Baucus Institute Climate Scholar
Henry's Fork Foundation
Location: In-Person (housing provided)
Duration: June 29–August 21, 2026 (8 weeks; flexible)

About Us
The Henry's Fork Foundation (HFF) is a nonprofit watershed conservation organization located in eastern Idaho. The Henry's Fork watershed is a world-famous fly-fishing destination and a hydrologic system highly managed for agricultural irrigation. HFF uses a science-based, collaborative approach to support multi-stakeholder water management and a Baucus Institute Climate Scholar will help HFF install high-mountain snow stations as part of a federally-funded project on improving snow-to-streamflow forecasting.

The Climate Scholar Project
The selected scholar will assist in installing snow monitoring stations across the Snake River watershed upstream of Menan, Idaho. Stations are designed for the purpose of monitoring key meteorological and hydrological variables that impact snow accumulation and melt. The variables include snow depth, precipitation, temperature, relative humidity, wind speed, solar and longwave radiation, and soil moisture. Stations will be situated in accessible high-elevation mountain regions of eastern Idaho and western Wyoming. Data from these sites will help inform statistical streamflow forecasting relationships and provide assessment of physically based snow water supply models. The scholar's role will be to 1) provide a helping hand during the installation of these sites, 2) assist in any technical troubleshooting of environmental instrumentation, and 3) help ensure all sites are transmitting data remotely in a real-time and meaningful manner.

Key Responsibilities

- Assist in manual tasks of installing snow study sites. This includes digging station mounts, rigging and adjusting station towers, and installing and wiring sensors.
- Troubleshoot technical issues related to sensor power and cellular communication, including reviewing existing documentation, and communicating via phone with vendors when needed.
- Develop detailed working knowledge of various sensors and help ensure appropriate remote transmission of recorded data to the HFF data dashboard.

Desired Qualifications:

- Experience working with meteorological, hydrological, or other related environmental instrumentation (or a high interest and capability in doing so).
- Some experience with Campbell data loggers, LoggerNet software, and/or coding languages such as R or Python.
- Ability to plan for long days in the field and troubleshooting effectively in an outdoor environment.
- Comfortable working outdoors for extended days, driving long distances, performing laborious tasks.

Required Qualifications

- Valid driver's license
- Ability to work ~40 hours/week
- Ability to lift ~25 lbs and do physical work outdoors at high elevations (6–10,000 ft)

- Coursework and/or experience with quantitative data in meteorology, snow science, hydrology, environmental science, or related fields

The Climate Scholar is required to work on-site; a remote work option is not available for this position. Free housing will be provided in the HFF bunkhouse shared with up to 5 other summer interns from universities across the United States.

Mentor: Dr. Otto Lang, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Boise State University and Henry's Fork Foundation

What to Expect During the Internship:

**Past interns have asked us about specific things that are useful to know, and those items are italicized.*

The Watershed

The 3,200-square mile Henry's Fork watershed lies at the headwaters of the Snake River in eastern Idaho and western Wyoming. The Continental Divide, Yellowstone Plateau, and Teton Range form the watershed's northern and eastern boundaries. Elevations range from 4,300 feet above sea level at the bottom of the watershed to over 10,000 feet along the Teton crest. Irrigated farms of potatoes, grains, and hay dominate land use in the lower half of the watershed. At higher elevations, National Forest and other public lands provide outstanding outdoor recreation, including hiking, climbing, camping, fishing, hunting, cycling, and snow sports. The watershed is very rural, with a total population of around 70,000 people. Agriculture and tourism are the largest economic sectors; HFF's work seeks to maintain a balance between water use for agriculture and streamflow to support world-class fishing and related ecological resources.

Living Arrangements

Interns from out of the Henry's Fork area will live in a co-ed dorm space at HFF's campus in Ashton, a farming community of 1,000 people. The campus is housed in Ashton's old community hospital, which was completely refurbished in 2017 to house HFF's offices, laboratory, interpretive center, and intern/graduate student housing. The dorm space consists of two bunk rooms, two large bathroom/shower facilities, a large open kitchen, laundry facilities, and a living room. Bunk rooms and bathrooms will be gender-separated, but all other living space is shared. *Housing, including linens and all kitchen implements, is provided by HFF, but interns are responsible for their own meals.* If any intern would like to live in separate housing, it is their responsibility to find and pay for separate housing arrangements before the internship begins. They will also be responsible for driving to and from HFF in their own vehicle without fuel reimbursement.

