

California Kelp Research and Recovery Synthesis

Bren Environmental Leadership Program



The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a global environmental nonprofit working to create a world where both people and nature can thrive. In California, TNC is tackling the dual threats of accelerated climate change and unprecedented biodiversity loss. Science determines where we focus and equity guides how we achieve lasting results. Grounded by decades of local on-the-ground experience, we maximize our ability to affect change by bringing together real-world solutions, policy expertise, sustainable financing and collaborative partnerships.

California's incredible kelp forests are a critical ecosystem that are a breeding ground for thousands of species, act as a protective blanket for our iconic beaches, and have an immense impact on jobs and revenue for our state. Yet, the forests of California are increasingly threatened. On California's North Coast, 96% of kelp forests have been lost due to a combination of warming ocean temperatures and the deadly Sea Star Wasting Syndrome has led to the die off of the sunflower sea star, which has set off a chain reaction resulting in massive loss for kelp. Climate-driven changes like those on the North Coast are leading to a massive die-off of kelp forests not only in California, but in places like Australia, Norway and Chile. Alongside community and partners, TNC is committed to leading the way to address this global conservation threat by advancing solutions for protecting kelp forests in California and around the world.

We are seeking a graduate student to lead the development of a synthesis report of historical and ongoing kelp recovery and research efforts in California. The synthesis report will be organized by and include considerations related to restoration and recovery technique (grazer suppression, kelp enhancement, predator recovery, etc.), region (north, central, south), and species (giant kelp, bull kelp, understory, etc.), with exact formatting co-developed with BEL students. The graduate student will be responsible for work planning, mentoring, and project managing an undergraduate counterpart with whom they will jointly conduct a background literature review, schedule meetings and host discussion with content experts, and draft and format a polished document that will provide a comprehensive overview of kelp recovery efforts in California. Once completed, this report will serve as a key reference document for the kelp restoration community, as well as state agency developing the Kelp Restoration Management Plan and global initiatives working towards 30 x 30 commitments for kelp.

Qualifications

- Professionalism and interest in marine policy, research, and restoration in California
- Interest in kelp recovery and research in California and beyond
- Interest in mentoring an undergraduate student working on the project
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team – self-motivation is strongly desired
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail
- Strong written communication skills
- Experience with Microsoft suite
- Experience synthesizing oral and written information

Details

The position is *10 weeks, 35 hours per week, with exact dates flexible between late June to mid-September*. This internship is (fully remote, in person or hybrid). The student will receive a \$8500 stipend. This position is part of the Bren Environmental Leadership Program – the student will attend mentoring and leadership training during Spring Quarter and mentor an undergraduate student working on the project throughout the summer.

How to Apply

Please submit applications [here](#) by **February 28, 2025**. Applications should include:

- *A cover letter describing how your previous experience and qualifications make you a good fit for the position. We are committed to fostering an inclusive environment and supporting diverse students in environmental science, including those from underrepresented, low-income, and first-generation college*

backgrounds, and/or those active in DEI, EJ, or social justice. We welcome insights into how your experiences or perspective might shape your contribution to the BEL community.

- *A resume or CV, including any relevant coursework and previous experience*