Dr. HOLLY ABBANDONATO
Adjunct and Biologist
University of New Brunswick
506-262-8864
holly.abbandonato@unb.ca

March 31st, 2019

RE: McCain Postdoctoral Fellow

Department of Geography and Environment
Mount Allison University
Sackville, New Brunswick
Canada E4L 1E4

Dear Dr. David Lieske:

It is in my interest to apply for the position of McCain Postdoctoral Fellow at Mount Allison University.

I am currently a part-time Faculty Member at the University of New Brunswick in the Department of Forestry and Environmental Management, as well as a Biologist for the Canadian Forest Service. I have previous experience and a diverse background in teaching, outreach, science communication and research.

I have successfully taught four courses in the natural sciences including lectures and labs with excellent student feedback as both an instructor and teaching assistant:

ENVS 2023 Climate Change, Dept. of Forestry and Environmental Management
BIOL 2125/2135 Introduction to Botany, Dept. of Biology
BIOL 1017 Applications in Biology, Part II, Dept. of Biology
BIOL 1006 Applications in Biology, Part I, Dept, of Biology

My excitement for environmental topics has translated into the classes I teach. I am currently teaching the course ENVS 2023 Climate Change at the University of New Brunswick. This course focuses on enlightening students about the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the scientific method, and case studies on global projected impacts, for example temperature and precipitation modelled changes at the poles and the equator, sources of greenhouse emissions from food production, and the effects on marine, arctic and desert ecosystems. My students have also written a climate change journal where they discuss different climate change TedTalks by renowned climate scientists, economists, psychologists and writers which we discuss weekly in class.

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Due to the interdisciplinary nature of my Master's and PhD research, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to combine plant ecology with other fields such as climatology, geology, ecosystem restoration, entomology, environmental management, geology, and policy. As a result, my research interests are broad and constantly evolving.

I have successfully completed a PhD in Earth and Environmental Sciences, specializing in plant and seed ecology, ecosystem restoration, and environmental policy (see resume for publications). This was an interdisciplinary PhD program that provided state-of-the-art training in teaching, internships, outreach and citizen science by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the Science Museum of Trento, Italy.

I studied the effects of climate change on the timing of plant phenology in the Arctic during my Master's degree. I also investigated a novel pathogen found in an evergreen shrub, winter temperature stress tolerances in Arctic invertebrates, and changes in soil characteristics such as carbon:nitrogen and loss of ignition. Lastly, I was a field assistant on a project that was part of the International Tundra Experiment (ITEX) and FRAGILE site where we measured plant recovery after goose-grazing and simulated warming in Svalbard, Norway.

My passion for teaching and public speaking is reflected in my academic, professional and volunteer experience. I have given numerous conference presentations and talks (25+) at different institutions including Kew Gardens, the Norwegian Polar Institute, Syngenta, and the Fredericton Botanic Garden. In Washington D.C., I presented to academia and industry regarding worldwide ecological policy issues.

I greatly enjoy giving back to my community, while being able to raise awareness about environmental issues. For almost 2 years, I have been on the Board of the Fredericton Botanic Garden, the Chair of the Fundraising Committee, and the Leader of our newest garden bed: the pollinator garden, which is aimed at raising awareness about the loss of our pollinators.

With my experience in research, teaching and public engagement, I feel that I would make a strong candidate for this position and I greatly look forward to hearing from you about this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Holly Abbandonato, PhD, MSc