Environment/Sustainability

Branches of Environmental Work

Skills

- Communication (written & spoken)
- Persuasion
- Interdisciplinarian
- Self-motivated
- Team player
- Integrity
- Politically astute
- Physically fit
- Versatile
- Science background
- Systematic thinker

A job that is considered “environmental”- or “sustainability”- related can be defined as….

A job or function within an organization that focuses on helping to minimize or reverse the adverse environmental impact of human activity.

OR

A job that emphasizes professional activities that maximize the utilization of natural resources.

Conservation

Conservation includes restoration of polluted or developed lands, preservation of wildlife, and protection of cultural treasures, such as ancient archaeological sites. Most of the field’s jobs are rooted in science, although because federal legislature remains the main force behind conservation, workers in this field also benefit from a background in public policy, law, and finance.

Education and Communication

Because environmentalists depend on the support of an informed, concerned public, education and communication are top priorities within the movement. Scientific discoveries are often mired in complex technical terminology, which puts the burden on writers, teachers, filmmakers, photographers, media specialists, and other “translators” to bring the message in clear terms to the people.

Environmental Consulting

Consultants of all varieties help corporations comply with environmental law, work alongside government agencies as contract specialists, and generally offer vision, advice, and technical expertise to those who need it. Individuals with the ability to combine technical or scientific expertise with a solid understanding of the legal and economic realities of business are in particular demand.

Environmental Management and Planning

Environmental managers deal with and prevent problems with the environment; planners, meanwhile, work with communities and individuals to make eco-friendly decisions when working to develop or reshape their local area.

Parks and Recreation

All kinds of specialists toil in our nation’s parks. There are managers, law enforcement officials, and goodwill spokespeople for nature. While most Americans associate environmentalism with the national park system, urban parks, where landscape architects turn city brownlands into playgrounds, are also included in this field.

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Major Employers in the Industry

Government Organizations
The federal government has several agencies, departments, and initiatives related to environmental issues. While some agencies are regulatory, others are more focused on research and/or education.

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- U.S Forest Service
- Commission for Environmental Cooperation
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- National Renewable Energy Laboratory
- Office of Environmental Management

Visit http://www.usajobs.gov to see Government job listings.

Private Sector - For Profits
Here is a sampling of For Profit organizations who hire individuals with backgrounds and experience in environmentalism/conservation:

- Seventh Generation
- Burt’s Bees
- Whole Foods

Private Sector - Non Profits
Within the Non Profit sector, environmental careers can fall within a wide range of categories such as education, outreach, policy, law, community organization, etc. Non-profits who hire for environmental positions include:

- Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
- Environmental Defense Fund
- The Wilderness Society
- Greenpeace
- The Sierra Club
- World Wildlife Fund
- Earth First!

Environmental/Sustainability Sample Job Titles

- Conservation biologists
- Environmental analysts
- Industrial ecologists
- Hydrologists—water and waste experts
- Environmental monitoring experts
- Environmental attorneys
- Environmental policy lobbyists and advocates
- Environmental educators
- Executive directors and fundraisers
- Water sector workers
- Environmental justice workers
- Researchers (i.e. on local sustainability practices)
- Jobs in national parks
- Planners (local and national level)
- Strategic sustainability consultants
- Food and agriculture specialists
- Finance and economic experts
- Policy analyst

Want to learn more about how you can get involved in environmental activities at Wake Forest? Check out WFU’s Office of Sustainability: sustainability.wfu.edu
Additional Online Resources

The Student Conservation Association:
Connects college-aged members with conservation service opportunities, such as internships in national parks.
www.thesca.org

GeoIndex:
A search engine for organizations and companies involved in geotechnical, environmental, hydrogeology, geology, mining and petroleum.
geoindex.com/geoindex/index.html

The Pew Charitable Trusts:
Report on jobs in the clean energy economy, including state-by-state rankings.
www.pewtrusts.org/our_work_detail.aspx?id=690

The Environmental Leadership Program:
Fellowships and resources for emerging environmental leaders.
www.elpnet.org/index.php

The Institute for Conservation Leadership:
Trains leaders and support environmental organizations.
icl.org

The New Hampshire Center for Nonprofits:
Provides resources for New Hampshire’s nonprofit sector.
www.nhnonprofits.org

National and regional associations of environmental professionals:
National Register of Environmental Professionals: nrep.org
National Association of Environmental Professionals: www.naep.org
Northwest Association of Environmental Professionals: nwaep.org
Florida Association of Environmental Professionals: faep-fl.org

Helpful Websites

http://EPA.gov
Ecological Society of America  
http://esa.org
The Nature Conservancy  
www.nature.org
Environmental Defense Fund  
http://www.edf.org/home.cfm
www.sierraclub.org
US Fish and Wildlife Service  
www.fws.gov
http://EcoEmploy.com
http://EnvironmentalCareer.com
http://ecojobs.com
www.envirocitizen.org
environmental-expert.com
www.greatgreencareers.com
www.usajobs.opm.gov
www.nps.gov/personnel
http://stopdodo.com
http://jobs.grist.org
www.greenjobs.com
www.lowcarbon.com
www.treehugger.com
www.sustainablebusiness.com
http://jobs.greenbiz.com
Graduate Programs in Sustainability

Graduate Certificate Programs:
UC Berkeley Extension
(Multiple Certificates in Sustainability)

http://extension.berkeley.edu/sustainability/

California State University-San Bernadino
(Certificate in Environmental Management)

http://www.csusb.edu/majorsDegrees/certificates/

Master’s Degree Programs:
Arizona State University
(MA, MS, or PhD in Sustainability)

http://schoolofsustainability.asu.edu/

Northern Arizona University
(MA in Sustainable Communities)

http://home.nau.edu/sus/

American University
(MA in Natural Resources & Sustainable Development)

http://www.american.edu/sis/sisabroad/graddual/UPeace.cfm

Saybrook University
(MA in Leadership of Sustainable Systems)

http://www.saybrook.edu/phs/academicprograms/os/lss

Ramapo College of New Jersey
(MA in Sustainability Studies)

http://www.ramapo.edu/masters-sustainability/

Virginia Tech
(Executive MS in Leadership for Sustainability)

http://cnre.vt.edu/xmnr/

Columbia University
(MS in Sustainability Management)

http://ce.columbia.edu/Sustainability-Management

Antioch University
(“Green MBA” - MBA in Sustainability)

http://www.antiochne.edu/om/mba/default.cfm

Iowa State University
(MS in Sustainable Agriculture)

http://www.sust.ag.iastate.edu/gpsa/default.html

Michigan State University
(MS in Ecological Food & Farming Systems)

http://www.effs.msu.edu/

Tufts University
(MS in Agriculture, Food, & Environment)

http://nutrition.tufts.edu/1174562918439/Nutrition-Page-nl2w_1177953852962.html

University of Wisconsin-Madison
(MS in Agroecology)

http://www.agroecology.wisc.edu/

PhD Programs:
Rochester Institute of Technology

http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/gradstudies/phdpage.php

*For a more extensive list of sustainability graduate programs, go to:
http://www.aashe.org/resources/graduate-programs-sustainability-and-environmental-education OR
http://www.ulsf.org/resources_sust_degrees_business.htm*