

Two field assistants at SLU Umeå during August 2021

The Department of Forest Ecology and Management, SLU Umeå, is seeking two field assistants during August 2021. The employment involves field sampling and the collection of peat cores from mires in northern Sweden. The project is related to wetland restoration, which is an effective method to suppress greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and to increase the biological diversity in forests. The position is therefore an effective way to contribute to a better climate and environment. Please find a project description attached at the bottom of the page.

Suitable candidates are comfortable with working outdoors, physically demanding job assignments, and to be a part of a team. Applicants must also be able to travel as a part of the employment during week-long periods. Sampling will namely be carried out at variable sites in northern Sweden. The employer (SLU) will handle costs related to accommodation and transport from Umeå to sampling sites during field trips.

A successful candidate has the ability to pay attention to details and to show carefulness in the field despite uncomfortable conditions (i.e., rain and cold weather). Previous experience from scientific sampling in forests and/or wetlands is therefore highly valuable.

For further information, please contact Jacob Smeds at the Department of Forest Ecology and Management, SLU Umeå (jacob.smeds@slu.se, 072 – 240 69 98). Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Project description

Wetlands are unique ecosystems delivering important ecosystem services to society. Due to extensive drainage only a minor fraction of the original wetland areas still remains in e.g. Europe. During the last decades, wetland restoration has become a prioritized environmental protection action in many European countries. Also the Swedish government has defined wetland restoration as a major national undertaking, with numerous authorities and land owners actively involved.

The major objectives behind wetland restoration are increased biodiversity, increased carbon sequestration, increased ground water storage and improved surface water quality. However, wetland restoration also causes fundamental changes in biogeochemical properties and may result in undesired impacts and potential environmental threats. In addition, a century or more of drained conditions has drastically changed the soil properties in relation to processes. This renders the impact of restoration on biogeochemical processes difficult to predict.

The overall aim of the project is to compare the physical, chemical, and ecological properties between undisturbed natural mires and restored wetlands. Almost all the important ecosystem functions at wetlands are controlled by the soil properties at the superficial 50 cm.