



Lake Superior Freshwater Fellowship Program Seeks Undergraduate Applicants

The Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve in Superior, WI is excited to announce the seventh year of the Lake Superior Freshwater Fellowship Program. The Freshwater Fellowship presents an exciting opportunity for an undergraduate student to independently craft and conduct research under the guidance of a mentor at the Lake Superior Reserve. With a focus on the St. Louis River Estuary, Lake Superior, and the surrounding community, this Fellowship provides a professional development experience that trains students in coastal and estuarine research, education, training, and stewardship. One student will be selected each year to conduct and communicate research to a variety of audiences. Research will align with the Reserve's ongoing projects and research. This year, we are especially interested in finding a student eager to conduct muskrat surveys, but other projects can range across disciplines, so **all majors are encouraged to apply**.

About the Lake Superior Reserve:

The Lake Superior Reserve, designated in 2010 by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is one of a system of 30 Research Reserves nationwide committed to long-term research, education, outreach, and stewardship to improve the understanding of coastal systems and the practice of coastal management. The Reserve has a conference room, exhibit hall, offices, and laboratory on the waterfront in Superior, WI and is a fun and dynamic place to work. You can explore more at the Reserve's website www.lakesuperiornerr.org.

Freshwater Fellowship Elements:

- Develop, conduct, and disseminate an independently led research project
 - develop a project proposal
 - create and carryout research methods
 - Present project findings locally or regionally at a conference, meeting, or public event
- Gain experience with Lake Superior Reserve programs and partnerships
 - Support education and outreach programs and public events
 - Work with the Coastal Training Program Coordinator on workshop and training development
 - Support the Research and System-Wide Monitoring Programs in the field and laboratory
 - Assist the reserve manager with a community partnership or leadership activity
 - Participate in land and water stewardship activities

- Work closely with a Lake Superior Reserve mentor and participate in networking opportunities to further academic and career goals

Position Details:

- We are offering an 8-month position (May – December 2026) located at the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve, 14 Marina Dr., Superior, WI 54880.
- Expected start date is May 18, 2026 but is flexible with applicant's academic schedule.
- The position is 25-40 hours per week during the summer and 4-8 hours per week during Fall academic semester
- Pay is \$16.00 per hour at minimum.
- Position is open to all majors and international students

Eligibility and Minimum Qualifications:

- Must be actively enrolled in an undergraduate institution during the Fall 2026 semester and be in good academic standing. The applicant should be of at least sophomore standing as of May 2026. All majors encouraged.
- Reliable work ethic and dedication to learning.
- Able to work in a collaborative office environment.
- Capable of completing tasks independently.
- Knowledge and skills to effectively interact with people from different cultural backgrounds, including those associated with race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, socioeconomic status, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and other aspects of human diversity.

Applications:

Applications will be evaluated on a rolling basis until April 1st, 2026. To apply for this position please email your resume and a cover letter to Hannah Nicklay (Hannah.nicklay@wisc.edu). The cover letter should include why you are interested in the position as well as address these two questions:

1. What experiences have prepared you to take on an independent research project?
2. What specific research topic(s) are you interested in pursuing?

If you have any questions related to the position or how to apply, please call 715-399-4088.

More Information:

For more information about the National Estuarine Research Reserve System and the Lake Superior Reserve visit <https://coast.noaa.gov/nerrs/> and <https://lakesuperiornerr.org/>.

Research Topics

Topics include but are not limited to; muskrat surveys, water quality monitoring, phytoplankton ecology, teaching youth outside and more. We invite creative ideas that relate to the St. Louis River Estuary.

Previous Student Research Projects:

Rylee Burkhart (2025). **Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs) Dynamics in Mixing Zones of Lake Superior**

Janae Widiker (2024). **Accuracy of Rapid Test Strips for the Detection of the Cyanotoxin Microcystin-LR**

Hana Gebretsadik (2023). **Development of an easy wetland plant identification tool for Pokegama Bay.**

Basith Nasik (2022). **Effectiveness of a constructed wetland in reducing microplastic pollution**

Cole Wilson (2021). **Assessing avian abundance and richness in structurally diverse, black ash wetlands**

Hannah Burgstaler (2020). **Documenting Water Depth Fluctuation and Waterfowl Occurrence within Wild Rice Beds in the St. Louis River Estuary**

Jenny Sherren (2019). **Effectiveness of Light-Based Traps in the Early Detection of Bloody Red Shrimp (*Hemimysis anomala*) in Lake Superior**

Hansen, Sam (2018). **Effect of Water Recreation on Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) Abundance in Northern Wild Rice (*Zizania palustris*) Bays.**