



GEOSCIENTISTS IN FORESTS PROGRAM

Applicant Information Webinar

JANUARY 8, 2026



GEOSCIENTISTS IN FORESTS (GSF) TEAM



Lima Soto

National Caves and Karst
Program Manager &
GSF Program Manager



Justin Wilkins

Paleontologist &
GSF Program Assistant



Geoff Elliot

Executive Director
Stewards Individual Placements
Conservation Legacy



James Gasaway

Program Director
Stewards Individual Placements
Conservation Legacy

- Stewards Individual Placements is a Conservation Legacy program
- Hosts 600+ individual placements annually with NPS, USFS, and other land management partners
- Lead for participant engagement, supervisor support, and position administration.



ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES



FS Lands, Minerals, & Geology

Program strategy and planning
Site selection
Educational opportunities/
resources
Allocating Funding



Programmatic Lead

Position development/recruitment
Member/Site
onboarding/orientation
Administrative partner
Member/site support
Recruitment Support



FS Unit Mentor

Candidate review, interview,
selection
On-site orientation and training
Day-to-day supervision/mentorship
End of term evaluation



INTRODUCTION

- Geoscientists in Forests (GSF) is a new Forest Service (FS) program.
- Partnership between WO Lands, Minerals, & Geology with Conservation Legacy.
- Specializes in AmeriCorps service opportunities that address geoscience-related needs and management priorities.
- Designed for individuals aged 18-30 and veterans up to age 35.



PROGRAM GOALS

- Address critical geoscience needs on National Forest System lands;
- Foster geoscience career growth to support mineral and energy development in alignment with the administration's priorities;
- Provide on-the-ground geoscience training and immersive paid developmental experience for emerging geoscience professionals under Forest Service mentorship.





PROGRAM BENEFITS

- **Compensation (\$700/week)**
- **Technical Assistance to Units:** participants provide knowledge, experience, and innovative solutions to complete mission-critical projects.
- **Professional Development:** participants develop professional skills under the mentorship of FS staff.
- **Noncompetitive Hiring Eligibility:** participants have the ability to earn a 2-year Public Lands (PLC) Noncompetitive hiring certificate.
- **AmeriCorps Education Award**
- **Time-Off (personal leave, holiday, sick)** – Varies by position length



