

## The Janice Lee Fenske Excellence in Fisheries Management Fellowship

The Department of Fisheries and Wildlife (Department) at Michigan State University is currently accepting applications for the Janice Lee Fenske Excellence in Fisheries Management Fellowship. Jan Fenske was the first female biologist for the Fisheries Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. During her 27 years of service, her love of the environment compelled her to work untiringly for the long-term protection and sustainable use of the State's aquatic resources. The intent of this award is to honor Jan's attitude, deep commitment to the resource, integrity, and memory by providing graduate students from the under-served community in the Department with additional financial and mentoring opportunities to assist them in developing successful careers in fisheries management. For more information about Jan Fenske, refer to the [Biography of Janice L. Fenske](#) in the Michigan Chapter of the American Fisheries Society website.

### Financial Award and Mentoring Experience

A single recipient will receive a financial award and be engaged through a rich mentoring experience. Funding for this award is spread out over the fall, spring and summer semesters. The recipient is expected to work closely with a university mentor and with a mentor from a state or federal fisheries management agency to address a practical issue facing the agency<sup>1</sup>. Through these mentoring relationships, it is expected that the award recipient will benefit greatly from collaborations with university and agency mentors, from interactions with others in the agency, and from their focused consideration of a high priority, real-world issue that challenges the management agency.



DEPARTMENT OF  
**FISHERIES AND  
WILDLIFE**

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<sup>1</sup> Eligible state agencies include fisheries management agencies in Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Tribes who are federally recognized under the 1836 Treaty of Washington are also eligible. Eligible federal agencies include the Great Lakes Fishery Commission in Ann Arbor, Michigan and the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Ecological Services Office in East Lansing, Michigan.

## Application Requirements

To apply for this fellowship, applicants **must be graduate students of the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Michigan State University during the Fellowship award year**. Applicants may be Master's or Doctoral students in the initial stages of their research program. Applications will be evaluated based on requirements listed below, and application materials shall include:

1. A cover letter that clearly articulates the applicant's career goals and demonstrates evidence of leadership potential in the field of fisheries management.
2. A resume or CV that includes the following information (along with other relevant information):
  - a. Educational history including:
    - i. Overall grade point average and grade point average in the major field of study for each degree earned.
    - ii. Overall grade point average and grade point average in the major field of study for completed semesters in the current program of study.
    - iii. Relevant courses taken for each degree earned.
    - iv. Relevant courses completed or enrolled in as part of the current program of study.
    - v. Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores.
  - b. Employment or volunteer activities in the field of fisheries management.
  - c. Employment or volunteer activities and leadership roles in academic or civic communities.
  - d. Affiliation with a State or Student Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, including the initial year of membership, meeting attendance and participation, committee involvement, and presentations made at chapter meetings.
  - e. Affiliation with the American Fisheries Society Parent Organization, including the initial year of membership, meeting attendance and participation, committee involvement, and presentations made at annual meetings of the Society.
3. Identification of specific mentors within the Department and within an approved mentoring agency.
4. Identification of a specific project that is of high priority to the mentoring agency and that addresses a practical application of fisheries management, as opposed to more theoretical research. This project may be a component of the applicant's graduate research project; however, it must be accomplished within one year.
5. A clear project proposal written by the applicant with guidance from the mentors. The project proposal should include the need, goals, objectives, methodology, expected outcomes, and time frame.

6. Identification of time constraints for accomplishing the project, including a description of how the management agency project fits with the applicant's class schedule, research requirements, and other responsibilities.
7. A separate letter of recommendation from each of the applicant's mentors in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and the mentoring agency. In this letter, the mentors should describe their commitment to meet with the applicant for feedback and planning over a one-year period. The mentors are expected to file quarterly reports on the fellowship experience and attend the final meeting with the Fellowship Review Committee. The mentors should also describe their ability to guide the applicant in the following areas:
  - Act as a source of information on the mission and goals of the Department and mentoring agency
  - Give feedback on observed performance
  - Provide recommendations on activities that will add to experience and skill development
  - Provide encouragement
  - Provide opportunities and resources
  - Provide increased exposure and visibility through attendance at various meetings both within and outside the mentoring agency
  - Assist in planning a career path

In the letter of recommendation from the Department mentor it should also be acknowledged that the funding provided with this fellowship is *in addition to* other assistantship or fellowship support held by the applicant during the Fenske Fellowship period. The Department mentor should indicate what other support will be available to the student during this period. The Fenske award is intended to support the additional efforts undertaken by the awardee for their Fenske project, not their thesis or dissertation research.

