

Assistant Research Scientist, Large River Fisheries Ecology
Illinois Natural History Survey
Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) investigates and documents the biological resources of Illinois and other areas, and acquires and provides natural history information that can be used to promote the common understanding, conservation, and management of these resources. INHS is part of the Prairie Research Institute (PRI) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which is centrally located between Chicago, St. Louis, and Indianapolis. Learn more at go.illinois.edu/PRIjobs.

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Since the development and expansion of the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS), numerous nuisance and injurious species have used the CAWS as a corridor for invasion between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basin. The most recent high-profile species, bigheaded carp (*Hypophthalmichthys* spp.) have had a profound ecological and economic impact on the economic and natural resources of the State of Illinois and the Mississippi River Basin, and grass carp and black carp are also threatening. The threat of invasive carp spreading to new ecosystems like the Great Lakes necessitates a strong and coordinated response to limit range expansion. Two currently successful tools used against the bigheaded carp threat are the electric dispersal barrier, which limits upstream spread, and the implementation of large-scale bigheaded carp harvest downstream of the electric barrier to reduce upstream pressure. However, there are still many research questions about the invasive species response to these tools that would improve and enhance their effectiveness, and also questions about ecosystem effects of the invasion and control. The need is for flexible and reliable monitoring, research, and response capabilities for both the current bigheaded carp control efforts and for the next invasive species threat that arises.

INHS is seeking an **Assistant Research Scientist, Large River Fisheries Ecology** to develop, direct, and conduct research activities focused on issues surrounding the impact, control, and management of bigheaded carp and other potential nuisance or invasive species throughout Illinois Waterway. This position is located in Yorkville, Illinois, **and will focus heavily on fieldwork, with limited other duties.**

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- Conduct biological research on Illinois Waterways using multiple types of fishing gear. (pulsed-DC electrofishing, AC electrofishing, netting)
- Collect fish population monitoring data and use the information to develop research projects.
- Coordinate field sampling schedules including identifying sampling locations, completion of equipment inventory for each trip, safety inspection of marine craft, and electrofishing gear.
- Supervise student and hourly staff including task assignment, explaining required sampling techniques to staff, informing staff of required field data collection necessary to complete project, and ensuring marine safety protocols are followed.
- Manage, analyze, and translate research and monitoring data into scientific findings and provide management recommendations to funding agencies, collaborators, and other interested parties.
- Provide recommendations to funding agencies, collaborators, and other interested parties.
- Translate scientific data into reports, peer-reviewed publications, and presentations to be delivered at conferences and professional meetings.
- Work with lay community to engender positive feedback regarding scientific research.
- Coordinate and cooperate with the Survey, PRI, University of Illinois, and other groups
- Attend local, regional, national, and international conferences.

- Represent the Survey, PRI, the University, and other state and federal agencies on professional and interagency committees associated with river ecology and fisheries.
- Represent the Survey, PRI, and UIUC committees.
- Ensure facilities and equipment are properly maintained, grant and contract obligations are fulfilled, and data quality assurance standards are met.
- Perform other duties as needed in order to further the mission and goals of PRI.
- Keep abreast of developments in this discipline.

Required Qualifications:

Bachelor's degree in Biology, Aquatic Ecology, Fisheries, or related field. Alternate degree fields will be considered depending on the nature and depth of the experience as it relates to this position. Bachelor's degree with a minimum of 5 years of experience or master's degree with a minimum of 3 years of experience in standard fish sampling and other sampling techniques important to large river ecology research. Experience with pulsed-DC and or AC boat electrofishing, fyke and hoop netting, trawling, and other sampling techniques important to large river ecology research. Experience with writing and presenting scientific reports and scientific journal articles that include standard fisheries statistical analyses. Valid driver's license required in order to drive to sampling sites.

Preferred Qualifications:

Master's degree in Biology, Aquatic Ecology, Fisheries, or related field. Alternate degree fields will be considered depending on the nature and depth of the experience as it relates to this position. Experience driving 4WD trucks and trailering boats. Experience working on large river systems by boat. Boater's Safety, MOCC training, First-Aid and CPR training, AFS Certified Fisheries Professional. Red Cross or other swim certification preferred.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Effective communication, personal relations, collaboration, organizational, teamwork, and leadership skills. Demonstrated ability to perform effectively in a diverse and fast-paced work environment consisting of multiple and changing priorities with stringent deadlines, under minimal supervision. Attention to detail, sound judgment, and strong conflict resolution skills. Proficiency in commonly employed software and databases, including Microsoft Office, MS Access, ArcGIS products, and statistical software packages. Possess appropriate field and laboratory skills as well as physical skills necessary to carry out work. Must possess strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work collaboratively with other scientists, researchers, staff, and clients. Ability to swim is required.

Environmental Demands:

Overnight travel may be necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of this position. Will require working in adverse field conditions (heat, humidity, biting insects, cold, etc.), travel (including driving to and from research sites) throughout the state of Illinois; lift and carry equipment weighing up to 50 pounds. The work of this position also takes place in an office setting. The work is sedentary and involves remaining in a stationary position for extended periods of time working at a computer, using a keyboard and mouse, and using repetitive hand motions.

Proposed Start Date: Negotiable

Salary: The starting salary for this position is \$47,500

Appointment Status: This is a regular full-time 12-month academic professional appointment, renewable annually based upon satisfactory progress in the position and continued funding. Eligible for full University benefits package as well as generous vacation and sick leave packages.

To Apply: Applications must be received by March 4, 2022. Applicants may be interviewed and hiring decisions may be made prior to the closing date. Please visit <http://jobs.illinois.edu/> to complete an online profile and to upload 1) a cover letter that clearly articulates how your qualifications and experience make you a viable candidate for this position and should address the qualifications listed above, 2) a résumé/CV, and 3) the names and contact information (including e-mail addresses) of three professional references. All requested information/documentation must be submitted for applications to be considered. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

For further information, please contact Amber Hall, Human Resources, Prairie Research Institute at amberh@illinois.edu or 217-300-4080.

For technical inquiries regarding this position, please contact Jason DeBoer at jadeboer@illinois.edu.

University of Illinois faculty, staff, and students are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. If you are not able to receive the vaccine for medical or religious reasons, you may seek approval for an exemption in accordance with applicable University processes.

University of Illinois conducts criminal background checks on all job candidates upon acceptance of a contingent offer. Convictions are not a bar to employment. As a qualifying federal contractor, the University of Illinois System [uses E-Verify](#) to verify [employment eligibility](#). The University of Illinois System requires candidates selected for hire to disclose any documented finding of sexual misconduct or sexual harassment and to authorize inquiries to current and former employers regarding findings of sexual misconduct or sexual harassment. For more information, visit [Policy on Consideration of Sexual Misconduct in Prior Employment](#).