Japanese Stiltgrass Control Project Internships - August 2019

The Town of Conway Massachusetts Open Space Committee seeks 2 interns for the month of August for ongoing monitoring and control of Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*). Interns will work as a team to take inventory, map infestations, remove stiltgrass, and help educate landowners to identify and control of this destructive, invasive annual grass.

Japanese stiltgrass was first discovered growing along Conway’s roadsides in 2007. Beginning in 2008, a control program was initiated as an “Early Detection/Rapid Response” effort. The Town of Conway has partnered with the Silvio O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife Refuge, the New England Wild Flower Society, and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. Interns will be supervised by Conway Open Space committee members under the guidance of staff from agencies involved in the project.

This field research opportunity should be of interest to students studying Forestry, Wildlife Biology, Environmental Conservation, Plant Ecology, Natural Resources Conservation, or Environmental Science.

**Employment Period:** August 5-30, 2019, 15-20 hours per week.

**Salary:** $12 per hour.

**Location:** Conway is located on Route 116, 15 miles west of Amherst. Interns must provide their own housing and transportation but will be reimbursed for work mileage within Conway.

**Duties**

- Conduct inventory in previously mapped areas of infestation.
- Walk/drive Conway roadsides to inspect for new infestations and identify likely areas for off-road inspection.
- Collect GPS data to add to ongoing mapping.
- Hand-pull grass, or string-trim larger infestations (no chemical controls used).
- Participate in public "pulling events," and train/lead volunteers.
- Interact with landowners to explain best control methods and offer to inspect property.

**Qualifications**

- Excellent plant ID skills a must!
- Coursework or practical experience with GPS and GIS highly desirable.
- Detail-oriented, and able to follow directions.
- Able to make careful field observations and record them accurately.
- A good sense of direction and capable of working unsupervised along roadsides and in the forest for extended periods of time.
- Willing to work off-trail in woodlands under adverse environmental conditions (heat, rain, insects, poison ivy).
- Capable of operating a gas-powered string trimmer.
- Good communication skills, comfortable speaking with landowners and curious citizens.

To Apply:

Email to **Michele Turre, Town of Conway Open Space Committee**, mturre@umass.edu:

1. Cover letter explaining why this internship interests you.
2. Resume listing pertinent experience and relevant coursework.
3. Names and contact information (email and phone number) for two references (including at least one academic reference).
4. An unofficial transcript.