



**ECOSYSTEM SCIENCE
AND SUSTAINABILITY
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**

The TRILLAR Lab, in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Sustainability within the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University, has a **four-year PhD/ Graduate Assistant position** open to work under the supervision of Dr. Andrea Baudoin Farah on a transdisciplinary project centered on **indigenous urban realities and rural-urban dynamics in the Llanos de Moxos (Beni, Bolivia)**.

The PhD student will support the Department of Ecosystem Science and Sustainability as a Teaching Assistant for 1-2 years and will support the TRILLAR Lab as a Graduate Research Assistant for the remaining 2-3 years (for a total of 4 years of GA support). The position will be based in Fort Collins, Colorado, with expected extended fieldwork in Bolivia.

Doctoral research project

Indigenous communities of the mid-upper Mamoré have identified the “emptying” of their communities as one of the major challenges they face in planning for their wellbeing, livelihoods, and the (re)production of their culture. At the same time, indigenous families and community members have increasingly complex life strategies that draw on multiple residencies, networks, and mobilizations of diverse resources and “capitals” (natural, social, human, political, cultural etc.). Urban spaces have crucial and understudied roles within those strategies. This project aims to contribute to filling the gaps in the understanding of these dynamic indigenous realities that unfold at the interfaces between indigenous communities, territories, the urban space, and other geographies. It will be carried out in coordination with the Llanos de Moxos Working Group. Results of this research are expected to contribute to discussions and planning processes in indigenous communities of the mid-upper Mamoré. The successful candidate will work with their academic committee, local partners, and indigenous communities in Bolivia to define the specific scope, approach, and methodology for the project.

The TRILLAR Lab

TRILLAR stands for “Transformations of Rural and Indigenous Livelihoods, Lands, and Autonomous Regimes.” “Trillar,” in Spanish, means “to separate grain from shaft.” We use this verb as a metaphor for the lab’s scientific endeavor, which aims to identify and discuss truths through rigorous mixed methods and dialogues among and across diverse ways of knowing.

Our objective is to contribute to more just and sustainable societies by generating knowledge, fostering critical thinking, and building academic and practice-oriented skills. We tackle questions of change and transformation of social-ecological systems – particularly in rural and indigenous lands – in the face of climate change, rapid urbanization, the expansion of extractive frontiers, and increasing connections to global commodity chains. We do so by bridging social and natural sciences; quantitative and qualitative research methods; and fundamental, applied, and transdisciplinary approaches. Our interests include – but are not limited to – land tenure, land use change, livelihoods, food security and sovereignty, cross-scalar and territorial governance of natural resources, territorial indigenous autonomy, food security and sovereignty,

ecosystem services and conservation, and urban-rural interfaces. While the lab is open in geographic focus, our work has been centered in the Andes-Amazon (and especially in the Llanos de Moxos).

[Llanos de Moxos Working Group](#)

The Llanos de Moxos (or Moxos Plains) are the largest savanna and wetland ecosystem in the Amazon (120,000 km²). It is a confluence zone of four biogeographic regions: the Amazon, the Cerrado, the Chiquitanía and the Chaco. Three large rivers: the Beni, the Mamoré and the Iténez flow through this region and, in their union, form the Madera River, the most important tributary of the Amazon basin, which provides 20% of its flow and 50% of its nutrients/sediments. The Llanos de Moxos are therefore a crucial site for the ecological balance of the Amazon: they sustain biodiversity, modulate water flows, regulate the hydrological cycle, control flooding, and cushion the impacts of climate change.

The high diversity of savanna habitats, wetlands, forest islands and riparian forests, led to the development of a significant wealth of flora and fauna. Human presence in the Llanos de Moxos dates back 10,000 years. Their interaction with the natural environment shaped a biocultural landscape over time. The relationship between humans and nature was at the core of the historical ecological and cultural transformations and mutual influences that define spatial occupation. Its linguistic diversity, with a large number of isolated languages, is an expression of the cultural heritage of the indigenous peoples of this region. Currently, half of Bolivia's 36 indigenous peoples are found in the department of Beni, where the Llanos de Moxos are located.

