

Student Geologist: A Day in the Life

CONSIDERING A CAREER IN GEOLOGY?

Geology is an exciting career for people interested in the Earth, mineral resource development, or a wide range of related fields where a background in earth science is an asset. Careers in Geology offer opportunities for field and office work in many areas of the world, often in places that few people ever get visit. The work that is done now by geologists affects the decisions of future generations.

HERE'S WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE A GEOLOGY SUMMER STUDENT

Typically, summer students in a geologic field program will assist the project geologists with all day-to-day tasks.

Two examples of geologic field programs standard during the summer are soil sampling and geologic mapping and prospecting.



Hiking location in northwestern Saskatchewan

Summer students start their day at 7 am by having breakfast with the team and preparing their gear for the day ahead. Some programs are based in hotels or lodging in a small community, whereas others operate out of small, remote field camps. The geologists will advise what gear needs to be packed for the day's duties but will typically include a shovel and rock hammer, sample bags, rain gear, GPS, compass, water, and food.

Once the team has their gear prepared, they will mobilize to whatever location they are sampling or mapping that day. Mobilization of units happens in various ways, including trucks or SUVs, quads, and ATVs, or, for remote locations, a helicopter.

Soil sampling involves:

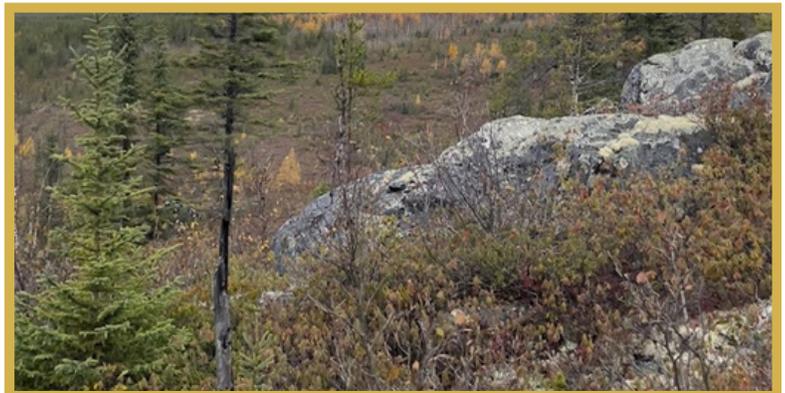
- Collecting samples with a shovel from a distinct soil horizon.
- Placing it in sample bags.
- Describing the sample in a booklet while marking the location with a GPS.

Soil samples are done on an organized grid, whereas prospecting and mapping, while similar in procedure, are based on what rocks are found and the outcrop exposure of the area. A sampling of soil profiles or outcrop rock types can add up quickly, and your backpack can easily exceed 50 pounds of samples in a day of work.

Depending on your travel time back to camp, work will typically wrap up between 4 and 5 pm, with the team returning for supper. After supper, project geologists often spend one to two hours in camp organizing samples or data from the day, creating digital representations of rock types, soil samples, or the traverses the team accomplished.

Evenings in camp include much socializing with your co-workers or quiet alone time, depending on your personality. Some people spend their free time in the evenings exploring the nearby camp, and some watch tv or play video games, depending on internet availability. Most modern camps have ways to communicate with loved ones, either through web calls or social media.

Work in remote camps is typically scheduled on a rotation, where a day just like this is repeated every day. Shifts can last anywhere from 7 to 21 days straight, with the average being 10 to 14, followed by some time off to rest, and see family and friends. Typical shifts in exploration and mining are 2 & 2's (two weeks of work followed by two weeks of vacation). Still, most students opt to make the most of their summer experience opportunity and earning potential by working 3 & 1's, taking one week off per month.



Outcrop sampling location in Quebec



Field camp in northeastern Saskatchewan

If this sounds exciting to you, check out our summer student opportunities!



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