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FOR RELEASE FRIDAY, APRIL 18

The National Science Foundation has awarded a grant of \$13,000 to two Montana State University researchers for a three-year study of the ecology of Alpine areas in Montana, MSU officials announced Thursday.

Dr. Richard D. Taber of the School of Forestry and Dr. Robert S. Hoffman of the Zoology Dept. will collaborate on the study, which is expected to produce long-range results of value to Montana's economy.

They said the purpose of the investigation is threefold: to add to basic knowledge of plants and animals in inaccessible areas which have not been intensively studied in the past; to gain a greater understanding of plant succession in areas where the plant cover is important as forage for livestock or game and as a watershed cover; to seek comparisons with Arctic conditions, which have been intensively studied in recent years.

The first summer's work will cover about 10 stations, well-distributed north and south along the Rockies and eastward into the isolated mountain ranges of central Montana. A crew of three men will be in the field all summer to take full advantage of the short period of accessibility in the high mountains, the researchers said.

The two scientists will receive help and guidance in problems of plant ecology through an informal arrangement with the Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research at the University of Colorado.

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