The Department of Environment and Society at Utah State University is seeking a highly qualified candidate committed to pursuing graduate research investigating the economic impact and visitor experiences of Utah’s night skies. The successful applicant’s research will be focused on:

1) Quantifying the economic impacts of night sky recreation to Utah’s economy and the economies of all 29 counties within the state; and
2) Identifying the motivations, perceptions, and experiences of dark sky recreationists within Utah.

The successful candidate will work under the co-advisement of Drs. Jordan W. Smith and Zach Miller. The successful candidate should have a strong desire to engage in rigorous social science research using a diverse set of methodologies.

Responsibilities
- Actively engage with an applied research team that includes social scientists as well as national and state park managers.
- Conduct literature reviews, collect and analyze data, and disseminate results through academic (peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations) and non-academic (websites, workshops, etc.) outlets.
- Maintain good graduate standing and make satisfactory progress toward completion of the Ph.D. degree.

Support
The research assistantship is funded at 20-hour per week. The position includes a competitive stipend, tuition, health insurance benefits, and funding for conference travel. The research assistantship is funded annually and is renewable each year based on satisfactory progress.

The Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism
The successful candidate will work out of the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism. The mission of the Institute is to provide resource management personnel, elected officials, private industry, and the general public with a better understanding of the social and economic trade-offs faced by communities who manage outdoor recreation resources and tourism destinations. Since the Institute was founded in 1998, it has been awarded millions of dollars in externally funded research grants, maintained an active extension program with communities and outdoor recreation managers throughout the Intermountain West, and trained some of the nation’s leading outdoor recreation resource managers.

Qualifications
Potential candidates must meet admission standards and be fully accepted into one of the Department of Environment and Society’s MS programs. Candidates must have very positive recommendations from previous positions. Prior undergraduate research experience is preferable.

Application Deadline  Start Date
April 1, 2020  Fall 2020

Application Process
Interested students are encouraged to contact Drs. Miller and Smith to learn more about the research. To apply, send a current CV and 1-page letter of interest to:

Dr. Jordan W. Smith  Dr. Zach Miller
Director, Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism  Assistant Professor of Recreation Resource Management
Department of Environment and Society  Department of Environment and Society
Utah State University  Utah State University
jordan.smith@usu.edu  zachary.miller@usu.edu