



Position Title: Recreation Assistant

Position Service Site: Ottawa National Forest Visitor Center Watersmeet, MI

Service Time: September 9, 2024 – July 25, 2025 (1,700 Hour AmeriCorps Term, 46 weeks, 40 hours per week)

Benefits: Living stipend total for whole term = \$23,000 (\$500 per week). Education Award of approximately \$7,300 upon successful completion of service. To find out more about the Award: <https://americorps.gov/members-volunteers/segal-ameri-corps-education-award/find-out-more>. Health insurance optional (1 year/1,700 hour positions only, who are not already covered).

Housing is available.

Requirements: Valid Driver's license

Recommended: Personal Vehicle

OVERVIEW: The nearly one million-acre Ottawa National Forest is located in the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan, an area known for its remote character, picturesque lakes and streams, vast northern hardwood forests, and abundant wildlife. The Ottawa offers numerous recreational opportunities including stream and lake fishing (blue-ribbon trout streams), deer and small-game hunting, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, hiking, birding, and cross-country and downhill skiing, among others.

The half million acres that make up the southern portion of the Ottawa contains numerous glacial lakes, which are home to bald eagles, ospreys, loons, smallmouth and largemouth bass, walleye, northern pike, and other native fish and wildlife species. Within this vast expanse lie three designated Wilderness areas: Sylvania, McCormick, and the Sturgeon River Gorge, each offering their own unique features.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Ottawa National Forest's Recreation Assistant will perform a variety of service in support of the recreation program based in Watersmeet, MI. They are responsible for providing visitor information about Clark Lake and Sylvania Wilderness, as well as instructing users about wilderness laws. Additionally, they will help coordinate responses to inquiries about recreation facilities, user permits, points of interest, and related activities. This role is stationed at the Entrance Station during the non-winter months, and at the Watersmeet Visitor Center during the winter months.

During non-winter months, the position is expected to be 50% office/indoor-based and 50% field-based with required field overnights occurring periodically. During winter months, service will be performed primarily in an office setting with occasional field components.

Duties include operation of hand tools, mowers, weed whips, and various types of power tools. In addition, this position may assist with data input and collect data out in the field utilizing a tablet or GPS unit. Service will often be performed in a small crew setting.

The Recreation Assistant will be trained/certified in:

- Cross Cut Saw certification
- First Aid and CPR
- ATV/UTV certification
- Defensive Driving
- Radio/SPOT device
- Avenza

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Manage Visitor Center operations.
- Assist visitors by providing with information about specific recreation opportunities and activities, such as those at specific sites.
- Monitor condition and use of trails portages and Wilderness campsites, perform maintenance to standards, and report issues.
- Monitor wilderness area for use, maintenance needs and report issues.
- Inform visitors of rules and/or regulations.
- Monitor Campgrounds, Day Use Areas, and other recreation use areas and report and correct safety issues
- Conduct site monitoring visits for compliance with recreation/Wilderness area rules and regulations, campfires, sanitation, use of camping sites. Report violations to Mentor.
- Use initiative in carrying out recurring assignments independently. Detailed instructions are provided for new assignments. Unfamiliar situations or technical deviations from established practices are referred to Mentor for guidance or resolution.
- Periodically rotate onto the Watersmeet Recreation crew perform and monitor day-to-day recreation maintenance, clean-up, and simple construction projects for sites, reporting issues. Day to day maintenance includes:
 - Mowing, trimming, and debris pick-up.
 - Cleaning and maintaining fire rings, campsites, bathrooms, beaches, and other facilities.
 - Assisting with assisting public with questions related to camping and recreation opportunities on the district.
 - Helping to plow recreation sites in winter.
- Member may take part in an overnight trip involving complex portage and campsite projects with the main mode of travel is by canoe and foot. Major duties include:
 - Backcountry maintenance using crosscut saws and axes, as part of the standard toolkit on designated wilderness campsites, and wilderness portage and hiking trails.

HOUSING: Members should be prepared to live in communal housing with other members of the program/organization/agency. Members should expect to have roommates, and must inform staff of any housing preferences or required accommodations.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Minimum age requirement is 18 years old.
- Ability to work independently.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Understanding of or willingness to learn various conservation practices.
- Passionate about outdoor recreation.
- Possess a valid driver's license.
- Physical demands and service environment regularly requires the service member to be outdoors in wooded areas and on uneven natural paths.
- Physically able to spend long days outside in inclement weather, hiking on and off trail.
- Able to carry up to 50 pounds of equipment.
- Ability to serve in a variety of weather conditions such as temperatures ranging from below freezing to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, high winds, intense, sunshine, rain, and snow.
- Ability to perform the essential duties of the position with or without reasonable accommodation.
- Ability to multitask and shift schedule and priorities to meet changing conditions.
- Upon hire, a criminal background check will be conducted. Service with WisCorps will be considered probationary until all results are returned and have been reviewed.

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