



# Eyes on the Environment

The Environmental Sciences Program News Bulletin

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## Welcome Back!

Welcome back Environmental Science Majors (and potential majors). This is an exciting time on the Northwestern Campus as we are welcoming a new class of freshmen, and preparing for fall classes to resume. We hope you enjoyed your summer and had time to reflect, relax, and regroup in preparation for the school year ahead.

There have been some changes in the program which we have made you aware of recently, but in case you missed the e-mail, here's a recap. Professor Andrew Jacobson is now Program Director of

Environmental Sciences and will be available to meet with you to discuss any issues related to your major, or to declare a major in Environmental Science, if you haven't done so already. If you'd like to schedule an appointment to meet with Professor Jacobson, you can do so through Princess Parker, the new Program Assistant for Environmental Sciences. You can reach Ms. Parker at (847) 467-2976 or e-mail her at [princess.parker@northwestern.edu](mailto:princess.parker@northwestern.edu). We know you will be busy getting settled into classes, and with the many opportunities available on campus. However, we hope you can

join us next Wednesday evening, September 28, from 5:30 PM - 7 PM for our Welcome Back Picnic. It'll be a fun time to catch up, have a light dinner and get reacquainted. The picnic will be held at the Lakefill Firepit, located along the bike path at the lakefront. Stay tuned for the formal invitation.

In this issue, you will find stories of fellow Environmental Scientists who interned over the summer and are sharing what they learned or enjoyed most about their experience.

This is sure to be an exciting year, packed with many opportunities to learn and grow together. We look forward taking the journey with you and wish you a successful school year!

### Important Dates To Remember

Fall Quarter Begins	<b>9/20</b>
Welcome Back Picnic	<b>9/28</b>
Deadline for Spring QTR IPD Study Abroad Apps	<b>10/24</b>
Registration for Winter QTR begins	<b>11/14</b>
Thanksgiving Vacation begins	<b>11/23</b>
Last Day of Classes	<b>12/3</b>
Final Exams	<b>12/5</b>
Winter Vacation Begins	<b>12/9</b>

## Interns Share Their Stories

We thought it would be a good idea to have students share their experiences working in research or some area related to Environmental Sciences. Following are a few accounts from students who had summer internships: some abroad, others right here in Illinois.

**Allegra Mayer:** This summer I worked on the Marin Carbon Project under Professor Whendee Silver at UC Berkeley.



Nicasio valley rangeland in Marin County, California  
- a site studied by the Marin County project

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## Don't Miss It!

The Fall 2011 **Environmental, Engineering and Science Seminar Series** kicks off September 30 with Edward O'Loughlin of Argonne National Labs discussing Uranium Transformations and October 7 with Keith EJ Tyo of Northwestern discussing Leveraging Synthetic Biology for Global Health. E-mail: [environment@Northwestern.edu](mailto:environment@Northwestern.edu) for full seminar schedule.

## Internship Stories (Cont.)

**Allegra Mayer (cont.)** I was lucky enough to do field work with an amazing group of scientists in one of the most beautiful places in America: the Marin Headlands (Point Reyes National Seashore) in Northern California. The projects I helped with studied the carbon cycle in rangeland soils and the impact of different land management practices on carbon sequestration.

**Meghan Cavanaugh:** The Alaska Conservation Foundation is a wonderful program that funds environmental science internships throughout Alaska. The type of internship varies from intense field work to writing legislation. For my internship I worked with a program called Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA). My role as outreach intern was to recruit rural and urban youth across the state to participate in AYEA's Youth Organizer program. As a Youth Organizer, teens lead a year long project under the statewide AYEA theme of Alaskan Wild Salmon. Teens work on projects that deal specifically with salmon, such as real foods issues or issues that indirectly relate to salmon such as the construction of local mines. Project type varies as well - teens complete research,

build policy or develop artistic representations of the issues. I worked with the teens to help develop their project interests and ideas. Furthermore, I worked on the logistical planning for a three day long Fall Project Planning Summit where all the teens came together to refine their activist and project planning skills.

My internship with AYEA was incredibly inspiring and motivating. Being able to empower youth, as well as give them the tools to effectively impact local environmental issues, was an amazing experience!

**Lisa Mithun:** This summer I worked with a Northwestern Ph.D. student in the Plant Conservation Program at the Chicago Botanic Garden. She is interested in the effects of restoration history in tall-grass prairies on the native bee communities. I helped her set up research sites in prairies, perform vegetation surveys, collect bee samples, and create land-use maps in ArcGIS. It was a valuable experience for me because I got to see what life as a grad student would be like in the lab and in the field. It made me consider grad school!

**Harry Hahn:** I am a Junior, double major in Environmental Science and Geology. Currently in South Island New Zealand for a semester abroad at Otago University. Doing an independent research at the abandoned Wangaloa Coal mine. Work includes creating a base map of soil pH and associated vegetation cover. The mission is to try and help understand the impacts on local ecology of coal mining sites after mining has ceased. Essentially a rehabilitation project. This will allow for better response and rehabilitation in future coal sites. For example, understanding native species that are resilient enough to grow in and survive a severely acidified soil. Being able to restore coal sites after mining is essential for local ecology and combines geology with environmental science based management.

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Eating avo during a climbing break at Longbeach, Dunedin