



**Associate Vegetation Ecologist / Field Coordinator
California Native Plant Society
Job Announcement**

About CNPS

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) is a statewide non-profit conservation organization (www.cnps.org) founded in 1965, with almost 13,000 members in 35 chapters across California and Baja California Mexico. The mission of CNPS is to increase understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and conserve them and their natural habitats through scientific study, education, advocacy, horticulture, and land stewardship.

CNPS Vegetation Program

The CNPS Vegetation Program supports vegetation sampling, classification, mapping, and monitoring across California. Our statewide system has been developed over the past 25 years by CNPS and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and is used by both governmental and non-governmental institutions to map, categorize, describe, and rank rarity of vegetation. We also collaborate with a variety of other local, state and national entities on fine-scale mapping, long-term monitoring, and data analysis including with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)'s Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring program. At the heart of our efforts is *A Manual of California Vegetation*; originally a hard-copy reference, this resource is now available and regularly updated online.

Job Summary

CNPS is looking to hire an **Associate Vegetation Ecologist / Field Coordinator** as a full-time, non-exempt position that will be supervised by the Vegetation Field Data Specialist. There is potential to hire up to two individuals. The position(s) includes at least 9 months of work, beginning in February 2024, and the position(s) will likely be extended. The Associate Ecologist is responsible for supporting regional vegetation inventory, classification, mapping, and monitoring efforts in *northwestern California*, *central California*, and other areas through the coordination of field missions and the promotion of the [Manual of California Vegetation](#) and [Sensitive Natural Communities Initiative](#). Areas of focus for field work include Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and other counties in Central California. This is a remote position that requires the final applicants to be centrally located within California.

The position requires a detail-oriented individual to coordinate fieldwork and crews in vegetation inventory and mapping efforts, assist in vegetation fieldwork in key ecological regions, organize and integrate vegetation data in regional efforts, map and describe vegetation, and increase training, outreach, and communication on California's vegetation. The position will typically work independently and may direct 4+ staff, partners or volunteers, in the office or in the field. Other opportunities include training staff, students, or volunteers on data collection, data entry, and Geographic Information System (GIS) tasks using CNPS vegetation methods and related work (e.g., plant identification & specimen collection). Required travel and time in the field will account for 30% - 70% of annualized responsibilities. Field work is seasonal with the concentration of required travel occurring during Spring, Summer, and Fall.

What You'll Do

Office work

- Coordinate logistics and track progress on regional sampling and mapping projects in northwestern or central California
- Compile, organize, quality control, and synthesize vegetation data in databases and spreadsheets
- Manage, query, analyze and display spatial information using ESRI ArcPro, ArcMap, and other software
- Photo-interpret imagery for vegetation patterns; and perform enhanced lifeform or fine-scale vegetation mapping
- Use literature to research and describe vegetation and environmental factors
- Assist in vegetation ranking and webinars on classifying, mapping, and evaluating sensitive vegetation
- Summarize natural communities in *A Manual of California Vegetation* and in written reports.

Field work

- Support ongoing fieldwork of field staff and partners on vegetation classification and mapping efforts. Coordination effort may be either:
 - a) coordinating 3 field crews who will be conducting BLM AIM riparian & wetland samples across California (with emphasis in northern and eastern California, or
 - b) coordinating 1-3 field crews who will be conducting CNPS-CDFW vegetation samples in central and southern California.
- Conduct vegetation sampling and training in regional projects across California
- Recognize patterns and stands of vegetation and identify them using diagnostic keys
- Identify plants using taxonomic keys, hand lens, and dissecting microscope.

Who You Are

Data & office skills:

- Strong organizational, verbal and written communication, analytical, and computer skills (Windows Operating System, Microsoft Word, Excel, and email)
- Experience coordinating with staff, partners, landowners, and stakeholders to build relationships, obtain land access, and facilitate consensus on collaborative projects
- Experience coordinating surveys, mapping and the description of California's diverse vegetation
 - Experience coordinating field work for at least 2 to 4 staff across project areas that span broad areas (e.g., across multiple park units or > 1 million acres) for at least 2 years
- Ability to work independently, communicate effectively, and coordinate daily tasks of others
- Ability to maintain and manage accurate records in digital and hard-copy formats
- Skill at describing and representing vegetation in classification, mapping, and in written reports
- Proficiency with databases and/or spreadsheets to quality control, manipulate, and manage data, with at least 2 years of data quality control and other data management experience
- At least 3 years of experience with GIS, such as ESRI ArcMap, ArcPro, Field Maps, and Survey123 to implement GIS tools, and to provide displays digitally, in reports, and querying online
- At a minimum, an undergrad degree in botany, ecology, environmental science, or related field.

