Job Title: Associate Scientist – Solar Wildlife Interactions

Organizational overview:
Wildlands Network is a growing non-profit organization that is committed to reconnecting, restoring and rewilding North America so that life in all its diversity can thrive. We have staff in the United States and Mexico, working with NGO partners, landowners, elected officials and government agencies to protect, maintain, and restore wildlife habitat and connectivity for wildlife. Our western program covers the four corners states of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado.

General Description

For the past three years, Wildlands Network has been conducting research on wildlife, with specific emphasis on pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) in New Mexico and Arizona to understand the effects of utility-scale solar on mammalian species. With funding from the U.S. Department of Energy, we aim to provide novel insights and create tools for wildlife agencies, land managers, and developers that will benefit wildlife by informing the future siting of renewable energy projects in ways that avoid or mitigate their effects on large mammals. Our research has employed diverse methods including tracking 75 pronghorn using GPS collars and

noninvasive methods including trail cameras, drones, and visual observations, at 1 comparison site and 1 site near a previously constructed solar facility and ongoing solar construction.

We are seeking an Associate Scientist to work with our existing staff to expedite analysis, writing, and product development of current information. The Associate Scientist will work with the project's principal investigator, and other Wildlands Network staff, to conduct analyses and assist in bringing final products to fruition within the timelines of the ongoing project. We expect that the successful applicant will have a strong record of conducting independent research and analysis, excellent writing skills, and a demonstrated ability to produce products on a firm deadline. The Associate Scientist will be given opportunities to identify and evaluate novel ideas or analyses within the scope of our work. Though research backgrounds and analytical skills may be varied, we expect the Associate Scientist to have a strong research background in at least one of the following: home range estimation, resource selection functions, step-selection functions or other movement-based models, occupancy analyses or analytical approaches to evaluate the effects of solar on wildlife through noninvasive methods, ungulate ecology and habitat requirements, or evaluation of the effects of energy development or construction on ungulate movements or habitat use. We anticipate that the Associate Scientist will lead or assist with at least 2 peer-reviewed publications with opportunities to lead or collaborate on other products or tools based on interest and time.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Work collaboratively with project PI and other staff to identify appropriate analyses and products.
- Use GPS or noninvasive data to evaluate effects on wildlife from the construction and presence of utility-scale solar on pronghorn or other mammalian species.
- Compare effectiveness of noninvasive methods for medium and large mammals in desert ecosystems.
- Assist with interpretation, analysis, writing, of other related products.
- Use results from analyses to develop recommendations to stakeholders on mitigation or design of solar for wildlife.
- Collaborate with other staff to develop proposals for new research.
- Present results of research and analyses and national and international conferences.
- Publish findings from analyses in scientific journals and create industry-based recommendations or guidance on solar development and design for wildlife.

Required Qualifications:

- Ph.D. in wildlife biology, ecology, conservation biology or related field.
- Demonstrated ability in using research design and analytical methods to evaluate and quantify the effects of habitat or development on wildlife.
- Experience scripting or coding in R, Python, or other software packages.
- Strong background in spatial analyses using programs such as ArcGIS Pro.

- Curiosity, diligence, and desire to independently solve problems.
- Ability to work within deadlines and complete objectives on time.
- Demonstrated ability to write and present scientific literature including a strong publication record.
- Ability to work collaboratively with a large partner group.

Other desirable qualifications:

- Knowledge of general ecology and behavior of pronghorn or other ungulates.
- Knowledge of ecology and monitoring methods for carnivores or other medium sized mammals.
- Previous research experience studying the effects of energy on wildlife.
- Experience working with developers, land managers, or wildlife agencies on energy development projects.
- Experience working with Indigenous tribes in the southwest United States.
- Previous experience working in desert climates of the southwestern United States.

Compensation: $65,000-70,000 per year based on experience and qualifications. This is a full-time grant funded position (40 hours per week) for a defined term of 18 months (September 2026 – March 2028) Continuation beyond that date is dependent on securing additional grant funding. Benefits include health insurance and paid vacation.

Location: Farmington, NM or surrounding area (final location is negotiable). Frequent visits to our Farmington office to work with staff will be expected if they live elsewhere.

How to Apply:
Please send a PDF containing your CV, cover letter, and the names and contact information for three references to Dr. Aaron Facka, aaron@wildlandsnetwork.org. No phone calls please and be sure to put "Associate Scientist - Western Program" in the subject line of your email to receive full consideration. Also, please label any file attachments with your last name, for example SmithCoverLetter.pdf. Position will remain open until September 14, 2026, at midnight Pacific Daylight Time, but qualified candidates may be interviewed or hired before this date.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:
Wildlands Network is committed to increasing equity, diversity, inclusion and justice in all elements of our work and with our partners to support the interconnected needs of wildlife and people in a rapidly changing world. We recruit, employ, train, compensate, and promote regardless of race, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, citizenship, genetic information, past, current, or prospective service in the uniformed services, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law. We are proud to be an equal opportunity

employer. If you require accommodation or assistance with our application process, please call us at 385-229-4849.