The Working Group for the Llanos de Moxos is made up of civil society, academic, financial institutions, businesses and social organizations committed to knowledge, sustainable development and the well-being of local populations, and to the conservation of the natural, historical, cultural and economic values of the unique landscape of the Llanos de Moxos in the Amazon Basin.

[Ecosystem Sustainability Graduate Program at CSU](#)

Many physical, ecological and social factors interact to shape the future of our ecosystems and societies. CSU's innovative new graduate program in Ecosystem Sustainability enables students to develop core competencies in ecosystem science—the study of organisms and the environment—and apply that knowledge to address real-world issues. We help develop leaders in sustainability science: a new generation of practitioners able to address complex, integrated social and ecological problems, in collaborative partnerships with researchers, resource users and decision-makers.

Our graduates have the tools to understand complex scientific questions in sustainability, and the leadership and collaborative skills required to address current and future issues in sustainability. The program serves as a foundation for a wide range of careers, including academic and scholarly professions, and work in government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and corporate and entrepreneurial environments.

Join us, and you will work at the cutting edge of new research on ecosystem sustainability. Collaborating with some of the world's leading ecosystem and sustainability scientists, you will explore solutions to global problems related to water resources, food supplies, energy, greenhouse gas management, land use change, climate change, and environmental justice, amongst others

Qualifications

Required

- Strong interest and broad expertise in social-ecological systems and justice and sustainability issues in Latin America, as evidenced by relevant Bachelor's and Master's degrees;
- Strong interest in theoretical and methodological innovation, especially through interdisciplinary approaches;
- Affinity to, and experience with, qualitative OR quantitative research methods, AND interest in developing mixed methods approaches that bridge quantitative and qualitative research methods;
- A commitment to participatory and transdisciplinary research and ethical engagement with local communities and partners (from research design to results dissemination);
- Strong interest and ability to work collaboratively within the TRILLAR Lab, CSU, the Llanos de Moxos Working Group, and other partners;
- Fluent in Spanish and English (interviews will be conducted in both languages).
- Interest and availability to conduct fieldwork in the Llanos de Moxos region (Beni) in Bolivia, including remote areas and communities.

Desired

- Strong interest and broad expertise in social-ecological systems and justice and sustainability issues in Bolivia or the Llanos de Moxos, as evidenced by prior research or work experience.
- Affinity to, and experience with, qualitative AND quantitative research methods, AND interest in developing mixed methods approaches that bridge quantitative and qualitative research methods;
- Experience with participatory and transdisciplinary research and ethical engagement with local communities and partners (from research design to results dissemination) as evidenced by prior research or work experience;
- Strong interest and ability to work collaboratively as evidenced by prior research or work experience;
- Prior experience conducting fieldwork in Bolivia or other Latin American countries, including remote areas;
- A solid publication track-record (which can include non-peer reviewed literature and materials written in non-English languages);
- Experience communicating research results in different formats for diverse audiences.

Apply

Please send your Intent to Apply to Andrea.Baudoin_Farah@colostate.edu, indicating your name and "TRILLAR Lab PhD position app" in the subject line of the email. Your application, combined in one single pdf, should include, in order:

- a motivation letter explaining your interest and suitability for the position;
- a full curriculum vitae (CV);
- the contact details of two references/referees (letters of recommendation are not required in the first selection round);
- up to 3 selected publications (not required).

The application deadline is August 31st, 2023 (23:59 MST). Additionally, an official application to CSU's Graduate School must be submitted at <https://gradadmissions.colostate.edu/apply/>. Please visit <https://warnercnr.colostate.edu/ecosystem-sustainability-apply/> to view full application instructions. The successful candidate is expected to start in the Spring 2024 (January).