Abram Iskander

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Education:

MSc Agricultural and Resource Economics   *September 2018 – September 2020 (Expected)*
University of Alberta

BSc Environmental & Conservation Sciences -   *September 2014 - April 2018*
University of Alberta

Related Work Experience:

Graduate Research Assistant, University of Alberta   *May 1, 2019 – Present*

- The thesis involved researching the current federal agriculture policy framework (CAP) and proposing a new tool to replace Agri-Stability which currently supports farmer's incomes when they experience volatility. The proposed tool supports incomes but used an area's average margin to index for the individual's production margin. This method reduces the time and information needed to process indemnity payments to farmers, which has been an identified issue with Agri-Stability.

- Researched agricultural insurance indemnity trigger mechanisms, and alternatives used across the world including area-based insurance, revenue insurance, peril-specific insurance, among other forms of index insurance. Identified key problems with using index insurance, such as basis risk, and strategized to address those issues in the program design.

- Created a whole-farm index-insurance policy based on margins by constructing an insurance indemnity function which could be used in simulations.

- Simulated expected insurance policy performance using a Monte Carlo simulation where a copula distribution was created for farm yields, prices, and costs.

- Wrote a thesis paper on the current Canadian policy and similar policies across the world as a comparison to the proposed program. Guided the research using academic literature and constructed a model to test the effectiveness of index-based insurance policies in a Canadian context. Defended the research in an adjudication committee of faculty members.

Economic Development Summer Student, Sturgeon County   *May 28, 2018 – August 29, 2018*

- Business patterns data analysis across all NAICS categories using StatsCan Census data and primary data collected by Sturgeon County, used in investor and council presentations

- Partnered with GIS department to develop new business survey where data can be presented spatially, and information management requirements are reduced.

- Collaborated across departments to spatially analyze home based business data and 2016 Census data using GIS software, guiding business support decisions in the county

- Worked collectively with department to create site selection packages that promoted Sturgeon County's infrastructure and economic assets to prospective investors

- Researched business incubation and accelerator programs and potential rural models that county businesses could benefit from

- Identified regional construction development trends, and created a report comparing regional development trends with provincial and national development indices. The report also presented economic trends affecting building development in Sturgeon County

Data Management Technician, Elk Island National Park   *January 2017 - August 2017*

- Researched information management best practices and implemented those suited for Elk Island's ecological information

- Compiled and analyzed historic elk population data for population management proposals for year 2018

- Presented a written and verbal report on recommendations for handling of historic and current ecological data, from collection to archival, for effectiveness and accuracy in resource management.

Administrative Assistant, Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP)   *May 2014 - August 2015*

- Reviewed and coordinated Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act and Water Act applications and approvals

- Coordinated with proponents and AEP departments to ensure regulatory applications and approvals were compliant with department policy

- Managed database that resolved 1-year regulatory backlog within 7 weeks

- Co-created and implemented employee training manual used by employees to assist in other roles due to understaffing pressures

Technical Skills:

Regression Analysis:

- Analyzed and ran various regression models using econometric techniques for environmental and agricultural research objectives using the software Stata. Capable of analyzing panel, time series and cross-sectional data formats. Familiar with identification techniques such as regression discontinuity, difference-in-difference, instrumental variable, etc. used in impact evaluations.

Monte Carlo Simulations
- Created multiple scenario analysis for proposed agriculture insurance trigger mechanisms to compare to current mechanisms. Simulations involved creating joint distributions with copulas to properly map relationships between variables.

Microsoft Office
- Managed data dumps from StatsCan and created infographics for business decisions
- Created Excel pivot tables; linear programming tables; cost benefit analysis sheets for agricultural, environmental, and forestry management issues; regression analysis of hydrological data sets

Stata
- Strong understanding of statistical software used in economic analysis
- Experience creating variety of regression models, and DEA analysis

Python, SQL
- Completed courses on DataCamp for SQL and Python including data manipulation, and database management

Community Service:

VP Sports, Resource Economics Student Association   *May 1, 2019 – April 30, 2020*

- Organized monthly physical activities for graduate students including campus intramurals, hikes, rock climbing, ski events, etc.
- Attended monthly meetings for the student group to plan events, and offer support to the department's student body.
- Completed risk assessments and emergency action plans for events

Finance Executive, Student Energy   *January 2016 - December 2016*

- Initiated research for wind turbines on campus by bringing together Energy Management & Sustainable Operations, Mechanical Engineering Department, and student groups
- Coordinated sponsorships, speakers, and event logistics for the 2016 Alberta Student Energy Summit

Edmonton Energy Efficiency (E3) Youth Education Program   *December 2016*

- Presented ideas about a wind energy project on campus, and renewable energy technologies to junior and high school students