Field skills:

- Familiarity with plants and plant communities throughout California with a northern California (e.g., Modoc Plateau, eastside of Sierra Nevada) or central California (e.g., Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara Co.) emphasis, with ability to sight identify 100+ CA plants
- At least 3 years of experience conducting vegetation sampling, such as the CNPS vegetation rapid assessment/relevé protocol or the BLM Assessment Inventory & Monitoring protocol
- Ability to identify live and pressed plants, using the *Jepson Manual* and other floras
- Experience in training staff on vegetation sampling methods and ArcGIS Online functions
- Ability to use GPS (Global Positioning System) or other mobile units and field gear (e.g., compass, rangefinder, binoculars, tape measures, camera)
- Ability to interpret hard copy and digital topographic / aerial maps and perform field sampling missions
- Ability to work individually and in teams on field data collection in varied conditions, including inclement weather, rugged terrain, poison oak, and other potentially toxic plants
- Ability to drive 4X4 vehicles over variable terrain and to ride in and/or drive ATV/OHV.

Education:

- An undergraduate degree in biology, botany, ecology, environmental science, or a related field is required

Nice To Have's

While CNPS recognizes that not every individual will exhibit all of these characteristics, the successful candidate will possess at least one – and ideally more than one – of the following:

- A master's or higher degree is preferred
- Data analysis experience using PC-Ord, R, or Python to assist in classification and GIS analyses
- Fluency in Spanish or other languages spoken in California
- Knowledge of CNPS; ability to manage complex projects independently and efficiently
- Expertise in recognizing and determining wetland plants and soil characteristics
- Enthusiasm, positive attitude, and ability to work well in dynamic, team settings and a commitment to the values of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice.

Physical Requirements

This job requires prolonged sitting and computer use to facilitate administrative responsibilities, and the ability to participate in fieldwork including standing, hiking, driving, carrying gear (up to 1/3 of your body weight), and traveling off-trail in sites with variable grade. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions.

Additional Information

- Office work schedule is generally eight hours a day, Monday through Friday. Flexible schedules are possible.
- Fieldwork schedules may be rigorous (e.g. 10 hours/day during 4- or 7-day stints, with camping remotely or staying at motels/home rentals overnight)
- A valid driver's license is required.
- While working remotely, project work will be in northern California (e.g., Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Siskiyou, Trinity, etc. counties) or in Central California (e.g., Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties), with support from the main CNPS office in Sacramento, CA.

What you'll get

- Hourly rate of \$31.51 – \$33.96

- 100% of employee premiums for health (Kaiser or Anthem), life, dental, and vision insurance
- 401(k) retirement plan with up to 6% matching contributions, eligible immediately
- Annual paid leave benefits include 13 holidays, 12 sick/wellness days, and 10 paid vacation days
- 16 weeks paid parental leave, after 12 months
- Optional flexible spending account (FSA) / health savings account (HSA), dependent care account (DCA) and/or transportation savings account (TSA)
- A CNPS-issued laptop, field-gear and remote work stipends
- \$750 office/equipment stipend
- Biannual company events

Equal Opportunity Policy

CNPS's policy is to afford equal employment opportunity to all persons, regardless of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, marital status, medical condition, military or veteran status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. This policy demonstrates CNPS's commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive environment that values different perspectives and fosters belonging. To better understand the demographic profile of applicants, CNPS requests candidates to fill out the volunteer questionnaire that is part of the application form. Your responses will remain confidential, anonymized, and not shared with the hiring committee.

To Apply

Submit a cover letter and résumé/CV here. Please include any pertinent information, including professional and personal experience, that is relevant to the position. The deadline to apply is **January 2, 2024**.