Aquatic Biology Career Outlook 2010-2011

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:
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 19,800 jobs in 2010. 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 60 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; and 7% worked for development in the physical, engineering, and life sciences.

Projected Demand for Aquatic Biology Majors in Minnesota:
The DISCOVER guidance system reports about 580 currently employed marine biologists in Minnesota. An advanced degree is recommended. The average salary is about $25.50 per hour for marine biologists. The number of jobs in this field will increase due, in part, to efforts to clean up and protect the environment.

Projected Demand for Aquatic Biology Majors Nationwide:
The DISCOVER guidance system reports the nationwide demand for marine biologists has a moderate growth rate, with a 1.3% expected growth rate per year. The average starting salary for marine biologists with an advanced degree was $61,000 annually, in 2011. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, from 2010 to 2011, beginning salary averaged $41,600 a year for bachelor’s degree recipients in marine biology.

Placement Information for Aquatic Biology Graduates:
Of the Bemidji State University 2009-2010 aquatic biology graduates, 80.0% have found employment in their field within one year of graduation. This does not include students who were not seeking employment, furthering their education, unavailable, or had unknown status.

A Partial List of Employers Who Have Reported Hiring BSU Aquatic Biology Graduates Since 1997:
(This list only includes employment within one year of graduation.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Preclinical Service, LLC</td>
<td>Study Coordinator I</td>
<td>Minneapolis, MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Natural Resources</td>
<td>Winter Creel Clerk</td>
<td>Bemidji, MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ducks Unlimited</td>
<td>Research Technician</td>
<td>Minot, ND</td>
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<tr>
<td>Great Lakes Aquarium-MinnAqua MN DNR</td>
<td>MinnAqua-Aquatic Educator</td>
<td>Duluth, MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iowa Department of Natural Resources</td>
<td>Fisheries Biologist</td>
<td>Spirit Lake, IA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JF New &amp; Associates</td>
<td>Ecological Resource Specialist</td>
<td>Walkerton, IN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Mosquito Control</td>
<td>Inspector</td>
<td>St. Paul, MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>MinnAqua</td>
<td>Aquaculture Technician</td>
<td>Renville, MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota Pollution Control Agency</td>
<td>Pollution &amp; Control Specialist</td>
<td>Brainerd, MN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Missouri Department of Conservation  
Technician  
Chillicothe, MO

MN Department of Natural Resources  
Aquatic Ecologist Specialist  
Brainerd, MN

MN Department of Natural Resources  
Intern  
Grand Rapids, MN

MN Department of Natural Resources  
Technician  
Lake City, MN

Northeast Technical Services  
Lab Technician I  
Virginia, MN

RMB Environmental Laboratories  
Field Services Assistant  
Detroit Lakes, MN

Self-Employed  
Professional Angler/Outdoor Promotions  
Brainerd, MN

United States Department of Game & Fish  
Biological Aid  
Minot, ND

US Department of Agriculture  
Agriculture Technician  
Hibbing, MN

US Department of Interior  
Aquatic Biological Science Technician  
International Falls, MN

Wabasha County Environmental Services  
Environmental Health Specialist  
Wabasha, MN

West Central Environmental Consultants  
Environmental Technician  
Morris, MN

Colleges and Universities Where BSU Aquatic Biology Graduates Have Gone to Continue Their Education:

Bemidji State University, Bemidji, MN  
South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD

California State University, Long Beach, CA  
University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff, AR

Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO  
University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS  
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:

Annual Graduate Follow-Up Study 1997-2010. Bemidji State University, Bemidji, MN (2011)

Bemidji State University Undergraduate Catalog 2011-2012. Bemidji State University, Bemidji, MN (2011)

DISCOVER. The American Testing Program, Educational Technology Center, Hunt Valley, MD (2011)


For more information, please contact the Career Services Office in 102 Sanford Hall or call us at 218-755-2038 or toll free at 800-657-3726.