

MSc opportunity – Carbon persistence in Canadian forest soils

With support from a Canadian Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) Alliance Society Grant, Dr. Theresa Adesanya (UNBC) and Dr. Charlotte Norris (NRCan) are offering a two-year funded graduate position under the project “Carbon under Canadian forests – Why soils matter.”

Project overview: Soils contain by far the largest carbon stocks in terrestrial ecosystems. About 28,800 million tonnes of carbon are sequestered in mineral soils of Canadian forests alone, corresponding to 10% of stocks found in forest soils globally. Even small variations in these extremely large stocks can have a profound impact not only on the carbon balance of Canadian forests, but also on the global carbon cycle. Yet, despite their importance, there is still great uncertainty about the mechanisms controlling soil carbon persistence. Our research project aims to address this major knowledge gap by quantifying soil carbon formation and persistence across the major forested ecozones of Canada. The objective of this MSc project is to study C persistence in Canadian forest soils and how it is influenced by fire and salvage logging disturbance.

Requirements: Applicants must have obtained a bachelor’s degree in Soil Science, Forestry, Agriculture, Environmental Science, or a related field. Strong written and oral skills in English are a requirement for a successful applicant. They must demonstrate excellent communication, writing, and organizational skills. Experience in soil sampling, field and laboratory work, and a valid driver’s license will be considered an asset. The ideal candidate will be highly motivated and have a strong interest in and potentially work experience in Canada’s forest sector.

A stipend of \$26,000 per year for 2 years is guaranteed

Possible start dates: September 2025 or January 2026.

How to apply:

Interested applicants should send the following (in a single pdf document) to Dr. Theresa Adesanya (Theresa.Adesanya@unbc.ca) and Dr. Charlotte Norris (Charlotte.Norris@NRCan-RNCan.gc.ca), with subject line “2025 Canadian forest carbon soils master’s position”:

1. A cover letter detailing how they meet the above listed qualifications for this master’s position. Cover letters should explicitly identify how previous academic and/or work experience are related to the skills required for the advertised position.
2. A CV detailing academic achievements, conferences and publications (including links where possible)
3. Unofficial transcripts

Only those candidates of interest will be contacted for an interview, so we ask that you do not send follow-up emails regarding the status of your application. We will review applications until the position is filled. Deadline is **April 30, 2025**, but early applications are highly encouraged.

The University of Northern British Columbia is fully committed to creating a welcoming, safe, and inclusive campus community for all who engage with our university. We recognize that making positive, transformational change requires the collective effort of the entire community, and that this work must be ongoing.