



Seeing the forest for the trees

Best part of the job: Analyzing fires and the passion and hard work I put into them. Every completed fire is a personal victory for me.

Most challenging part of the job: Finding the right Landsat scene pair to analyze a fire. The scene pair has to be just right.

Favorite plant: Curleaf Mountain Mahogany. That's where the shed antlers are!

Outside UFI: I value my family. I love spending every minute I can with my wife, Braylee. I love going in the mountains to look for antlers, catch big fish on the fly-rod, ride motorcycles, trail run, and praise God for what he has given me in life.

Student Profile: Sheven Andersen | Undergraduate Technical Analyst

"At the UFI, I got a tremendous amount of experience and skills. By the time I hit WILD 3810, a class that is very heavy on coding in R Studio, when other students felt like they were a fish out of water, I felt very comfortable. In WATS 4930, which is Advanced GIS and Spatial Analyses, I felt very comfortable with the functionality of ArcMap before I stepped foot in class. Megan Nasto was a great mentor. She always made individual success a top priority. She was very understanding when class loads got heavy, always helped answer questions whether work or school related, and even helped guide me in writing a professional resume and cover letter. When you work for the UFI, you aren't just working for an on campus lab. You are joining a small work family that helps each other out as much as possible."

Sheven's interest in the natural resources developed from spending time with his grandfather. His grandfather worked his entire career in the United States Forest Service (USFS) eventually becoming a District Ranger. Sheven loved listening to his grandfather's stories about working in monitoring plots in the backcountry of Nevada, harvesting timber in Idaho, marking cattle in New Mexico, and fighting fire all across the western US. He became very aware of his passion to follow in his grandfather's footsteps. As such, Sheven enrolled in the S.J. and Jessie E. Quinney College of Natural Resources from Utah State University (USU) to acquire a B.S. in Forestry. In his tenure at USU, Sheven enjoyed interacting with professors he felt took pride in making sure he understood the concepts and tools needed to succeed in his future. He feels that the College's biggest strength is their focus on preparing students to be "modern" foresters that are proficient with computer software and programs and technical writing. In the latter half of his time at USU, Sheven worked for the Utah Forest Institute (UFI) as an Undergraduate Technical Analyst to further refine these technical skills. He credits his education at USU and his time with the UFI for obtaining the coveted permanent position of Forester at the USFS in the same forest his grandfather managed – the Caribou-Targhee National Forest in Idaho. Here's to continuing the Andersen legacy!



What Sheven wishes everyone knew about forest ecology?

I have heard countless times from people, "oh, you're a forestry major? So you just grow Christmas trees? You just count trees and write people tickets in the mountains all day?" I wish people knew that forestry is so much more. Forestry means making ecologically sound silvicultural management decisions to ensure renewable timber harvesting. This timber is the same lumber that peoples' homes, businesses, and livelihoods are built out of.