



COLORADO FOREST
RESTORATION INSTITUTE
Colorado State University

**Uncompaghre Plateau Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program:
High School Internship Programs
CFRI-1804**

The Uncompaghre Plateau CFLRP created three high school internship programs to fulfill the collaborative ecological effectiveness monitoring requirements for the CFLR program.

Forestry Internship Program (FIP)

The Forestry Internship Program (FIP) is an internship program based out of Montrose High School in Montrose, CO. The program aims to recruit high achieving students to gain insights, skills, and experience in forestry, ecology, and natural resource management as part of a paid summer internship experience.

The students perform data collection for monitoring of restoration treatment areas with the direction of the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute and with the aid of the U.S. Forest Service Ouray District. The Colorado Forest Restoration Institute analyzes and reports on this data to the collaborative about the ecological impacts of forest restoration treatments, an important component in adaptive management discussions and trust building amongst the collaborative. The program has several benefits, including:

Empowers and engages local youth in forestry and natural resource management:

- Students gain basic vocational skills and job experience
- Students gain other skills needed for natural resource jobs (i.e. first aid, navigation, etc.)
- Students gain knowledge of the ecology, history, and management of their region
- Students gain skills collecting ecological data and experience with the scientific process
- Students get to connect with natural resource professionals and gain insights into job opportunities



The 2016 Forestry Internship Program crew (from top left): Gavi Lightsey, Megan Hortkins, Lyle Motley (crew leader), Daniel Culver, and Logan Porter.

Fosters community engagement around forest health and management:

The FIP fosters and encourages land stewardship while providing opportunities to local students to explore and expand their career opportunities in natural resource or science fields. Students pass along stories and insights from their experiences in the internship program to family, friends, neighbors and classmates about the ecology and issues of forest health in their region. The students also have the opportunity to participate in the annual collaborative field trip and meetings, where they have additional learning and networking opportunities.

Creates opportunity for US Forest Service to recruit youth from local area:

Since the program's inception in 2008, >40 student interns have participated in the program, and >10 have gone on to pursue careers or education in natural resources or have worked locally for the US Forest Service. For example, Gavi Lightsey (pictured opposite), was a FIP intern in 2016 and has gone on to work for the local US Forest Service Ouray District on a timber crew for the past two years and is interested in pursuing a degree in forestry.

Provides data to the collaborative for use in adaptive management learning opportunities:

The Forestry Internship Program provides low-cost, but high quality data to the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI) to analyze the ecological and fire risk impacts of forest restoration treatments. This information is then reported by CFRI to the collaborative who can use this information in the adaptive management discussion, and managers can adjust future treatments accordingly.

Delta High School Apprenticeship in Science and Engineering Program

Each year, the Collaborative engages two to three students from Delta High School in Delta, CO to participate in a six-week internship program where they have the opportunity to learn about careers in public lands management and conduct independent scientific investigations. The first three weeks has students job shadowing Forest Service personnel to learn what they do and what career opportunities exist for youth in our community. The independent studies vary from year to year based on the interest of the student and the US Forest Service needs. In 2018, three students participated completing independent studies on cutthroat trout management, weed management and Gunnison sage-grouse. Over the eight years of the program approximately 20 students have participated. Three of these students used their projects in local, State and National Science Fair competitions. Twenty students have participated with one landing a full-ride scholarship to Drexel University.

Norwood High School Apprenticeship in Science and Engineering Program

The objective of the Norwood High School Internship Program is to introduce one student each year from the Norwood High School in Norwood, CO to the US Forest Service and have them assist with gathering data on birds and mammals. Each student assists in performing bird surveys in 5-8 separate locations using the Integrated Monitoring in Bird Conservation protocol. In addition to student performing bird surveys, students assist with setting up trail cameras to detect mammal use in forest treatments and nearby areas. This data is used by the US Forest Service and is reported to the collaborative. Ten students have participated in the program over the past eight years.

For more information, contact Marin Chambers at the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (marin.chambers@colostate.edu) or Todd Gardiner, Ouray Ranger District (tgardiner@fs.fed.us).



COLORADO FOREST
RESTORATION INSTITUTE
Colorado State University

