



Southwest
Climate Adaptation
Science Center

2026-27 Natural Resources Workforce Development (NRWD) Fellowship Collaborative Team Science Training

Deadline: April 10, 2026

What is the fellowship?

The SW CASC NRWD Fellowship was developed to provide graduate students with opportunities for training and practice in developing use-inspired, actionable science to inform natural resource management. Those selected will make up a team of seven interdisciplinary scientists (from *University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University, Utah State University, University of Nevada Las Vegas, University of California Davis, University of California Los Angeles, and University of San Diego/Scripps Institution of Oceanography*), working together over the course of twelve months. This will be the 7th cohort of NRWD Fellows. Past NRWD [Research products](#) have included story maps, podcasts, peer-reviewed manuscripts, and fact sheets.

Who is eligible to apply and what does the funding include?

The program is for currently enrolled graduate students in research-based thesis or dissertation-granting programs at the seven SW CASC consortium institutions [found here](#). One applicant from each institution will be selected to take part in the 2026-27 fellowship cohort. The Fellowship will begin at the end of September 2026 and extend through October 2027.

Funding includes a stipend of **\$9,000** (disbursed 50% Fall 2026 and 50% at completion in August 2027, with travel costs and arrangements made by Utah State University (USU) to each meeting to be held at USU in Logan, Utah. This fellowship does not include tuition support and should not be used in lieu of a graduate research or teaching assistantship.

2026-27 SW CASC NRWD Fellowship Team Science Theme: CLOUD SEEDING

Snowpack is critical to both ecosystems and economies in the southwestern US. When snowpack falls in winter, it supports a multi-billion dollar recreation economy throughout the region. And, when it melts in spring and summer, its runoff fills rivers and reservoirs, supports habitat for wildlife, and provides the water necessary for agriculture and power generation. Yet, for decades, both the amount of snowpack and the timing of snow cover have been declining, primarily due to warming winter temperatures. To combat this change, [cloud seeding](#)—a highly localized form of weather modification where a seeding “agent” is added to existing clouds to enhance their precipitation—has been increasingly used across the western US. California, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona all have active cloud seeding programs. However, the effectiveness of cloud seeding as a climate adaptation tool and its resilience to future climate shifts remains largely unknown. For this project, NRWD Fellows will work with SW CASC scientists and state

agencies to synthesize the current state of knowledge regarding cloud seeding, clarify the role of cloud seeding in southwestern water issues, and provide insight on how it can be used effectively.

We seek applicants with a broad range of research interests including *climate science, hydrological sciences, biogeochemistry, wildlife/fisheries management, ecology, data science, outdoor recreation, and social sciences*.

We encourage broad participation from students.

We welcome applicants from various backgrounds with unique lived experiences, skills and interests. The Fellowship provides funding to students with active research interests to (a) take part in training on methods to foster collaborations and the development of science that informs resource management decisions, (b) join a cohort that will collaboratively research an issue aligned with the SW CASC and its current research foci and develop a use-inspired research product that benefits the SW CASC, (c) gain experience in interacting and collaborating with natural resource management professionals, and (d) gain experience in effective communication of research results.

Qualifications

Applicants must:

- Be currently enrolled in an M.S or Ph.D. degree-granting program at one of the seven SW CASC consortium institutions.
- Be a student in good standing and progressing toward completion of their degree.
- Commit to attend two in-person multi-day cohort meetings September 28–October 1, 2026 (start of the Fellowship) and Fall 2027 (to report results of cohort projects), and biweekly cohort teleconferences.
- Demonstrate the relevance of their research to the 2026-2027 SW CASC NRWD Fellowship Science Theme.

Application Process

Please submit **ALL** of your application documents including the reference letter as **ONE .pdf file** using this [Google form](https://forms.gle/2FKgZG5gtdU9WRGGA) (<https://forms.gle/2FKgZG5gtdU9WRGGA>). Google Forms will require you to sign into your Google account. Please name your PDF: Institution_LAST NAME. For example: UA_Smith.

Please provide:

- One letter of support** from your graduate advisor that endorses your application and academic standing, and demonstrates support of your aim to garner training and develop experience in producing use-inspired or actionable science and outreach in the fellowship science theme.
- A description of your research interests and relevance to the Fellowship science theme. **(250 word limit)**
- A description of how the fellowship and collaborative cohort experience will strengthen your research and/or support your career goals. **(250 word limit)**
- A description of your interest in a collaborative experience as part of a cohort. **(250 word limit)**
- A description of a desired and feasible connection with stakeholders and rightsholders in natural resource management and decision making. **(250 word limit)**
- An up-to-date curriculum vitae. Please include a brief synopsis of any prior work related to co-production of knowledge.

Application Timeline and Questions:

Applications due date: **April 10, 2026**. Notification of Award to applicants: **May 1, 2026**.

- **Questions:** Katherine Ko, katherineko@arizona.edu

Fellowship Requirements:

- Attend biweekly, 1-hour Fellowship cohort teleconferences, to receive training, develop and discuss cohort research related to the Fellowship science theme, and report research progress.
 - o Cohort research will employ a team-science model of interaction, which will be introduced during the initial cohort meeting. Research teams will co-develop a scope of work for cohort research, related to the SW CASC NRWD Fellowship theme, the participants' experience and research interests, and the needs of decision-makers in the U.S. Southwest.
 - o Members of the cohort will represent multiple disciplines. For example, research may take the form of syntheses and assessments of research needs and gaps, examinations of the state of knowledge regarding the Fellowship theme, or a research or action plan to address a Fellowship theme-related issue or wicked problem.
 - o We anticipate that Fellows will spend about 1-2 days each month on research and cohort coordination, in addition to a 1-hour biweekly teleconference.
- Attend two in-person meetings: A Fellowship cohort meeting and team-science training (Fall 2026: to be in Logan, Utah, scheduled for September 28-October 1, 2026), and a fellowship cohort meeting to report cohort research results (Fall 2027).
- Submit a blog for the SW CASC website, related to one of the following (a) the training, (b) the cohort experience, (c) cohort research, (d) engagement with natural resource management decision-makers. See past Fellows' blogs [here](#).
- A summary product(s) will be determined in discussion with the group and NRWD mentors. See [here](#) for examples of previous products.
- Complete CITI training and submit the certifications to katherineko@arizona.edu by August 24, 2026. These online training modules will be:
 1. Human Subjects Research
 2. Collaborative Research
 3. Tribal Nation Research
 4. Community-Engaged and Community-Based Participatory Research