Federal Lands Scholar Position Description

Kaua‘i National Wildlife Refuge Complex - Hawaii
Kaua‘i is one of the most geographically and climactically diverse islands on the Hawaiian chain encompassing a number of 5,000 foot peaks, record setting rainfall, tropical canyons and scenic waterfalls. Over 25% of the landmass of the island is public land or forest, including 3 National Wildlife Refuges: Kīlauea Point NWR, Hanalei NWR and Hulē‘ia NWR.

- Kilauea Point NWR is the only refuge on Kaua‘i open to the public and providing visitor services. It opened to visitors in 1985 and has around 500,000 visitors a year. The highlight of the refuge is the Kilauea Point Lighthouse.
- Hanalei NWR is the oldest of Kauai’s three refuges. It is a 917-acre refuge in the Hanalei Valley. The refuge was established to conserve the feeding and nesting habitat for five endangered water birds. The NWR is closed to the public to protect the birds.
- Hule‘ia NWR is located adjacent to the Menehune Fish Pond along the Hule‘ia River. This 238-acre NWR is also closed to the public to minimize disturbance to the endangered Hawaiian waterbirds protected by the NWR.

The island is also a very popular tourist destination, hosting over a million visitors per year. Because many visitors arrive without a personal automobile, yet still wish to take advantage of the recreational opportunities on the island, there is ample opportunity for development of alternative transportation projects. It will be the incumbent’s assignment to lead three alternative transportation modules on the island. In coordination with the transportation planning efforts of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Central Federal Lands Highway Division (CFLHD), U.S. Department of Transportation Volpe Center, Kaua‘i County, and Kaua‘i National Wildlife Refuge Complex, analyze the short- to medium-term feasibility and implementation of a shuttle, bike/pedestrian access, and a conceptual re-design of the Refuge overlook at the end of Kīlauea Road.

The refuge is looking to work with a transportation scholar who has an emphasis in transportation planning for alternative modes (i.e., shuttles and non-motorized) and will provide overall transportation support for the three refuges within the Kaua‘i NWR Complex.

A detailed work plan, including tasks, deliverables, and approximate work schedule for this location, will be created by the scholar assigned to the Kaua‘i NWR during their first 4 weeks of onsite work and used as a guide throughout the planning assignment. The scholar will work with USFWS refuge and headquarters staff, as well as, their MSU/STC mentor to develop this work plan. It is expected that the scholar would report for work at the Kaua‘i NWR through the duration of the assignment. Occasional business travel may be needed as part of the effort.

Specifically, the incumbent could provide support to several of the following activities during the assignment:

1. Lead a project to develop transit service that would take visitors from the residential and commercial areas of the island to one or more of the 3 NWRs.
2. Advance a project to develop bicycle and pedestrian access to Kilauea Point NWR by acting as the liaison and official FWS representative to the contractor for the first phase (alternatives development) of this Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) project.
3. Advance a project at Kilauea Point NWR to conceptually re-design the Refuge overlook to best facilitate the implementation of a shuttle system and a potential bike/pedestrian access to the Point. In addition to these transportation components, a biological component will need to be considered in the re-design. A
nēnē (Hawaiian goose) corridor needs to be incorporated to allow nēnē to more safely move from the Point to Nīhoku (Crater Hill) during brood rearing.

4. Develop transportation goals and objectives.
5. Conduct background research and data analysis related to transportation planning at the sites.
6. Identify transportation needs and assist with prioritizing them.
7. Develop conceptual plans to manage transportation.
8. Assist and provide planning knowledge to site specific initiatives and projects.
10. Identify potential partnering and leveraging opportunities.

Skills and Qualifications:
1. Strong oral, writing, and graphic communication skills to interact with federal, state, and local agencies, interest groups, partners, FWS regional staff, and field staff.
2. Ability to establish and maintain positive professional relationships with a variety of agencies and the public.
3. Ability to assess transportation needs, evaluate and make priorities, and to modify or develop new approaches to solve transportation or access challenges.
4. Ability to assist with assembling grant applications with provided technical information, potentially handling multiple project submissions to meet several deadlines at once.

Financial Package:
- Assignment Period – 10 months on site and 1 month at home to write the final report
- Eligible for benefits, click here for details
- Salary: $3,000/per month, total of $33,000
- Housing will be provided by the refuge in a shared bunk house
- Relocation Expenses: Up to $750 to and from Kaua‘i for a maximum total of up to $1500
- On island transportation will be needed as bunk house is not located at unit. Details regarding on-island transportation are pending.