

Practicum Proposal

MS Environmental Policy and Management

Expected graduation: June 2019

Partner Organization (PO): Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)

Location: Sacramento, CA

Position: Intern

PO Supervisor: Eric Holst (EDF; Associate Vice President, Working Lands)

Practicum Supervisor: Mark Schwartz (UC Davis)

Timing: Summer 2018: June – September 2018, 35 hours/week [with possibility of continuation during some or all of the 2018-2019 academic year (part time)]

Credit: UC Davis ENV 296 Practicum Units (6) will either all be enrolled in for Fall 2018, or (depending on continuation of internship during academic year) will be dispersed throughout Fall 2018, Winter 2019, and Spring 2019 quarters.

PO Description: Environmental Defense Fund is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit environmental organization whose mission is to solve environmental problems in the United States and globally through solutions that benefit people and ultimately preserve and protect natural systems. Guided by science and economics, EDF's core values include results, respect, innovation, optimism, and integrity. Their work involves a multidisciplinary approach to solve problems on topics spanning the climate, oceans, ecosystems and health. EDF works with other organizations, businesses, government agencies, and communities.

Project description:

This summer internship will be comprised of three primary tasks.

(1) CA State Board of Food and Agriculture meeting

The CA State Board of Food and Agriculture is an advisory board to the governor and secretary that addresses key food and agricultural issues. The Board has a two-day meeting on July 31 and August 1 that will focus on agriculture in the Sierra Nevada (i.e. ranching, grazing, wine grapes), including the connection between Central Valley growers and those in the Sierra Nevada. My duties will be to assist in the planning of this meeting. I will coordinate speakers, ensure presentation material flows and relates to the meeting theme, and other tasks as needed. There may be potential follow-up in the form of information or meetings, and I will help provide necessary resources and/or planning.

(2) Whole Farm Plan

Farmers in the state of California must comply with several environmental regulations (e.g. water quality, air quality, etc.). Many farmers (especially small, family-run farms) are heavily burdened by the time and cost associated with compliance with these regulations. Meanwhile, environmental regulations may overlap or conflict. The Whole Farm Plan would streamline the permitting process without compromising environmental protection. A farmer would file a Whole Farm Plan with the state, and in exchange for overcompliance with environmental regulations, would be deemed “in compliance” with several regulations. This project is still in its early stages. My role would be to create a proposal for implementing this idea. This will involve tasks such as analysis of current policy, looking at similar models in other fields (e.g. forestry), evaluating associated costs, and determining feasibility. The final deliverable will be a proposal for the Whole Farm Plan, which may be submitted to the CDFG Secretary of Agriculture.

(3) Monarch and Pollinator Conservation

EDF currently has a program to engage farmers in planting species that support monarch (and other pollinator) species. This occurs through voluntary action or some monetary compensation. My role in this project will be to engage in farmer outreach. I will recruit farmers, which may involve traveling to engage farmers in person. There is also an opportunity for me to engage in the science, such as determining optimal seed mix for various locations.

These three projects fit into the mission of EDF by addressing environmental policy and farmer engagement needs in a way that promotes human well-being with biodiversity and ecosystem health. By engaging in these projects, I will help contribute to research, analysis, and outreach in important environmental needs.

These three projects fit into my career development objectives in terms of (a) building networks (project 1 and 3); developing expertise and leadership in sustainable agricultural practices (project 2 and 3); and develop an understanding how environmental challenges are approached from the non-profit sector (projects 1-3).

Career Goals: This practicum will further my career objectives by providing experience in environmental non-profits, and in working with environmental and agricultural topics. I will have several opportunities to network and engage with professionals in the environmental policy and agricultural fields. These projects will provide useful experience in policy analysis, economic analysis, communication, balancing environmental and human values/objectives, as well as farmer/rancher engagement.

Future Work: Upon completion of the internship, a final written report of practicum experience (i.e. accomplishments, advancement of career goals) will be submitted to the Practicum Supervisor.

Due Date: Final written report will be due to the Practicum Supervisor on the final day of instruction of Fall 2018 quarter, or the final day of instruction of Winter 2019 or Spring 2019 (depending on continuation of internship).

Final Review: The final written report will be reviewed and approved by the Practicum Supervisor and the Comprehensive Exam Committee (CEC).