field staff;
2. Strong organizational skills;
3. Ability to establish and maintain positive professional relationships with a variety of agencies and the public;
4. Excellent working knowledge of GIS and mapping tools;
5. Working knowledge of common spreadsheet and database tools;
6. Knowledge of transportation planning and asset management principles and techniques;
7. Ability to assess transportation needs, evaluate and identify priorities, and to modify or develop new approaches to solve transportation or access management challenges;
8. Ability to assist with scoping projects to pilot and implement transportation management systems and programs, potentially working on multiple projects at once;
9. Ability to assist with assembling grant applications with provided technical information;
10. Familiarity with methods for assessing the sustainability and resiliency of transportation assets;
11. Ability to take initiative and work independently, yet know when to ask for help and guidance;
12. Ability to work in a small team and willingness to assist with some day-to-day tasks and issues;
13. Familiarity with marketing and social media; and
14. General knowledge of the Service and NWR System and a genuine interest in supporting our collective transportation efforts related to our primary goals.

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### Requirements

All applicants must:

- Be U.S. citizens, nationals, or lawful permanent resident aliens of the U.S.;
- Be 30 years of age or under by the start date; and
- Have at least a Bachelor's degree.

### Financial Package

- Assignment Period: Eighteen (18) months including two (2) months of rotational assignments.
- Salary: \$24.23/hour or \$50,400/year
- Benefits: Eligible for benefits through MSU (<https://www.montana.edu/hr/recruitment-hiring-onboarding/FY23%20Benefits%20Overview.pdf>)
- Relocation Expenses: Reimbursement of up to \$750 for relocating to and from your home to assignment location, for a maximum total of up to \$1,500. Travel costs from the assignment location to the rotational assignment locations will also be covered (see additional information under travel costs below).
- Personal Transportation: Personal transportation (e.g., travel from your housing to unit, to grocery store, etc.) will be the financial responsibility of the transportation fellow.
- Professional Development: up to \$1000 is available for pre-approved, transportation fellow professional development. Note that this *cannot* be used for professional society membership.
- Travel Costs: Costs for travel to orientation, relocation to rotational locations, conference travel, and occasional business travel will be reimbursed/covered by WTI.

### Federal Non-Competitive Eligibility Status

Transportation fellows who **complete** their assignment will be eligible for federal non-competitive hiring status for two years following the completion of their fellowship. The transportation fellow, with the help of their supervisor, must demonstrate that specific minimum hour work requirements have been met.