



United States Department of Agriculture

RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE  
[www.ars.usda.gov](http://www.ars.usda.gov)

*"Solving Problems for the Growing World"*

**VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

**AMENDMENT: THIS EXTENDS CLOSING DATE FROM 11/12/2004.**

**Announcement Number:** ARS-X4W-0436A

**Position Title/Series/Grade:**

Research Entomologist  
GS-414-13/14

**Employment Type:** Full-time - Permanent

**Grade and Salary Range:**

GS-13 \$69,762.00 - \$90,692.00 Per Year  
GS-14 \$82,438.00 - \$107,170.00 Per Year

**Location of Position:**

WRRC, Exotic and Invasive Weeds Research Unit,  
Reno, Nevada

**Who Can Apply:** All U.S. Citizens

**Opening Date:** October 4, 2004

**Closing Date:** November 26, 2004

For copies of vacancy announcements and/or application materials, please call (301) 504-1482. For additional information regarding employment opportunities, please visit <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/jobs/apply.htm>.

**Contact Information**

**Human Resources Specialist:**

Christine Isaac  
(301) 504-1469

**Location Contact Information:**

Sylvia Abolencia  
(510) 559-6090

**DC Relay Service:** (202) 855-1234 (TDD)

**Send Applications to:**

USDA, Agricultural Research Service  
Human Resources Division  
Attn: Christine Isaac  
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Stop 5106  
Beltsville, MD 20705-5106

**Fax:** (301) 504-1535

**E-mail:** [scirecruit@ars.usda.gov](mailto:scirecruit@ars.usda.gov)

Applications must be postmarked, e-mailed or faxed by the closing date of the announcement. Applications received in Government envelopes will not be considered.

Please take advantage of the Application Package Checklist at the end of this announcement to ensure your application is complete.

For information about the organization and location, visit the location's website at [www.pw.usda.gov/](http://www.pw.usda.gov/).

**Applications will also be accepted from USDA Surplus and Federal Displaced Employees in the commuting area.**

## **Major Duties:**

Incumbent's assignment is to increase the field effectiveness of biological control for major weed pests of rangeland and riparian habitats with initial focus on saltcedar (*Tamarix*) management. Specific investigations will center on classical biological control of exotic weeds. Objectives for the next 3-4 years are to improve mechanistic understanding of the biotic and abiotic factors involved in natural and manipulated host/natural enemy/environment life systems and to effectively alter these biological systems to increase biological control effectiveness, to assess environmental safety and to conduct extensive risk analyses and used to assess and document biological control agent efficacy and safety. Emphasis will be placed on the development of principles of population regulation, risk analysis, host/herbivore interactions, and their importance in the safe and effective control of invasive weed species. This position will focus on the detection, collection, identification, host specificity testing, risk analyses and use of arthropod biological control agents to manage invasive weeds.

**Qualifications Required:** Your education and experience will be evaluated against all qualification requirements (basic and any additional requirements) listed below.

### **Basic Requirements**

Applicants must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for the position: A Ph.D. is highly desirable.

**BASIC REQUIREMENT:** Degree: Entomology or related discipline of the biological or physical sciences that included at least 16 semester hours in entomology.

GS-13: After meeting the basic requirement above applicant must have 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-12 level in the Federal service.

GS-14: After meeting the basic requirement above applicant must have 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-13 level in the Federal service.

**This position has a positive education requirement. You must provide a copy of your academic transcripts OR a list of college courses with credit hours, dates completed, and grades received to verify education when applying for this position. If this information is not provided, your education may not be appropriately evaluated, and you may lose consideration for this position. If you are selected for this position, you will have to provide an official copy of your transcripts prior to entering on duty.**

**Time-In-Grade Restrictions apply for all candidates considered under Merit Promotion/Alternative Merit Promotion.**

**Specialized Experience** - experience which has equipped you with the following Knowledge, Skills and Abilities - 'KSAs' required to perform the duties of this position and is professional research experience that has provided the applicant with:

1. Knowledge of insect population dynamics.
2. Knowledge of host specificity testing and risk analysis.
3. Ability to conceive, plan, and conduct laboratory and field experiments based on testable hypotheses, document research results in peer reviewed publications, and make presentations at scientific meetings and conferences.

**To be considered for a research scientist position, you must submit a one-page abstract of your MS thesis and/or PH.D. dissertation. Also submit a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of persons familiar with your stature, contributions, recognition; any honors or awards received; memberships in professional or honor societies; invitations to make presentations at scientific/technical meetings; scientific society office and committee assignments; presentations (other than invitation); and publications.**

**Vacant research positions may be filled at one of several grade levels depending upon the scientific impact of the person selected. A peer review may be required to determine the appropriate grade level of the position and supplemental materials may be required from the selectee.**

**Research scientists have open-ended promotion potential. Research accomplishments and their impact on the duties and responsibilities of positions are evaluated periodically. The grade level is limited only by the individual's demonstrated ability to perform research of recognized importance to science and technology. \*Final grade level may be determined by a peer review panel.**

## Other Important Information

### **Benefits Package:**

A Benefits Package is authorized for this position. Additional information about Federal benefits can be obtained at [www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.htm](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.htm).

### **Veteran's Preference:**

For further details, call the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 478-757-3000 or TDD 478-744-2299. Select General Information on the Federal Employment Policies and Procedures, and then Veterans Preference and Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans. Visit their VetGuide website at <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp>.

### **Relocation Expenses:**

Payment of relocation expenses will be determined in accordance with P&P 412.5, Recruitment and Retention Incentives and Other Special Pay, Sections 6 and 7, as amended by Bulletin 03-402, which may be found at: [http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/staffing\\_recruit/reloweb.htm](http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/staffing_recruit/reloweb.htm).

