Aquatic Biology Career Outlook 2014–2015

Aquatic Biology Programs Available at Bemidji State University:
Major: Aquatic Biology (B.S.)
Field of Emphasis: Aquatic Systems, Fisheries Biology, Wetlands Ecology
Department Website: http://www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/departments/biology/aquatic

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS:
Aquatic biology involves the study of physical, geological, chemical, and biological factors that influence the productivity and integrity of freshwater systems. Aquatic biology includes the study of lentic (still) and lotic (moving) water. The aquatic biology major is designed for students preparing for careers with local, state, and federal agencies involved with water quality and natural resource management. With the appropriate selection of elective course work, it can also provide an ideal foundation for students intending to pursue graduate studies in limnology, aquatic ecology, and fisheries biology. Students should consult with their academic advisor in Aquatic Biology prior to developing their program. The aquatic biology program at Bemidji State University is the only institution in Minnesota to offer a four-year program.

EMPLOYMENT AREAS:
According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook, zoologists and wildlife biologists held about 20,100 jobs in 2012. Depending on their position, zoologists and wildlife biologists may spend considerable time in the field gathering data and studying animals in their natural habitats. About 58 percent of all zoologists and wildlife biologists were employed by federal and state governments; 7 percent worked in management, scientific, and technical consulting services research; 6% worked for colleges, universities, and professional schools; 4% worked for local government, excluding education and hospitals; and 10% worked for development in the physical, engineering, and life sciences.

PROJECTED DEMAND FOR AQUATIC BIOLOGY MAJORS IN MINNESOTA:
According to iseek.org, 670 biologists are employed in Minnesota, though competition for openings will be high due to the small number of jobs at the moment. Pay is closely tied to level of education. The average wage for a Zoologist (Aquatic Biologist falls in this category) in Minnesota is $26.78 an hour. This would include those who have advanced degrees.

PROJECTED DEMAND FOR AQUATIC BIOLOGY MAJORS NATIONWIDE:
Focus™2 reports the nationwide demand for Marine and Aquatic Biologists is projected to grow slower than average through 2022, with people established in their career, including masters & Ph. D. level graduates, generally earning between $51,850 and $90,400 per year. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers biologist’s beginning salary averaged $40,700 a year for bachelor’s degree recipients in 2012.

PLACEMENT INFORMATION FOR AQUATIC BIOLOGY GRADUATES:
Of the Bemidji State University 2012-2013 Aquatic Biology graduates, 77.8% have found employment in their field within one year of graduation, while 29.4% are continuing their education. This does not include students who were not seeking employment, unavailable, or had unknown status.
LIST OF EMPLOYERS WHO HAVE REPORTED HIRING BSU AQUATIC BIOLOGY GRADUATES: (This list only includes employment within one year of graduation.)

Aquarium-MinnAqua MN DNR, Duluth, MN
American Preclinical Service, LLC, Minneapolis, MN
Bemidji State University Water Institute, Bemidji, MN
City of Eagan, Eagan, MN
Department of Natural Resources, Bemidji, MN
Ducks Unlimited, Minot, ND Great Lakes
Essar, Minneapolis, MN
Gander Mountain, Cottage Grove, MN
Goodyear Tires, Winona, MN
Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Spirit Lake, IA
JF New & Associates, Walkerton, IN
Metropolitan Mosquito Control, St. Paul, MN
MinnAqua, Renville, MN
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, MN
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Brainerd, MN
Missouri Department of Conservation, Chillicothe, MO
MN Department of Natural Resources, Lake City, MN
MN Department of Natural Resources, Bemidji, MN
MN Department of Natural Resources, Brainerd, MN
MN Department of Natural Resources, Grand Rapids, MN
MN Department of Natural Resources, Lake City, MN
MN Department of Natural Resources, Aitkin, MN
MN DNR, Ortonville, MN
MN DNR, Brainerd, MN
MN DNR, Virginia, MN
Northeast Technical Services, Detroit Lakes, MN
REM Mentor Network, Bemidji, MN
RMB Environmental Laboratories, Brainerd, MN
Self-Employed, Brainerd, MN
United States Department of Game & Fish, Minot, ND
US Department of Agriculture, Hibbing, MN
US Department of Agriculture, International Falls, MN
Wabasha County Environmental Services, Wabasha, MN
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, Mesa, WA
West Central Environmental Consultants, Morris, MN

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WHERE BSU AQUATIC BIOLOGY GRADUATES HAVE GONE TO CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION:

Alexandria Technical & Community College, Alexandria, MN
Bemidji State University, Bemidji MN
California State University, Long Beach, CA
Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO
Lake Superior College, Duluth, MN
Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College, Cloquet, MN
Minnesota State University, Mankato, Mankato, MN
Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS
South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD
University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff, AR
University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS
University of Nebraska, Kearny, NE
The University Of Texas At Brownsville, Brownsville, TX
Western Nebraska Community College, Alliance, NE

Note 1: Some of the above job/career titles require advanced degrees or specialized training.
Note 2: Degrees alone do not get students jobs. Internships, summer jobs, volunteer work, part-time jobs, work-study positions, and active participation in student organizations on campus are all ways to become more competitive in a tight job market.
Note 3: Personal Competencies: it is also recommended that individuals be competent in a variety of communication methods, and computer skills are a must.
Bibliography:
FOCUS II. Career Dimensions Incorporated, Manchester, NH (2015)

For more information, please contact the Career Services Office in 207 Sattgast Hall or call us at 218-755-2038 or toll free at 800-657-3726.

For more job listings please visit:

http://www.bemidjistate.edu/students/services/career/job_search/jobs/