**Postdoctoral Research Associate**

*Linking Genetics to Movements of White-tailed deer to Assist Surveillance for Chronic Wasting Disease.*

We seek a postdoctoral researcher using landscape genetics to understand landscape features, dispersal characteristics, and transmission and spread of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in white-tailed deer through assessment of population structure throughout a region. This is the culmination of a research effort that was initiated in 2014 in the Mid-Atlantic region to identify the frequency and distribution of prion gene variants (PRNP) and use of microsatellite genotypes collected from free-ranging white-tailed deer. Previous published research encompassed over 2,000 individual deer genotyped within the CWD core areas of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. This project will expand this effort statewide in Pennsylvania and New York state to increase our understanding of the potential genetic basis of disease risk and potential disease transmission pathways at the landscape level for several areas of known or anticipated CWD occurrence. This project aligns with FY20 EMA annual guidance, and will be funded by the USGS RFP priority: Chronic Wasting Disease: Research to investigate the impact of genetics on CWD dynamics in cervid populations.

The successful candidate will be part of an interdisciplinary group that includes ecologists, geneticists, veterinarians, and state agency researchers. This full-time position is located at The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania or remotely depending on the candidate’s preference. The selected candidate must agree to follow all Covid-19 safety guidelines and protocols established by the university. This is a one-year appointment, with an additional year possible pending performance and funding availability. Start date is flexible and dependent upon hiring process but ideally within a month or two of offer.

Salary: $60,000/year plus excellent benefits.

Closing date: 1 week

Qualifications: Competitive candidates should be highly motivated and possess a PhD in spatial ecology of mammalian species and disease epidemiology or a related discipline with a strong quantitative emphasis. Specific experience with landscape genetics or population genetics is preferred. The ability to work both independently and collaboratively in a team environment is essential. Submission to or publishing in peer-reviewed journals is required and mandatory prior to any potential renewal beyond the one-year appointment. Experience with Program R and Bayesian methodologies is required. Please provide: (1) a cover letter detailing your experiences for the qualifications above and how they have prepared you for this position, (2) a CV, (3) names and contact information of three professional references, and (4) two relevant publications. Please submit these materials to Dr. W. David Walter via email (wdw12@psu.edu) as a single pdf.

For more information, contact Dr. W. David Walter at wdw12@psu.edu; 814-867-4763.