One graduate research assistantship is available on a project to synthesize the ecosystem services (or benefits that humans receive) from wetlands and coastal waters. Recreational use, food provisioning, and other goods and services from nature together are an important justification for maintaining healthy coastal ecosystems. Models based on detailed maps of these services can help us plan conservation actions and communicate their value to society. The broader study will quantify services provided by coastal ecosystems in Delaware and model how their diversity differs across locations. The student involved will collect data, such as crowd-sourced activity for birdwatching and beach use, to map and measure some of these services in geographic information systems (GIS). This information will be used to analyze overlaps and tradeoffs between services at multiple scales using statistics.

The M.S. program in Natural Resources in the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Delaware State University (Dover, DE) is designed to prepare students for careers in natural resources management, field ecology, environmental science, and related fields. Information about the program: https://cast.desu.edu/departments/agriculture-natural-resources/natural-resources-ms.

The position is funded for two years, covering salary ($20,000/year without benefits) and tuition and fees. A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in biology, geography, natural resources, environmental science, or related fields is required. A minimum average GPA of 2.5 overall and 3.0 within the major is needed for admission into the program. Students with experience using geographic information systems (GIS) and strong computer and writing skills are especially encouraged to apply.

To apply, please send a cover letter describing your research interests and fit for the position, resume/CV, unofficial copies of GRE scores and transcript(s), and contact information for 3 professional references to Dr. Sigrid Smith (ssmith@desu.edu) with "coastal ecosystem services MS student" in subject line). Feel free to send any questions to this email as well. Review of applications will continue until filled. Student will ideally start in January (spring 2020 term) or this September (fall 2019 term).