



# AmeriCorps Project Conserve 2021 – 2022 Service Description



**AmeriCorps Position Title:** Elk Volunteer Program Assistant  
**Host Site:** Great Smoky Mountains National Park

**Service Term:** September 1, 2021 – July 31, 2022

**Supervisor Name:** James Latendresse  
**Supervisor Title:** Supervisory Park Ranger  
**Supervisor E-mail:** james\_latendresse@nps.gov

**Physical Address:** 60 Enloe Floyd Bottoms Rd., Cherokee, NC 28719  
**Mailing Address (if different):** same

**Phone:** office: 828-497-1913; cell: 828-736-9476  
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**Website:** N/A

## **Host Site Mission Statement:**

Great Smoky Mountains National Park is an Appalachian mountain sanctuary where life thrives, science advances and cultural connections resonate. The mission statement for the division of Visitor and Resource Protection is to prepare and empower professionals who foster the protection, support and guardianship of employees, visitors and resources.

## **Summary of Position:**

As a shared position between the divisions of Visitor & Resource Protection and Resource Education, this internship offers a diverse set of opportunities for a candidate interested in elk management and public education. The primary purpose is to provide volunteer program assistance for the Oconaluftee Rovers and the Elk Bugle Corps programs that assist with the protection of reintroduced elk and provide wildlife education to visitors in the Cherokee and Cataloochee Valley areas of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

## **Qualifications – Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

- Be prepared to work safely outdoors in a variety of weather conditions. Ability to stay healthy and well hydrated while working outdoors, especially during hot and humid summer months.
- Ability to maintain a positive attitude while working with park visitors in a safe, friendly and professional manner under potentially stressful situations.
- Willingness to work weekends and assigned duty schedule.
- Skill in written and oral communications and ability to work well with diverse populations.
- General knowledge of Microsoft office software suite to produce phone lists, work schedules, email distribution groups and assist with annual reporting requirements.
- Ability to be trained to operate a park handheld radio to communicate clearly and accurately. Ability to provide dispatch and rangers with information needed to report emergency situations such as a motor vehicle accident, medical situations or a lost person incident in a professional manner.
- Eligible applicants must be at least 18 years of age, be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States, and consent to a criminal history check.

**Preferred Service Hours / Weekly Schedule:**

Friday- Tuesday, 8 hours/day tour of duty, shift times will vary based on sunset times- approximately 11:00am-7:30pm

**Position Responsibilities and Duties:****Conservation Education: 50%**

- The Project Conserve member will be trained in principles of interpretation and answer questions posed by the public when working at the Oconaluftee Visitor Center.
- The service member will develop educational programs about the significance and uniqueness of park resources including the Elk at GRSMNP. The programs will be presented to the general public, and to local school districts, using the various techniques and platforms including visitor center contacts, virtual distance learning, and through social media platforms.
- The service member will be contributing to the preservation of the cultural and natural resource through visitor education and education.

**Volunteer Engagement: 50%**

- The Elk Volunteer programs at GRSMNP are long term well established programs. The Project Conserve member will assist with annual recruitment of new volunteers, and assist with coordination and instruction at the annual required training for volunteers.
- Approximately 30% percent of the volunteer infrastructure program portion of this position's time will be spent learning how to coordinate, facilitate and manage a volunteer program. In coordination with the supervisor, the service member will create phone lists, work schedules, and track volunteer time. The service member will answer volunteer questions and concerns, update program manuals, and assist with an annual needs assessment with requisite funding requests.
- Approximately 70% percent of the volunteer infrastructure program portion of this position's time will be spent in the field working with the elk volunteers to provide accurate information to visitors regarding elk management and park regulations that protect the elk such as disturbing wildlife and field closures to the public when the elk are present. Training will be provided so that the intern can safely assist with traffic management during times when traffic jams are caused by visitors viewing elk in various fields.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

**Equipment / Software Used:** Computer knowledge with Microsoft word, excel and powerpoint

**Physical Demands:** Must be able to walk comfortably for a 4 hour shift/up to 5 miles on uneven surfaces but mostly flat terrain. No off trail work required.

**Transportation Needs:** The park is remote, so it is critical to have a car for personal use; no public transportation is available. A government vehicle is usually available for work related transportation needs. Intern needs to complete a driver training course in order to drive a government vehicle.

**Setting/Location of Service Activities:** The position is based out of the Oconaluftee area near Cherokee, NC in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Intern will sometimes travel from Cherokee to the Cataloochee Valley to work with the Elk Bugle Corps program based there.

**Other Considerations:** Seasonal housing is available in the park near

- Leading, coordinating, and interacting with diverse individuals in field-based and office settings (ex. landowners, students, low-income residents, partner organizations).
- Training, supporting, coordinating, and recognizing volunteers for conservation-based volunteer opportunities.