The David S. Maehr Florida Wildlife Corridor Applied Science Fellowship

To catalyze the science needed to effectively and efficiently conserve the Florida Wildlife Corridor and the ecological (e.g., wildlife, water, and ecosystem processes) and societal (e.g., economic, recreational, and cultural) benefits it provides, Archbold Biological Station is offering the 2nd Annual David S. Maehr Florida Wildlife Corridor Research Fellowship. We are soliciting proposals for creative, innovative science solutions to advance Corridor land conservation. This award is made possible through generous support of Bellini Better World.

Applicants from any field of natural or social science are invited to submit proposals for modeling, synthesis, fieldwork, tool construction, data collection and analysis, or a combination of these activities. **Applications are due Friday December 1, 2023 at 5pm ET.**

The fellowship offers a one-time $25,000 grant for a 1-year project led by an existing postdoc or an enrolled graduate student. The project must be a new one, or a new extension of an existing project for work that could not be done without this funding. There may be up to two secondary PIs (student, postdoc, faculty or other personnel) designated, but there must be a single lead researcher.

Project leads must propose activities in cooperation with an academic sponsor (typically at an academic institution, to encourage intellectual merit and rigor of the project) *and* a conservation sponsor (government, NGO, or private organization staff to ensure application of the research) working towards land conservation in the Florida Wildlife Corridor geography. Applicants must explain how their research (e.g., a new method, dataset, tool, report, analysis, model, or durable collaboration) will measurably advance regional or statewide land protection and/or decision-making in the Corridor.

The fellowship is named for Dr. David Maehr, renowned conservation biologist known internationally as a world expert on large carnivores, most notably Black Bear and Florida panther. Maehr was a faculty member at the University of Kentucky and conducted research at Florida's Archbold Biological Station for 25 years. His work helped form the backbone of knowledge on which the Florida Wildlife Corridor geography and conservation campaign are built, and he trained and mentored many students and scientists who have gone on to careers in conservation. He was conducting an aerial survey of Highlands County Black Bears with friend and colleague Mason Smoak, when their plane went down southwest of Lake Placid, Florida in 2008.

The following application materials are required and should be submitted in this order to corridorfellowship@archbold-station.org as a single .docx or .pdf document named with the applicant's last name (e.g., "Smith.pdf"):

1. A written (up to 100 words) or graphical summary of the importance of the research to Corridor conservation, written to inspire and excite the public.
2. An up-to-four page project description. This must include:
    a. Name, address, email, and phone number of the project lead(s) (student or postdoc) and the academic and conservation sponsors;
    b. The research question or scientific need to be addressed, with sufficient background for a scientific and conservation practitioner audience to understand its importance;
    c. How addressing this need will measurably advance regional or statewide land protection and/or decision-making in the Corridor;
    d. The methods to be used;
    e. The specific outcomes and/or products of the research;
    f. Proposed deliverables at the completion of the project (paper, report, tool etc) and which should address the scientific and conservation outcomes;
3. A project timeline including expected completion date and date for final deliverables;
4. An itemized project budget (salary and fringe, travel, supplies, etc; see Archbold Indirect cost policy);
5. The CV of the project lead and names of others to be involved in the project;
6. Letters of support from the academic and conservation sponsors regarding the likelihood of success of the proposed activities in the 1-year timeframe, and the sponsor's supporting activities or other contributions to the project.
7. Faculty confirmation of budget approval from the institutions' sponsored programs office including a statement verifying that the administering institution will waive indirect costs in excess of 12% (see Archbold Indirect cost policy).

Pending review, funds will be distributed as early as January 15, 2024 to one of the academic or conservation sponsors. **Review and selection criteria:**

1. The degree to which the proposed activities would accelerate land protection, improved decision-making for efficient use of land protection resources, or recruitment of new resources for land protection in the Corridor. "Land protection" is broadly construed to include acquisition or easement, but also payment for ecosystem services schemes, and any private enterprise that maintains Corridor Opportunity Areas (those locations within the Corridor, but not yet conserved) in an undeveloped state.
2. The urgency of the scientific and/or land protection problem addressed by the proposed activities.
3. Clear evidence the proposed activities are new analysis, modeling, tool production, or a durable collaboration that would not occur without receipt of new grant funds. Any intellectual property developed by a candidate proposing new methodologies or tools will lie with the sponsoring academic and/or conservation institutions and not Archbold Biological Station.
4. The likelihood of project success within the 1-year timeframe, based on the project description, letters of support, and the professional record of the project leader(s) and sponsors.
5. Proposals for activities leading to
    a. Timely results with immediate applicability;

b. Scalable land protection solutions and sustainable processes that need not be funded heavily for continued successful implementation;
c. Advances in cutting-edge conservation science theory, technology, or methodology; and/or
d. Improved consideration of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in Corridor land protection

will be favorably reviewed.

6. Matching funds are encouraged, but not required.
7. The award must be made to a U.S. institution.
8. Project leader(s) must remain enrolled and/or employed at their current institution for the duration of the award spending period (up to 1 year).

Review will be conducted by a panel of Florida conservation scientists from across fields (e.g., ecology, water resources, demography, economics, and climatology).

Archbold welcomes and encourages applicants from diverse backgrounds and from groups traditionally underrepresented in the conservation science community. Current Archbold employees are not eligible to act as the lead or academic or conservation sponsor.

Questions may be directed to corridorfellowship@archbold-station.org.