Other than businesses oriented primarily toward tourism and agriculture (auto parts and repair, hardware, etc.), *services in Ashton are limited to a small health clinic and pharmacy, one grocery store, a dollar store, and five small eating establishments* (Mexican, three traditional American diners/drive-ins, and a pizza/sandwich shop). The grocery store is well stocked for a small town but does not carry much in the way of organic and natural foods and is difficult to access from HFF's campus because of a busy highway crossing with no stoplight or pedestrian facilities. The nearest large supermarkets, Walmart, drug stores, and other businesses are in Rexburg, about 25 miles southwest of Ashton. There are a few restaurants with broader menu options located in the tourist area of Island Park, 20-30 miles north of Ashton. The closest natural-food stores and restaurants, "finer" dining establishments, and "night life" (e.g., weekly outdoor concerts) are in Teton Valley, 40-50 miles southeast of Ashton. The closest regional airport is in Idaho Falls 53 miles southwest of Ashton. The closest international airport is in Salt Lake City (SLC) 220 miles south of Ashton. The Salt Lake 3 Express shuttle runs from the airport Salt Lake City International Airport to Rexburg several times a day, but should be booked in advance.

The west entrance to Yellowstone National Park is a one-hour drive from Ashton, and Jackson, Wyoming is about a 90-minute drive. The best climbing and hiking opportunities are 45-60 minutes from Ashton, although outstanding fly fishing can be found 5 minutes away from the campus. *An out-of-state fishing license costs $108.* Some of HFF's boats and rafts are available for intern recreational use after hours and on weekends, when not being used for HFF's field work. HFF provides company vehicles for work but does not provide vehicles for interns to use on their personal time. *A personal vehicle is required in order to allow full enjoyment of the area's recreational opportunities.*

The Work Schedule

HFF is committed to supporting a diverse and inclusive workplace and to promoting careers in the environmental and natural-resource sciences among groups underrepresented in these professions. Thus, we will make every effort to adjust assignments to accommodate strong applicants who may initially be uncomfortable with the work requirements described below. However, these adjustments are much easier to make during the recruiting process rather than after interns arrive for the summer, which is why we request that applicants contact us with questions before applying.

*To see HFF's full policy on nondiscrimination diversity and inclusion please click here.

Interns are expected to work 40 hours per week, on average. The work week starts with a mandatory staff meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Monday. Workdays can begin as early as 6:30 a.m. and end as late as 10:30 p.m.

Interns will settle into a weekly routine of field, laboratory, and office work, with individual schedules dependent on the internship position. *Not all internships will require field work.* For the internships that do require fieldwork, this can vary between 25% and 75% of the intern's work hours. All field work will require driving to/from field sites, usually 20-45 miles one way. Some field work will be done in teams with the intern's mentor and possibly other interns, staff or volunteers, while other tasks will require the intern to work alone in remote, rural settings.

Depending on the internship position, field work could include conducting experiments in farm fields, measuring various ecological and physical parameters in the river, surveying river users, and maintaining fences to keep livestock away from streambanks. Field and laboratory work will include use of expensive high-technology equipment as well as boats, rafts, and other standard outdoor equipment and clothing. Field work will be done in all types of weather, aside from lightning and severe thunderstorms. In June, temperatures can be below freezing, and snow is possible at high elevations. During the rest of the summer, temperatures range from 40 degrees to 90 degrees, sometimes spanning that range in a single day. Expect wind, low humidity, and bright sun, all of which add to the physical stress of working at high elevations, especially for those not accustomed to the climate and altitude of the arid western U.S. At the same time, afternoon thunderstorms are possible on any given day, usually producing some combination of strong winds, heavy rain, hail, dangerous lightning, and sudden temperature drops of up to 40 degrees. Orientation and training will cover procedures for conduct under these conditions.

Interns will contribute to the HFF intern blog two times throughout the internship where they will provide an update on their work to our membership.