Waiver Request for Prerequisites

I graduated from Pomona College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Environmental Analysis in spring of 2019, about 5 ½ years ago. During my time at Pomona, I took classes involving social and natural sciences as well as statistics. For natural sciences, starting in freshman year with a geology course, I proceeded to take Introductory Genetics followed by multiple ecology and biology classes. Introductory Genetics, in particular, required use of the chi-square test and t-test, as well as null hypothesis testing and p-values. Environmental and Spatial Statistics continued some of these concepts but forayed into the use of spatial analysis and practical environmental applications as well. For social sciences, I mainly focused on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) courses, which not only covered geography and ArcGIS technologies but also involved some use of statistics to perform spatial analysis.

For three months after graduating, I worked as a summer forest research technician in Iowa, learning how to measure tree diameter at breast height, estimate percent canopy cover, and document data from transects. Simultaneously, I completed a contract for the Pomona College Economics Department to help match Los Angeles-area residential property IDs with Assessor Identification Numbers (AINs). To do this, I overlaid the two datasets within an ArcGIS Pro map, performed a spatial join between point data and polygon data, and used Stata software to clean and deduplicate the data, thereby helping departmental professors to more easily read data as part of an ongoing research effort.

In the fall of 2019, I joined the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) as an AmeriCorps member and began learning about habitat restoration practices. While the majority of my time in service was spent performing tough, physical field work, my crew also helped the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe monitor and document the presence of invasive Eurasian water milfoil. In my time off, I also volunteered with Jefferson Land Trust, a local non-profit, helping to reorganize their filing system and devise ways in which ArcGIS could be used to improve their records and help prioritize future restoration areas.

In that same period, I was working as a remote contractor for the nonprofit Eden Reforestation to assess potential areas for future mangrove restoration. Eden Reforestation, now known as Eden People + Planet, is a global nonprofit that partners with local communities around the world to restore ecosystems and foster healthy relationships between people and landscapes. My role with them was to source online geospatial datasets, such as tidal zones, vegetation, digital elevation models, land use, and forest cover loss, to name a few, and overlay them on GIS maps. Then, I would perform initial analyses on potential areas that needed mangrove restoration, and report on my results. I would also provide easy-to-decipher maps to supplement reports.

Five months into my first WCC term, the COVID pandemic began. While I had hoped to continue to make connections and strengthen my professional and analytical abilities while serving local nonprofits, the shutdown made this difficult. The remainder of 2020, as well as 2021 and 2022, were difficult times for everyone. Isolation is difficult to function in and some of

my goals to continue my education fell by the wayside. Things as simple as safety, employment, residence stability, and transportation became number one priorities.

After two AmeriCorps terms and six months as a supervisor, I moved into my current role as Stewardship Manager with the Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group, a non-profit based in Belfair, WA. I regularly write grants, compile field datasets, and analyze and report grant metrics. I also supervise and coordinate field crews, perform field work, host volunteer restoration events, and manage budgets – including creating proposed budgets for contracts and grant proposals, as well as keeping tabs on amounts left over in each funding source and deciding where that money should go. Each year, I create feature layers on ArcGIS Online for invasive plant point collection, with data entry fields to better analyze the amount and density of species. After the field season is finished, I then use those feature layers to calculate stream miles surveyed, total acres searched, solid acres treated, solid acres surveyed, parcels treated, and landowner permissions. This is compiled into a report for the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA). I also apply for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits each year, report herbicide metrics at the end of the year, and ensure that my crew and I fulfill the requirements of 40 pesticide credits every five years to maintain our herbicide applicator licenses.

It is my hope that my college courses, in tandem with my professional experience, will allow me to waive these prerequisites in order to gain entry in the Evergreen State College MES program.