



AmeriCorps Project Conserve 2022 – 2023 Service Description



AmeriCorps Position Title: Resource Education Volunteer Coordinator
Host Site: Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Supervisor Name: Kristine Brunsman
Supervisor Title: Supervisory Park Ranger
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Host Site Mission Statement:

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

Summary of Position:

Great Smoky Mountains National Park straddles the border of Tennessee and North Carolina and is the largest mountainous park east of the Mississippi River and is one of the most visited units managed by the National Park Service, welcoming over 14 million visitors in 2021. The park encompasses more than 800 square miles of these ancient mountains that exhibit the finest example of the ruggedness, magnitude, height, and scenic grandeur of the southern Appalachian Mountains, including 16 peaks over 6,000 feet. It was one of the first UNESCO World Heritage Sites and is an International Biosphere Reserve.

The Smokies are world-renowned for the diversity of its plant and animal life, beautiful scenery, and the size and integrity of the wilderness sanctuary within its boundaries where hikers can experience over 800 miles of trails. With more than 19,000 species documented in the park, no other area of equal size in a temperate climate can match the park's diversity of plants, animals, and invertebrates.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park also celebrates the rich cultural tapestry of Southern Appalachian mountain culture. Humans have lived here for more than 9,000 years and the park preserves diverse archaeological sites and historic structures, including one of the largest collections of Appalachian log structures.

As the South District Resource Education Volunteer Coordinator, the AmeriCorps Project Conserve member will work closely with their supervisor and the park-wide Volunteer Coordinator to provide effective management for volunteer activities on the North Carolina side of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This includes recruiting and retaining volunteers from the surrounding community, maximizing the impact and capacity of those volunteers, writing position descriptions, establishing volunteer agreements, developing volunteer training, creating or updating local volunteer management manual, analyzing risk and updating or

creating job hazard analyses for volunteer functions, acting as communications liaison between volunteers and supervisor, and tracking and reporting data and statistics. Member will also have the opportunity to assist with conservation education activities for youth and adults at the Oconaluftee Visitor Center.

Qualifications – Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Ability to take initiative and produce desired results
- Knowledge of people-management skills
- Demonstrated experience working effectively on a diverse team and with a diverse range of people
- Ability to accept professional feedback and integrate it into daily conduct and performance
- Demonstrated commitment to applying JEDI values in all aspects of work
- Experience working with underserved communities
- Skill working outdoors in all weather conditions, including standing or sitting for up to four hours at a time and walking up to five miles over uneven terrain.
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Knowledge of skills needed to engage and recruit individuals and groups to mission-oriented service
- Desire to work in a fast-paced environment and ability to respond seamlessly to competing priorities
- General knowledge of or ability to learn Microsoft Office Suite products
- 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:

Flexible schedule, generally working 8-9 hours per day, 4-5 days per week.

PLEASE NOTE: In addition to fulfilling host site service responsibilities, all Project Conserve members are required to fully participate in team trainings, service projects and statewide AmeriCorps events. Project Conserve team events will occur approximately twice per month in locations throughout the service area and may require one or two overnight stays.

Position Responsibilities and Duties:

CONSERVATION EDUCATION (20%)

The AmeriCorps 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 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 (80%)

The AmeriCorps Project Conserve member will work closely with their supervisor and the park-wide Volunteer Coordinator to provide effective management for volunteer activities on the North Carolina side of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This includes recruiting and retaining volunteers from the surrounding community, maximizing the impact and capacity of those volunteers, writing position descriptions, establishing volunteer agreements, developing volunteer training, creating or updating local volunteer management manual, analyzing risk and updating or creating job hazard analyses for volunteer functions, acting as communications liaison between volunteers and supervisor, and tracking and reporting data and statistics. Volunteer projects include a variety of activities, such as conservation education at the Oconaluftee Visitor Center, Mountain Farm Museum, Clingman’s Dome, and Cataloochee Valley, preservation and restoration of park resources, and citizen science

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Equipment / Software Used: basic computer operational knowledge, Microsoft Office Suite

Physical Demands: standing or sitting for up to four hours at a time and walking up to five miles over uneven terrain.

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 other areas of the park in North Carolina

Other Considerations: This position comes with paid housing in the park at the Cherokee entrance. After service, members can apply for a Public Land Corps certificate, which can lead to direct-hire within a “non-competitive hiring authority”.

- Using computer software and online programs for conservation-based education and outreach initiatives, including social networking, written articles and press releases
- Leading, coordinating, and interacting with diverse individuals in field-based and office settings (ex. landowners, students, low-income residents, partner organizations).
- Developing and implementing educational programs and events for groups (presentations, workshops, educational hikes and outings, etc).
- Training, supporting, coordinating, and recognizing volunteers for conservation-based volunteer opportunities.