

Position ID

E17-23

Position Title

NOAA Fisheries Habitat and Ecosystem Science Coordinator

Office Name

Office of Science and Technology, NOAA

Portfolio Summary

Job Responsibilities:

The Office of Science and Technology works to guard the integrity of NOAA Fisheries scientific activity and strives to maintain and improve its quality and credibility. It is the primary interface between NOAA Fisheries science (including its Fisheries Science Centers and laboratories), and other agencies and international organizations.

Position Overview: This position is split between the Office of Science and Technology and the Office of the NOAA Fisheries Chief Science Advisor, and is based on two core projects with an opportunity to participate in other ancillary projects (listed below), depending on the Fellow's skills, interests, and fellowship objectives. This opportunity will provide broad exposure to NOAA Fisheries' science and management needs, and allow a Fellow to gain experience in NOAA Fisheries Headquarters, including interactions with field personnel as well as gain experience in science policy and program development, and NOAA-wide coordination of ecosystem activities.

Core Project 1 of 2: Ecosystem Sciences and Management Working Group (ESMWG) coordinator

The NOAA Science Advisory Board (SAB) is an external group that provides advice and recommendations to NOAA. A working group on ecosystem sciences and management (http://www.sab.noaa.gov/Working_Groups/standing/index.html) was formed that advises the SAB on NOAA's progress related to specific issues under that overarching theme. Specific topics that will be covered in 2017 include advising NOAA on its work to incorporate: 1) traditional ecological knowledge, 2) emerging ecosystem technologies, and 3) 'omics/environmental DNA (eDNA) technologies. The ESMWG is composed of 10-12 renowned scientists and leaders (outside of NOAA) with a broad interest in NOAA's ecosystem related activities. The NOAA Fisheries Chief Science Advisor works closely with the ESMWG to provide support and guidance on NOAA's ecosystem portfolio. The Fellow would have a unique opportunity to network with the nation's top marine ecosystem scientists, develop an inside perspective on the direction ecosystem science activities are taking, and learn how top scientists provide guidance on marine policy. ESMWG meetings are held both via teleconference and in person outside of the DC metro area. The fellow would attend and provide support for up to 3 meetings during the course of the fellowship. Responsibilities include meeting preparation, agenda development, and support for meeting output (e.g., reports). Opportunities to collaborate on written publications may be available.

Core Project 2 of 2: Habitat and Ecosystem Science

Habitat science provides essential information to resource managers on the current status and future trends of marine habitats used by the nation's marine species. Habitat science also supports habitat restoration, improved stock assessments, ecosystem-based management, and almost every other NOAA program. The Fellow will participate in several activities led by the Office of Science and Technology supporting and expanding the habitat science program, including:

Implementation of the NOAA Fisheries Habitat Assessment Improvement Plan (HAIP, http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st4/documents/habitatAssesmentImprovementPlan_052110.PDF). This plan provides recommendations to NOAA Fisheries to advance our ability to conduct ecosystem-based management by reducing habitat-related uncertainty in science that supports fisheries management. These advances also improve our ability to identify Essential Fish Habitat and Habitat Areas of Particular Concern, and contribute to the developing concept of Integrated Ecosystem Assessments, a new approach to ecosystem-based management. The fellow will have an opportunity to join the team putting the Plan into action.

- This office funds NOAA Fisheries science center and laboratory staff to undertake habitat science research that can be applied to the stock assessment process. The fellow may choose to lead the internal proposal solicitation and review process.
- NOAA Fisheries is working to strengthen the direct applications of habitat science into Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) priorities. The fellow would help in developing a document that outlines strategies for stronger incorporation of habitat science toward EBFM.
- A process has been developed to prioritize which species would benefit the most from habitat assessments. This process has been completed for the West Coast and Northeast regions, and over the next year the agency will be implementing this process in the remainder of the NOAA Fisheries regions. The fellow would be a part of the headquarters team supporting the prioritization process in the regions.

NOAA Habitat Conservation Team and Habitat Blueprint – Habitat loss and degradation is increasingly recognized as a challenge to sustaining living and natural marine resources. NOAA is addressing this issue head-on with a new focus on and approach to strengthen habitat science, protection and restoration across the agency led by the NOAA Habitat Conservation Team (NHCT). Additionally, the NHCT oversees NOAA's Habitat Blueprint, which works to enhance habitat science and conservation in specific Habitat Focus Areas (HFAs) throughout the United States and its territories. NOAA Fisheries also co-leads the Habitat Science and Ecoforecasting sub-team within this structure, and works to promote habitat science efforts throughout the agency. The fellow would have the opportunity to play a key role in working to support NOAA-wide habitat science priorities, and continuing scientific efforts within HFAs.

Habitat Mapping with Sonar Technologies Workshop – NOAA Fisheries and The National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) are working together to hold a workshop in 2017 to focus efforts on standardizing multibeam sonar technologies (including ME70s) for habitat mapping on NOAA vessels, improving information sharing, and creating strategies in applying this information toward enhanced fishery-independent surveys. The fellow would have the opportunity play a key role in designing the workshop, developing the agenda with regional scientists, coordinating logistics and outreach, and publishing a technical report summarizing the results.

Expertise Desired

Ability to communicate technical and scientific material to a variety of audiences concisely, in person and in writing. The candidate's interest, motivation and ability to adapt to and participate in a broad suite of activities are more important than an exact educational track. However, the more relevant disciplines include fisheries biology, oceanography, and marine policy. This position is designed to offer a Fellow a diverse mix of assignments with broad intra/inter-agency exposure. The Fellow can expect to gain enhanced writing, coordination, planning and problem solving skills, and exposure to cutting-edge marine and fisheries science issues.

Travel within DC (days per month)

1-3 days

Travel outside DC (days per month)

1-3 days

Accepts Foreign Nationals

Yes