8. Unless the applicant is being sponsored by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Fisheries Division, a letter of recommendation from the head of the mentoring agency.

## **Beginning the Application Process**

Interested applicants are encouraged to contact the Review Committee via e-mail prior to formal application. Upon request, a committee member will advise prospective students on the application process and will provide guidance on connecting with mentors and mentoring agencies. Applicants are also encouraged to invite their academic advisors to contact the Review Committee.

### Review Committee Members:

Randy Claramunt, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

[claramuntr@michigan.gov](mailto:claramuntr@michigan.gov)

Dana Infante, Fisheries and Wildlife Chair, Michigan State University

[roloff@msu.edu](mailto:roloff@msu.edu)

Jessica Mistak, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

[mistakj@michigan.gov](mailto:mistakj@michigan.gov)

Seth Herbst, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

[herbsts1@michigan.gov](mailto:herbsts1@michigan.gov)

## **Submission**

Application materials should be sent to:

Janice Lee Fenske Excellence in Fisheries Management Fellowship  
Committee

C/o Dr. Dana Infante

Department of Fisheries and Wildlife

480 Wilson Road

East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1222

[infanted@msu.edu](mailto:infanted@msu.edu)

Electronic submissions are preferred.

Application deadline: February 14, 2025

**(all materials must be RECEIVED by this date)**

## **Acceptance**

Applicants will be notified of their acceptance status no later than April 18, 2025.

Once accepted, the applicant will be responsible for reporting requirements that include quarterly progress reports, publications, and formal presentations described in more detail on the following page.

## **Requirements for the Janice Lee Fenske Excellence in Fisheries Management Fellow and Mentoring Committee**

1. **Quarterly Updates.** Both the Fellow and the Fellow's Mentoring Committee must provide the Review Committee with quarterly updates on the project and the fellowship experience.
  - a. Quarterly reports will be due by September 30, December 31, March 31, and June 30.
  - b. The fall quarterly update may take place during a face-to-face meeting with the Fellow, Mentoring Committee, and Review Committee.
2. **Oral Presentations.** The Fellow must orally present project results either during the year of the fellowship or the following year in at least two of the following formal venues:
  - a. Department of Fisheries and Wildlife's Annual Graduate Student Research Symposium.
  - b. Michigan Chapter of the American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting.
  - c. The Midwest Fisheries and Wildlife Conference.
  - d. American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting.
3. **Written Publications.** The Fellow must write an article describing their project and the fellowship experience either during the year of the fellowship or the following year for each of the following publications:
  - a. The Spotlight (a magazine published each semester by graduate students of the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife).
  - b. The American Fisheries Society biweekly email newsletter.
4. **Fellowship Network.** During the Fellowship year and in following years, current and past Fellows will be asked to grow the Fenske Fellowship network by conducting the following activities:
  - a. Meet with prospective Fellowship applicants.
  - b. Attend informal luncheons or dinners during the annual American Fisheries Society meeting, or other meetings where three or more Fellows are in attendance.
  - c. Maintain Fenske Fellowship activity information on the internet, including but not limited to Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Janice-Lee-Fenske-Excellence-in-Fisheries-Management-Fellowship/170582020622298> and Word Press blog <https://fenskefellow.wordpress.com/>.
5. **Final Reports.** All final reports must be submitted within 3 months of the end of the Fellowship.
  - a. The Fellow must prepare a final report for the Review Committee that describes the fellowship project in detail, their experience as a Fellow, participation in the Fellowship Network, lessons learned, and advice for future Fellows.
  - b. The Mentoring Committee must prepare a final report describing the mentoring experience and advice for future mentors.