**Graduate Research Assistant Position**

**Cornell University, Department of Natural Resources**

**Human Dimensions Research Unit**

Engagement with the outdoors is a major part of the national discourse about the future of conservation in the U.S. Typically, attention is focused on the effects of broad social trends on participation in nature-based and wildlife-dependent recreation, and how participation is fostered through social support. Relatively little attention, however, is given to the reciprocal effects participants can have on the social context supporting these activities. This is a missing piece of information in understanding the relationship between nature-based recreation and conservation outcomes using a social-ecological systems perspective: how can outdoor engagement foster broad social support for conservation, and eventual conservation action?

The Human Dimensions Research Unit (HDRU) in the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell University has a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) position open for a prospective MS or PhD student interested in examining these topics. The inquiry will take a social-ecological systems perspective, to be developed by the graduate student, his/her advisor(s) and wildlife management practitioners. We anticipate that the study will examine how and the extent to which participants in one or several wildlife-dependent recreation activities contribute to creation and maintenance of the individual participants’ social world (social structure) and how that contributes to broader social support for wildlife conservation and management (e.g., protection and recovery of threatened and endangered species, conservation of renewable game species populations, habitat enhancement, etc.).

This 12-month graduate assistantship pays for tuition and health insurance, and provides a competitive stipend (salary). The GRA begins August 2017. The GRA is funded in part through the on-going support of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Fish and Wildlife. The research will be supervised by Professors Richard Stedman and Daniel Decker. Other professional HDRU research staff also be active in the work, providing breadth of support and insight for the graduate student.

The HDRU studies the social and economic aspects of natural resources and the environment and the application of related insights to management planning and policy. More information about HDRU research, outreach and staff can be found at: http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/hdru.

Please apply by submitting a current CV, statement of interests, and names/contact information for three references via email to Rich Stedman (rcs6@cornell.edu); Daniel Decker (djd6@cornell.edu); with a cc to Brian Hutchinson (bah246@cornell.edu).

To receive full consideration, please submit your materials by **Monday, January 2, 2017.**