### **Financial Disclosure Requirement:**

Federal employees are subject to prohibitions against officially dealing with outside organizations in which they have a financial interest. You may be required to submit a financial disclosure report if hired for this position.

### **False statements:**

If you make a false statement in any part of your application, you may not be hired; may be fired after beginning work; or may be fined or jailed.

### **Optional Form 306, (Declaration for Federal Employment):**

If you are selected for this position, you will be required to complete this form before an offer may be made.

**All status candidates who wish to be considered under both alternative merit promotion and non-status competitive examining must submit two (2) complete applications. When only one (1) application is received, it will be considered under the alternative merit promotion procedures if the applicant is a current or former Federal employee with reinstatement eligibility.**

**This position is being filled in accordance with the Alternative Merit Promotion system. All merit promotion principles remain in effect.**

### **USDA Surplus/Federal Displaced Employees:**

USDA Surplus/Federal displaced employees must submit documentary evidence of eligibility. Well qualified surplus and displaced employees within the local commuting area will receive selection priority as provided by OPM regulations. Well-qualified means the applicant meets the basic qualification and eligibility requirements and all selective placement factors; is rated above minimally qualified against the KSAs or quality criteria; and is able to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position upon entry. Applicants must submit the following:

- 1) a copy of your RIF Separation Notice or Certification of Expected Separation or other documentation indicating that you are a surplus employee;
- 2) evidence of full performance level of current position;

- 3) a copy of your most recent performance appraisal; and
- 4) a copy of your most recent SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, to verify reassignment eligibility.

**Selective Service System:**

Males over age 18 who were born after December 31, 1959, must have registered with the Selective Service System (or have an exemption) to be eligible for Federal employment.

**Reasonable Accommodation:**

Reasonable accommodation is provided to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, or have questions regarding reasonable accommodation and/or accessibility for any part of the application and hiring process, please contact the Disability Program Manager on 202-720-6161 or through the DC Relay Service on 202-855-1234 (TDD). The decision to grant reasonable accommodation is made on a case-by-case basis.

**Civil Rights Policy Statement:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity employer and provider. Discrimination is prohibited in all USDA programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center on 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

**To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD).**

## Application Package Checklist

**If application packages do not contain all of the requested information, you may lose consideration for the job. To help you ensure your application fully outlines your qualifications and eligibility for this position, please submit the following documentation.**

- Optional Form 612 (Optional Application for Federal Employment), SF-171 (Application for Federal Employment), Resume, Curriculum Vitae, or other document outlining your qualifications (Go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to obtain the OF-612).

**The following information is required of all applicants:**

- Announcement number, title, and grade(s) of the position
- Full name, mailing address (including zip code) and day and evening phone numbers (with area code)
- Social security number
- Statement that you are a U.S. citizen (if not using the OF-612 or SF-171)
- Copy of DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) (if claiming veterans preference) (Visit <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp> for additional information).
- SF-15 (Application for 10-point Veteran's Preference) plus the support documentation required by this form (if claiming 10-point veterans preference) (Go to the web site at <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/sf.asp> to obtain form.)
- Paid and non-paid work experience related to the position. For each period of work experience include:
  - \_\_\_ Job title
  - \_\_\_ Series/grade (if Federal employment)
  - \_\_\_ Duties and accomplishments
  - \_\_\_ Employer's name and address
  - \_\_\_ Supervisor's name and contact information
  - \_\_\_ Starting and ending dates of employment (at least month & year)
  - \_\_\_ Number of hours worked per week
  - \_\_\_ Salary
  - \_\_\_ Indicate if we may contact current supervisor/employer
- Other job related information, such as training courses (title & year); skills (e.g., other languages, computer software/hardware, tools, etc.)
  - \_\_\_ Certificates/licenses (current)
  - \_\_\_ Honors, awards, and special accomplishments
  - \_\_\_ Supplemental questionnaire if applicable (usually for Federal Wage System positions - WG, WL, WS)
- Copy of college transcripts (if qualifying all or in part on the basis of education for this position) (If you have non-conventional education, e.g., foreign study, continuing education units, life experience, etc., go to the web site at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-II/s2-e4.htm#e4a> and look under the heading "Other Education" for information governing acceptability of this type of education.)

- Copy of SF-50 (Notification of Personnel Action) to verify possession of competitive civil service status (if you are a current or previous federal employee)
- Copy of most recent performance appraisal (if you are a current federal employee)
- Second copy of application package (if the position is open to candidates outside the federal government AND if you are a current federal employee or a candidate with reinstatement eligibility and wish to be considered under both merit promotion and competitive examining procedures).
- Support documentation for eligibility for special hiring authorities, such as disability, Peace Corps service, etc. (If you have questions about whether you are eligible for a particular hiring authority, please call the servicing HR specialist or visit the web site at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/a2.htm> and scroll down to the subject heading, "Category".)
- Support documentation if you are a USDA surplus or federal displaced employee (See pertinent section under "Other Important Information" below.)
- Self-certification of typing speed (if required as a basic qualification for the position)
- While not required, a separate response to the required knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs listed under Specialized Experience) and Selective Placement Factor(s), if present, for this position may better highlight your specific qualifications for this position. (For an explanation of KSAs, go to the web site at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers/whatksa.html> ).

**As an Applicant for a Research Scientist Position, you must also submit the following:**

A one-page abstract of MS thesis and/or Ph.D. dissertation

A resume of any honors or awards received; memberships in professional or honor societies; invitations to make presentations at scientific/technical meetings; scientific society office and committee assignments; presentations (other than invitations); and publications.

A list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of persons familiar with your stature, contributions, and recognition.

**If this is your first time applying for a federal job, or if you wish to view more detailed information about various aspects of applying for federal jobs, go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to access the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Optional Form 510.**