PhD assistantship in soil carbon valuation

Sequestration of carbon in soils has been recognized as an important tool in climate mitigation. Yet, understanding of the magnitude of soil carbon change is poorly constrained, and recent evidence suggests carbon loss from the most carbon-rich of soils. Furthermore, management activities appear to accelerate soil carbon loss by increasing disturbance frequency. It is clear that the collective actions of humankind and our declared values about carbon sequestration in ecosystems are at odds. In order to bring them closer together, we need to understand the functional interactions that affect soil C balance, and the feedbacks between ecological and market processes. This is an opportunity for a curious students to work on the interface of ecosystem ecology and natural resource economics, summarizing our current understanding on the topic, and develop optimization models that consider feedbacks in both biological and economic systems. The ideal candidate should have a background in ecosystem ecology, natural resource economics, soil science or a related field. Experience working with models or large datasets, and proficiency in at least one scientific programming language (e.g. R, Matlab, Python, SAS) are also highly desirable.

The position may start any time in 2019 (spring, summer or fall semester), pending availability of and the competitiveness of the candidate to the university fellowships. Review of applications for the spring term will begin on September 15th. If the position remains unfilled, the review for the fall term will begin on November 15th. To apply, please send a cover letter including a summary of your research experience and interests, curriculum vitae, copies of academic transcripts, coding and writing examples, names and contact information of three references, and GRE and TOEFL scores (for international applicants) to Dr. Asko Noormets (noormets@tamu.edu). The departmental graduate student acceptance criteria and procedures are outlined at https://essm.tamu.edu/academics/graduate/prospective/. AA/EOE.