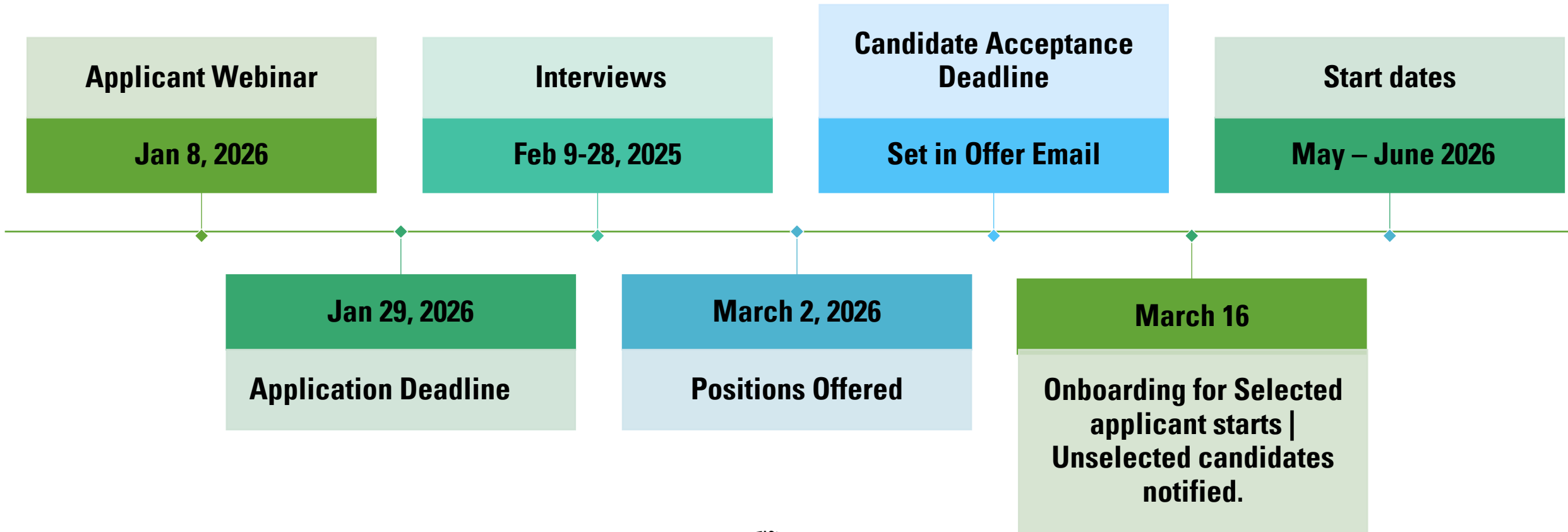


PARTICIPANTS ELIGIBILITY

- U.S. Citizens or Legal Permanent Residents (Green Card Holders).
- At least 18 years old, and to be eligible for PLC certificate, must start project while age 30 or under, or if a military veteran, age 35 or under.
- Able to pass a federal background and employment background check.
- Possess a valid driver's license and a good driving record (if the GSF needs to drive a government vehicle during their position).
- Each position includes preferred qualifications relevant to the specific project scope.



APPLICANT TIMELINE



2026 PROJECTS

Geology

Geology Technician Assistant

Pike-San Isabel National Forests & Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands (Colorado)

Abandoned Mine Lands Technical Support Assistant

Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest (Idaho)

Field Technician/Abandoned Mine Assistant

Idaho Panhandle National Forests (Idaho)

Physical Scientist Technician Assistant

Superior National Forest (Minnesota)

Mining and Geology Program Assistant

Cleveland National Forest (California)

Minerals, Geohazards and Geologic Resources Assistant

Bridger-Teton National Forest (Wyoming)

Geotechnical & Geohazards

Soil, Water, and Geologic Hazard Inventory

Hoosier National Forest (Indiana)

Hydrogeology

~~**Watershed and Geology Program Assistant (FILLED)**~~

~~George Washington & Jefferson National Forests~~

Hydrology Technical Assistant

Tongass National Forest (Alaska)

Cave & Karst

~~**Guadalupe Cave Technician Assistant (FILLED)**~~

~~Lincoln National Forest (New Mexico)~~

Forest Cave Mapping Assistant

Mark Twain National Forest (Missouri)

Karst Resource Assistant

Tongass National Forest (Alaska)

Cave Interpretive Assistant


Tongass National Forest (Alaska)

HOW TO APPLY

[HTTPS://STEWARDSLEGACY.ORG/GEOSCIENTISTS-IN-FORESTS](https://stewardslegacy.org/geoscientists-in-forests)


A PROGRAM OF CONSERVATION LEGACY

NEWSLETTER SIGNUP



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GEOSCIENTISTS IN FORESTS



The USDA Forest Service Lands, Minerals and Geology (LMG) office in partnership with the Conservation Legacy and the Geological Society of America (GSA) is pleased to announce the Geoscientists in Forests (GSF) Program offering paid workforce development opportunities to emerging geoscientists that leverage Agency capacity to conduct geologic work.

2026 Geoscientists in Forests Openings.

Recruitment for 2026 Geoscientists in Forests positions is now open. Recruitment will close on January 29, 2026.

POSITION TITLE	FOREST SERVICE UNIT	LOCATION	LENGTH OF SERVICE	HOUSING PROVIDED	LINK TO APPLY
Mining and Geology Program Assistant	Cleveland National Forest	San Diego, CA	26 Weeks	No	Apply Here
Field Technician/ Abandoned Mine Hunter	Idaho Panhandle National Forests	Couer d'Alene, ID	16 Weeks	Yes	Apply Here
Physical Scientists Technician	Superior National Forest	Ely, MN	12 Weeks	Yes	Apply Here
Cave Guide	Tongass National Forest, Thorne Bay Ranger District	Thorne Bay, AK	12 Weeks	Yes	Apply Here
Karst Resource Assistant	Tongass National Forest, Thorne Bay Ranger District	Thorne Bay, AK	12 Weeks	Yes	Apply Here
Hydrology Technical Assistant	Tongass National Forest, Thorne Bay/Craig Ranger District	Craig, AK	12 Weeks	Yes	Apply Here
Soil, Water, and Geologic Hazard Inventory Assistant	Hoosier National Forest	Bedford, IN	12 Weeks	No	Apply Here
Cave Management Specialist	Mark Twain National Forest	Rolla, MO	12 Weeks	No	Apply Here
Abandoned Mine Lands Technical Support	Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest	Kamiah, ID	12 Weeks	Yes	Apply Here



