

Summer 2025 Sustainability Scholars Program Internship Opportunity

The UBC Sustainability Hub is pleased to offer current UBC graduate students the opportunity to work on sustainability internship projects. Successful candidates work under the guidance of a mentor from the partner organization, and are immersed in real world learning where they can apply their research skills and contribute to advancing sustainability across the region. The pay rate for the summer 2025 program is \$31.25/hour or \$7,812.50 for a 250-hour project.

- Visit the [Sustainability Scholars Program website](#) to learn [how the program works](#) and to [apply](#).
- Be sure to review the application guide on the Apply page to confirm your eligibility before applying.

Applications close at 11:59 pm on Sunday January 26, 2025.

Project title: Research to locate and compare spatial datasets for mapping primary forests across Canada

Project Background & Overview:

Forests in Canada contain some of the highest proportions of intact and primary forest remaining on earth, although these are shrinking due to resource extraction (e.g., logging, oil and gas, mining), fragmentation (e.g., by road development), and effects of global climate change (e.g., increase in fire frequency and insect outbreaks).

To track progress against Canada's conservation targets and international commitments, it is important to have clarity and consensus around the extent of primary forests in Canada. Significant and valuable work has been done to map intact forest landscapes, caribou habitat, high carbon stocks and other high conservation value forests in Canada. However, there are no maps depicting primary forests in Canada, as there has not been a clear operational definition for them.

This project will help advance WWF-Canada's work on mapping primary forests, which is an important step towards protecting and stewarding high value primary forests that are vital in mitigating climate change and biodiversity loss.

Project description

WWF-Canada has undertaken a literature review of criteria for defining primary forests in Canada and a review of the available Canada-wide datasets that could support the creation of a primary forests map. However, given that management of lands and resources is under provincial jurisdiction, forest data often exists at a sub-national rather than national scale. The challenge is to identify what relevant data exists in each province and territory, and where the gaps are.

This project will review the available datasets on a provincial, territorial, and regional basis that could be used to map primary forests, and create recommendations for a data collection

methodology to address any gaps. This includes government-produced datasets, those produced by researchers in the scientific literature, and any other datasets such as those produced by conservation groups. The scholar will also create a compiled national dataset of any available provincial and territorial historical forest harvest areas. If time permits, there will be an option for the student to work with WWF-Canada staff to use the datasets they identify and the workflow outlined in the literature review to generate primary forest maps for British Columbia and Ontario.

This work will help inform WWF-Canada's efforts to produce a Canada-wide map of primary forests, which is an important first step towards protecting and stewarding high-value primary forests.

Project scope

1. Review of all available provincial, territorial, and regional datasets in Canada that could be used to map primary forests.
2. Analysis of the data gaps, data specifications, differences between datasets and challenges with dataset compatibility for use to create a national primary forest map.
3. Recommendations for a data collection methodology to address any data gaps.
4. Creation of a compiled national dataset and map of all available provincial and territorial historical forest harvest areas. This will include data cleaning and ensuring dataset compatibility.
5. If time permits, there will be an option for the student to work with WWF-Canada staff to use the datasets they identify and the workflow outlined in the literature review to generate primary forest maps for British Columbia and Ontario.

Deliverables

- A final report comprising a list and summary of all available datasets for each province and territory in Canada, and any relevant regional datasets. The report will include a section outlining any data gaps, data specifications, differences between datasets, challenges with dataset compatibility and related recommendations for creating a national primary forest map.
- A compiled national dataset and map of all available provincial and territorial historical forest harvest areas. This should include detailed methods and metadata where relevant.
- A final report for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#).

Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 hours to complete
- This project must be completed between May 1 to August 15.
- The Scholar is to complete their hours between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 17 to 20 hours per week.
- The Scholar will be supervised remotely and will interact with other WWF-Canada staff remotely. If the scholar prefers to work in a WWF-Canada office, they will have access to the Victoria office located at 259—560 Johnson St. Victoria, BC.

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Demonstrated experience using GIS software for dataset exploration (e.g., ArcGIS, QGIS).
- Data collection
- Comfortable working with large data sets
- Experience working with data, including geospatial data, and using data for analysis
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Familiarity with conducting online research
- Background or interest in forestry/habitat mapping, an asset

Applications close at **11:59 pm Sunday January 26, 2025**

Apply here: [Click here to apply](#)

Contact Karen Taylor at sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca if you have questions

Useful Resources

We are holding a special **resume preparation workshop for prospective Scholars** on January 21, 2025. [Click here for details and to register.](#)

Below are some links to useful resources to help you with your resume and cover letter (there are many more online). Some of these resources also provide information on preparing for your interview.

<https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources/resumes-cover-letters-curricula-vitae>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/graduate-pathways-success>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/cover-letter-cv-resume-templates-ubc-career-services>