The University of Minnesota, Department of Forest Resources is seeking a M.Sc. graduate student to participate in a research project examining the effects of simulated emerald ash borer (EAB) mortality and mitigation strategies on soil carbon and nutrient cycling in black ash wetlands in the upper Midwest. EAB is a nonnative insect that has caused extensive mortality of ash species since its introduction to North America. The effect of EAB mortality in black ash wetlands is expected to cause dramatic changes in ecosystem functions because ash is a dominant component of the forest structure.

The student will join a team of collaborators from the University of Minnesota, the USDA Forest Service-Northern Research Station, the University of Vermont, and Michigan Tech who are evaluating the ecological impacts of EAB and alternative silvicultural treatments for mitigation. Within the larger project, the student will provide an assessment of carbon and nutrient cycling changes that will occur following EAB mortality and mitigation practices. Research will involve summer field work at project sites in northern Minnesota and northern Michigan, and will utilize a mix of field and lab experimental approaches. The student will be responsible for conducting field and lab work in support of project goals, analyzing data, and preparing peer-reviewed publications.

The start date is somewhat flexible, but preferably the student will begin field work in Summer 2016 with classes beginning the following fall at UMN Twin Cities. There are two guaranteed years of funding for this position to cover stipend (~ $21,000 annually), tuition waiver, and health insurance with additional support likely from teaching and research assistantships.

Qualifications: B.Sc. in forest/wetland soils, forest/wetland management, forest/wetland ecology, or a closely related field. Applicants must be able to work independently, but also cooperatively with other researchers working on the larger project. Knowledge of soil sampling and processing, analytical techniques, and laboratory methods is desired. Applicants should have a strong work and leadership ethic, and demonstrated writing / quantitative capabilities.

Interested candidates should submit their CV, undergraduate transcripts and GRE scores, and a cover letter. Deadline for receiving applications is February 15, 2016.

For more information please contact either:
Dr. Rob Slesak (raslesak@umn.edu, 651-603-6756) or,
Dr. Randy Kolka (rkolka@fs.fed.us, 218-301-6564)