

The UFRI Fire Science Internship

Tell Utah's Fire Stories Through Science, Fieldwork, and Public Communication

Term: Fall 2026 Semester

Stipend: \$3,000

Number of internships: 6

All internship positions will be filled by September 6, 2026. Apply early for full consideration!

Contact: ryan.jess@usu.edu

Wildfire is one of the most important forces shaping Utah's landscapes, communities, and future. While some wildfires are devastating for landowners, firefighters, and the general public, others burn in milder conditions and can actually benefit the environment. The UFRI Fire Science Internship gives students the opportunity to tell complete wildfire stories — what burned, how it burned, who was affected, and what can be learned.

What Interns Will Do

Interns will work with UFRI mentors to research and document a significant, recent Utah wildfire. Activities will include:

- Researching the background of a wildfire, including how the fire started, how it was managed, and what land management and policy issues shaped the response
- Visiting the burned area to take photos, collect field notes, record GPS points, and observe post-fire conditions (transportation and lodging paid)
- Interviewing land managers, fire personnel, scientists, and community members
- Examining data, including fire perimeter, burn severity, vegetation, and landscape patterns
- Summarizing key information such as acres burned, suppression response, ecological effects, and human impacts
- Creating a final Fire Report that combines narrative, data, maps, photos, and lessons learned (UFRI professional staff support provided)
- Presenting internship findings to UFRI faculty, staff, students, and agency partners
- Summarizing key findings in a short, shareable YouTube video

Who Should Apply

This internship is ideal for students interested in wildland fire, forest or rangeland ecology, natural resources, land management, GIS, science communication, journalism, environmental storytelling, or public outreach. Strong applicants will be curious, dependable, willing to learn, and interested in communicating science clearly to a public audience.

Internship Term

The UFRI Fire Science Internship will take place during the **Fall 2026 semester**. Interns should expect to participate in orientation, background research, fieldwork preparation, a short field/site visit, data analysis, writing, and a final presentation.

Most internship work will be completed on a flexible weekly schedule, with some required meetings, deadlines, and fieldwork dates coordinated with UFRI mentors.

How to Apply

To apply, email the following materials as **a single PDF** to ryan.jess@usu.edu:

1. Application letter
2. Resume
3. Three references who may be contacted

Your application letter should explain why you are interested in the UFRI Fire Science Internship and how it connects to your academic, professional, or personal interests. You may also describe relevant coursework, field experience, GIS or mapping experience, writing or communication skills, photography or media experience, and any interest you have in wildfire, forest restoration, land management, or public science communication.

Questions and application materials may be sent to:

Ryan Jess

Utah Forest Restoration Institute

ryan.jess@usu.edu