



Position Description

RESEARCH ASSISTANT BUZZARDS BAY COALITION

The Buzzards Bay Coalition seeks a Research Assistant for this energetic, performance-driven and rapidly growing regional organization. The full-time, entry-level position reports directly to the Vice President for Bay Science, joins a talented staff and dedicated Board of Directors, and is responsible for aiding in the effective monitoring of Buzzards Bay and analyzing the impact of nitrogen pollution and climate change to Buzzards Bay.

The Research Assistant will further the Coalition's long-term water quality monitoring effort with a focus on continuous sensors. The Research Assistant position is a combination of fieldwork, data management/analysis, and equipment preparation/maintenance. The Research Assistant will be experienced in environmental research and data analysis, an effective communicator who works well with others, and capable of managing small projects.

BACKGROUND

Buzzards Bay is a national treasure whose outstanding beauty and natural resources touch so many aspects of our lives here in southeastern Massachusetts. It is central to our quality of life, to our economy, and home to some of the world's leading oceanographic institutions. The Bay's waters support a thriving commercial shellfish and expanding recreational sportfishing industry, diverse and abundant wildlife populations, and some of the finest sailing around. On its shores, the Bay's watershed lands include deep forests, clear rivers, and farmland as old as New England itself, all meeting the Bay's soft edge of beaches and saltmarsh through more than 30 harbors, coves and tidal estuaries.

The Buzzards Bay Coalition is a nonprofit, membership organization dedicated to the restoration, protection and sustainable use and enjoyment of our irreplaceable Bay and its watershed. The Coalition works to improve the health of the Bay ecosystem for all through education, conservation, research and advocacy. The Coalition works throughout the entire Buzzards Bay Watershed to protect the region's coastal, river and drinking water quality and the upland forests, wetlands and streams that support a healthy watershed/bay ecosystem.

Since its founding in 1987, the Coalition Board of Directors has been comprised of individuals from throughout the Bay watershed - environmental advocates, cranberry growers, fishermen, marina owners, research institutions and town government. The Coalition is a \$9 million/year organization staffed by a team of 32 conservation professionals, aided by hundreds of volunteers,

and supported by more than 12,000 members. As we have grown over the past 30 years, our effectiveness and reach have greatly expanded. What has not changed is our fundamental vision for the Bay we have committed to defend and restore.

Position Description

The Research Assistant supports the organization's objectives of understanding the Buzzards Bay ecosystem and the ecosystem's response to human-related impacts.

The Research Assistant will further the Coalition's long-term monitoring efforts through a variety of projects. The Research Assistant's focus will be bay-wide water quality monitoring using continuous water quality sensors. The Research Assistant will also support the collection of discrete water quality samples and salt marsh monitoring. This full-time position reports directly to the Buzzards Bay Coalition's Vice President for Bay Science.

The Research Assistant position is a combination of fieldwork, data management and analysis, lab work, data entry, and works with year-round and seasonal staff. The Research Assistant will deploy programmable continuous water quality sensors at 20 or more locations around Buzzards Bay and on Martha's Vineyard and perform regular maintenance activities on them, including calibration and cleaning. The Research Assistant will communicate effectively with partner organizations to coordinate boat transport for the maintenance of some sensors. The Research Assistant will be responsible for the management and quality control of the continuous water quality sensor data. The Research Assistant will assist with collection of water quality data using hand-held sensors and by the collection and filtration of water samples. The Research Assistant may assist with salt marsh field work including measurements of water level, marsh elevation, vegetation, and fauna. The Research Assistant will support a variety of rotating funded projects including things such as helping to update water quality signs around the watershed.

The Research Assistant will have experience performing environmental research and analyzing environmental data. The successful candidate will be able to follow directions, pay attention to detail, and accurately record data. The Research Assistant must be able to work independently, have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and a passion for the environment and Buzzards Bay. The position is based at the Coalition's Science and Field Operations Center in Marion, MA.

Specific Responsibilities

Tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Deploy, retrieve, and maintain continuous sensors around Buzzards Bay.
- Data management including database organization, quality assurance and processing based on calibration checks, statistical analysis, and data visualization.
- Collect water samples and field measurements of basic water quality characteristics (e.g., dissolved oxygen, temperature, salinity) and transport water samples.
- Assist with the long-term monitoring of salt marshes.
- Assist in the organization, maintenance, and calibration of monitoring supplies and equipment.

- Assess the locations of and support the installation of physical signs describing Bay Health at waterfront locations around the Bay.
- Assist with other watershed monitoring projects; river flow/temperature monitoring, river herring counting, etc.
- Assist with Buzzards Bay Coalition organized outreach and Bay education events.

Professional & Personal Qualifications

- College degree in environmental science or related discipline.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Experience performing environmental research, including field work.
- Experience manipulating & analyzing environmental data using Microsoft Excel and/or R.
- High energy level, well-organized, able to take initiative, and willingness to learn.
- Excellent communications skills.
- Capable of working under physical conditions in the field including heat, humidity, wet, climbing up and down rocky areas, and traversing areas of poison ivy and tick habitat as well as carrying equipment up to 30 pounds for a mile.
- Willing to work flexible hours – especially in summer, work schedules will vary from week to week, and are based around tide and weather conditions. Work outside of normal working hours, including early mornings, may be required.
- The Research Assistant must have his/her own reliable transportation to cover monitoring in the Buzzards Bay watershed (mileage will be reimbursed).
- Enthusiastic commitment to the Buzzards Bay Coalition’s mission to protect the bay.
- Familiarity and comfort with operating a small boat and marine gear for field deployment of instruments is a plus.
- Familiarization with Buzzards Bay is a plus.

Salary/Benefits

This is a full-time at-will position beginning in early May 2024 with a salary of approximately \$40,000 per year (depending on level of experience) plus benefits including employer contributions towards Health Insurance and 401(k) Retirement plan and access to supplemental benefits. Travel will be reimbursed at the prevailing IRS rate per mile.

To Apply

To apply, email a resume, a cover letter explaining your interest in the position, and contact information for three references to: Rachel Jakuba, Vice President for Bay Science, at jakuba@savebuzzardsbay.org. Application review will begin April 10, 2024 and position will remain open until filled.

Buzzards Bay Coalition is proud to be an Equal Opportunity employer. All qualified persons are encouraged to apply and will be considered without regard to race, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, or veteran status.

March 2024