CRAFTING A STRONG APPLICATION

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- **Tailor Your Application:**

- Highlight skills and experiences that align with program.
- Address how you meet or exceed requirements.

- **Be Thorough and Clear:**

- Double-check that all sections are complete.
- Proofread for spelling and grammar errors.

- **Showcase Your Passion:**

- Use your application questionnaire to share your enthusiasm for the program and its impact on your goals.

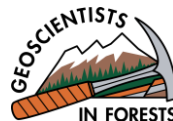
Use specific examples to demonstrate your achievements and contributions:

Situation

Task

Action

Result



HIGHLIGHTING YOUR UNIQUE STRENGTHS

STAND OUT IN YOUR APPLICATION

- **Emphasize Your Unique Value:**
 - What sets you apart? Reflect on unique experiences, skills, or perspectives.
 - Tie your strengths directly to the program's goals.
- **Quantify Your Achievements:**
 - Use data or specific examples to showcase impact (e.g., "Increased efficiency by 20%" or "Led a team of five on a successful project").
- **Show Alignment:**
 - Demonstrate how your goals align with the program's mission or values.

Use action verbs and concise language in your application to convey confidence and professionalism:

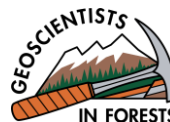
Investigated

Developed

Synthesized

Validated

Modeled



COMMON MISTAKES AND FINAL ADVICE

AVOID THE COMMON PITFALLS

- **Avoiding Pitfalls:**

- Missing the deadline – submit early to account for technical issues.
- Providing generic or incomplete answers.
- Overlooking the character limits or other requirements for short answer questions.

