

**Assistant Professor - Forest or Landscape Ecology & Management -
261084, 001170**

Western Carolina University

Department: Geosciences & Natural Resources

About WCU: Western Carolina University continues to rank high on Forbes 'Best Employers' lists each year. Including:

- 2025 – Ranked 1st in the top 100 employers in North Carolina in Forbes 'America's Best Employers by State' list.
- 2024 – Ranking in the top 8.5% on Forbes 'America's Best Midsize Employers' list, WCU was ranked 34 out of the top 400 employers across all industries.
- 2023 – Ranked in the top 20% on Forbes 'America's Best Midsize Employers' list, WCU was ranked 97 out of the top 500 employers across all industries.
- 2022 – Ranked 14th in the top 100 employers in North Carolina in Forbes 'America's Best Employers by State' list.

Western Carolina University is the UNC system's westernmost campus and has been consistently ranked as one of the top 15 public regional institutions in the South.

Employees of WCU are provided a comprehensive benefits package as well as other resources, policies and programs to ensure a happy and healthy work/life balance. Benefit eligible employees have access to dental, vision and health insurance plans – eligibility begins on the first of the month following date of hire. Retirement plan contributions begin on the eligibility date following election and include employer contributions for either a defined contribution or a defined benefit plan. Optional disability plans are also available.

Eligible employees have access to tuition waivers for up to three courses per academic year; employee may enroll at any of the constituent UNC System campuses. Also offered are free group exercise classes multiple times per week, a discounted membership to the campus recreation center, free vaccine and booster shots offered on campus, pretax flexible spending accounts, 12 paid holidays and 24 hours of paid community service leave each year. Leave earning employees (staff and 12-month faculty) who work at least half of the working days of their first month of employment will begin accruing vacation and sick leave immediately. Paid parental leave after 12 months of continuous service. WCU offers an abundance of training and development programs, certifications, workshops and conferences – many of which are offered free of charge.

Position Summary: The primary location of this position is the main Cullowhee, NC campus.

Faculty in the Department of Geosciences and Natural Resources (GNR) at Western Carolina University (WCU) invite applications for two 9-month, tenure-track, Assistant Professor positions in Forest or Landscape Ecology and Management to begin Fall 2026.

The department offers academic programs in Natural Resource Conservation and Management (NRCM), Geology, Environmental Science, and Geography; all sharing a strong commitment to excellence in teaching, undergraduate research, and experiential learning.

We seek candidates with a background in forest or landscape ecology and management or a closely related field and are particularly interested in candidates with a focus on fire ecology, soil biogeochemistry, or natural resource policy. We desire candidates who can increase the instructional capacity of the NRCM program and effectively teach 4 – 5 of the following courses, in addition to a course in their area of expertise:

- NRM 150: Careers in Natural Resources
- NRM 210: Methods in Natural Resources
- NRM 240: Natural Resource Measurements
- NRM 255: Dendrology
- NRM 351: Forest Ecology
- NRM 440: Integrated Resource Management

The teaching load may also include participation in WCU's general education curriculum and other courses in the department. The successful candidate will demonstrate a strong commitment to excellence in teaching, student mentoring, and providing hands-on, field-based learning opportunities for our students. In addition to teaching, the successful candidate will develop a scholarly research program that engages undergraduate students and provides service to the university, profession, and community.

Qualified candidates may have the opportunity to engage with Forest Stewards, a WCU -affiliated non-profit that employs students in applied research and field-based forest stewardship initiatives across the Southern Appalachians.

Western Carolina University is a regional comprehensive university serving approximately 12,000 students and is part of the University of North Carolina System. Located in the Southern Blue Ridge Mountains adjacent to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, WCU offers unparalleled opportunities for field-based research and outdoor learning. WCU is designated by the Carnegie Foundation as a Community-Engaged University and was recognized by Forbes as one of "America's Best Employers by State."

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Required for this position:

Minimum Qualifications: The successful candidate should have a PhD in a relevant field at the time of hire; ABD candidates will be considered during the application process given that the degree will be conferred prior to the hire date of August 01, 2026.

Preferred Qualifications:

Position Type: Permanent Full-Time

Special Instructions to Applicants: Applications must be submitted online at and include:

- 1) a resume/curriculum vitae,
- 2) a cover letter,
- 3) transcripts for all degrees (unofficial acceptable)
- 4) a statement of teaching philosophy**
- 5) a statement of research philosophy, and**
- 6) contact information for 4 references.**

Please contact the search chair, Aimee Rockhill (aprockhill@wcu.edu) if you have specific questions about the position or see gnr.wcu.edu for more general information. Application review will begin by December 1st, 2025 and will continue until filled.

All applicants are required to submit an unofficial transcript of their highest attained degree, showing all completed coursework and the date the degree was conferred. The transcript must state Degree Awarded, Degree Conferred or a similar phrase. For candidates who are ABD, please submit your most recent doctoral program transcript along with your master's degree transcript, if you hold such a degree. The master's degree transcript must have a notation such as Degree Awarded, Degree Conferred or similar phrase, to verify it as your highest completed degree.

AA/EOE

Western Carolina University is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race; color; ethnicity; religion; sex; pregnancy; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; political affiliation; National Guard or veteran status, consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations, and policies, and the policies of The University of North Carolina. Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations in the application and interview process please call (828) 227-7218 or email at jobs@email.wcu.edu.

University Safety

The Western Carolina University Annual Safety Report is available online at University Annual Safety Report or in hard-copy by request at the office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, 227 HFR Administration Building, Cullowhee,

NC 28723 (828-227-7147) or the Office of University Police, 111 Camp Annex, Cullowhee, NC 28723 (828-227-7301). The report, required of all universities participating in Title IV student financial aid programs, discusses crime statistics, procedures for reporting suspicious or criminal activity, security, police authority, crime prevention strategies, university policies on substance abuse and sexual offenses, workplace violence and fire safety.

To apply, please visit: <https://apptrkr.com/6736692>

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