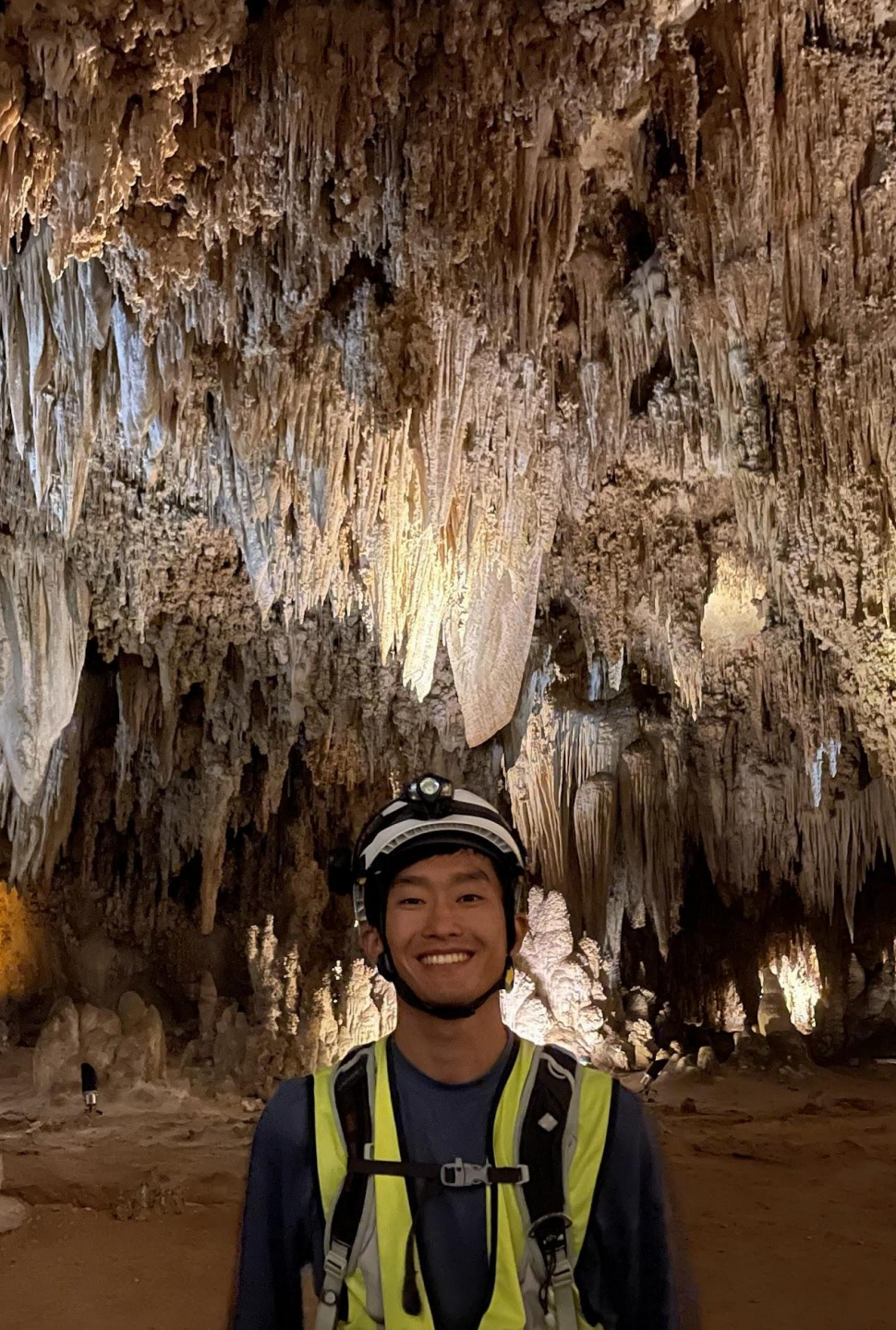
- **Final Advice:**

- Seek feedback from a mentor or colleague on any part of the application where you think extra eyes could help you.
- Use the resources provided by the program for clarification.

Your application is your story—tell it with confidence and care!

Don't undervalue the possible sources of your knowledge and experience (i.e., volunteering, clubs, etc.)





BASICS OF CREATING A RESUME

Choose the Right Format

- Chronological: Focus on work history
- Functional: Highlight skills
- Combination: Mix of both

Key Sections

- Header: Name, contact info, LinkedIn/portfolio (optional)
- Summary/Objective: Brief overview of skills or career goals
- Skills: Relevant technical and soft skills

- Experience: List jobs (most recent first) with accomplishments
- Education: Degree, school, and certifications

Customization

- Tailor your resume to match the job description

Professional Look

- Simple fonts, 1 page (2 max), no excessive graphics

Proofread

- Check for grammar, spelling, and formatting errors.



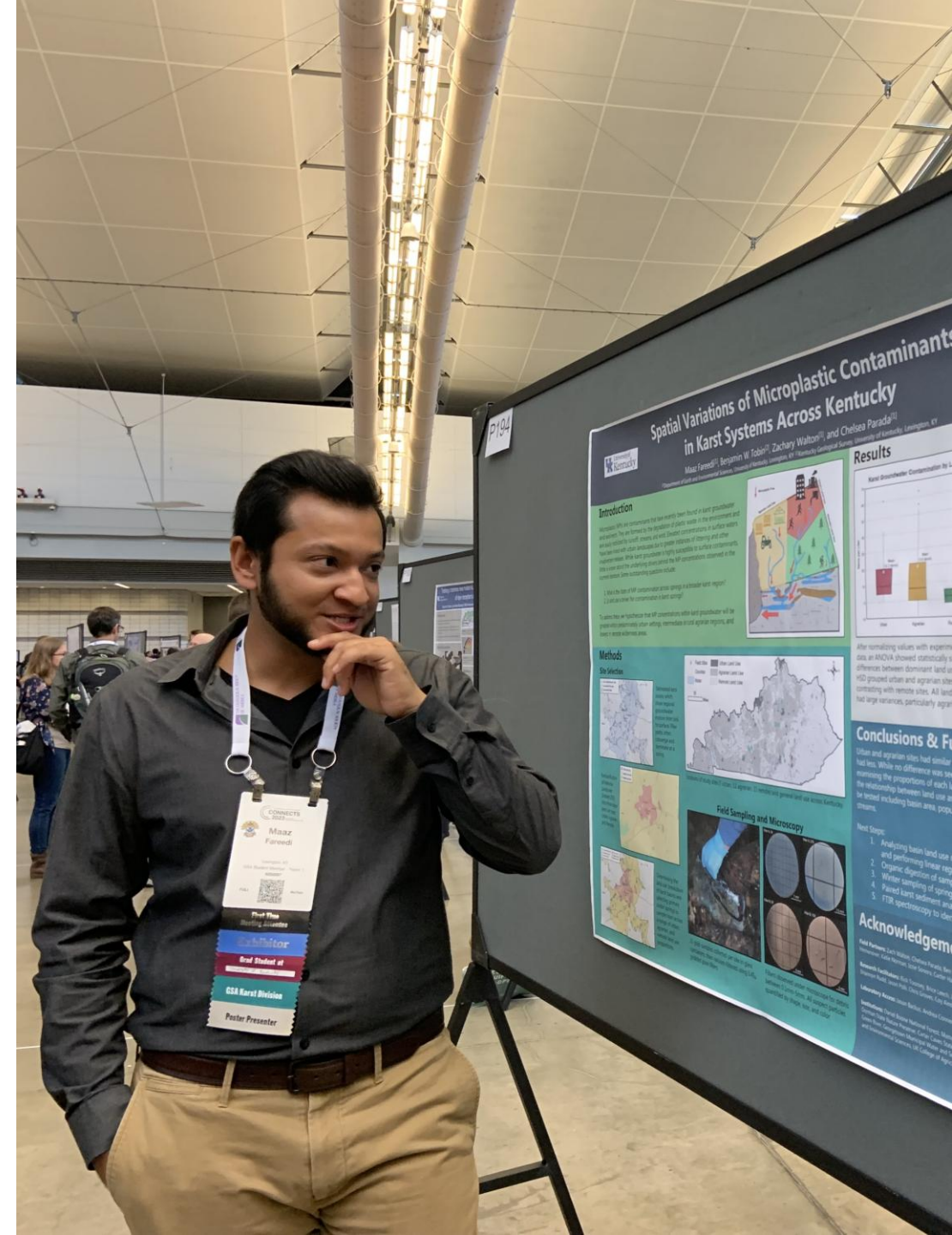
WHAT ELSE DO YOU BRING TO THE TABLE?

- Hobbies
- Volunteer experience
- Public speaking
- Diving/SCUBA certified
- Wilderness first aid
- CPR
- Climbing
- Amateur astronomer
- Backpacking experience
- Off road driving/ATV
- Wilderness experience
- Multilingual



CREATE A LINKEDIN PROFILE

- Business and employment-focused social media platform.
- Mostly used for business, federal hiring managers are starting to use it.
- It helps you connect with other colleagues that are doing similar work.
- Be sure customize your URL www.linkedin.com/in/XXX-XX and add that to your resume or application.
- Your social media is important, be careful with what you put out there!



GUEST PANELIST

CHAD HARROLD

2023-2024 GeoCorps Mentor

2025-2026 Geoscientist Mentor

2012-2016 National Park Service (Big South Fork)

- Physical Science Technician (Term)
- GIS Specialist/Geologist

2016-2022 Forest Service (Tonto)

- Geologist/Cave Manager

2022-Present Forest Service (R8/George Washington & Jefferson)

- Geologist/Regional Cave and Karst Coordinator

Highlights

- Cooperative Agreement with VA. Dept. of Conservation & Recreation
- Regional Cave database manager
- Cave and karst survey/inventory for 16 Forest Units
- Sub-Regional Minerals Program Coordinator
- Wildland Fire Resource Advisor



CONTACT INFORMATION

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<https://stewardslegacy.org/geoscientists-in-forests>





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