

# Position Description

## 1715 Hour AmeriCorps Member

Trails Specialist

Location: Joint First Peoples Buffalo Jump and Giant Springs State Parks



**Term of service:** January 16, 2024 – November 15, 2024

**Service schedule:** Member will serve a minimum of 1,715 hours over a 44-week term, averaging 41 hours per week with 80 hours of “Time Not Scheduled to Serve” to be used as sick, vacation, or other personal leave.

### Position Summary:

First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park, a National Historic Landmark and archaeological site, located about 15 miles from Great Falls MT, is a nearly 3000-acre site which contains the largest buffalo jump in North America. Located where the prairie transitions to the eastern Rocky Mountain Front and among the scenic buttes and island mountain ranges, it is a vitally important cultural, prehistoric site that was used during the “Dog Days “of several Plains and Plateau tribes. A 6000 square foot visitor center contains exhibits that tell the story of how tribes conducted a buffalo jump hunt and processed the animals after they were stampeded off the cliff. There is also a gift shop operated by park staff. A 3 - mile interpretive trail tells additional history as visitors are hiking through the area. An additional 4-miles of trail in the park winds along the Jump and through a prairie dog town. The Park hosts students from all over Montana and neighboring states as the site is a favorite field trip destination. Visitors from all 50 states and numerous foreign countries enjoy the site to learn about the tribal culture. Another component of park operations is Tower Rock State Park. This natural feature was prominently noted in an 1805 journal entry of Captain Meriwether Lewis, co-leader of the Corps of Discovery.

Giant Springs State Park is a gem in the Montana State Park system. The Park is situated just outside of Great Falls (Montana’s 3<sup>rd</sup> largest city) and is comprised of 4,600 acres of diverse land. The park’s landscape varies from dense trees and manicured lawns to natural prairie along the banks of the Missouri River. Giant Springs is home to much more than just its namesake springs, it also boasts over 30 miles of the River’s Edge Trail system, a fish hatchery, a thriving education/interpretation program, a full slate of special events, and a rich history including the Lewis and Clark Expedition. This State Park is loved and cherished by many, receiving over 500,000 visitors annually. Visitors engage in a variety of recreational activities including fishing, hiking, biking, hunting, picnicking, bird watching, and photography.



An AmeriCorps member will help enhance the incredible cultural and natural resources of these parks. The member will improve educational and interpretive opportunities by working with youth groups and junior rangers on projects in the parks.

Outreach programs will target and encourage school groups and organizations to use the park, especially those that assist at-risk populations. The member will increase volunteer capacity by hosting an open house for potential and new volunteers. To improve park land, the member will implement noxious weed control measures such as mapping, biocontrol, chemical/mechanical treatments and facilitate trail work with volunteers.

Montana State Parks AmeriCorps members perform capacity building activities. Their service revolves around the program goals listed below to ensure that they do not displace workers or take part in any prohibited or unallowable activities as outlined in AmeriCorps regulations. Montana State Parks AmeriCorps members *will* likely participate in activities that involve recurring contact with vulnerable populations.

**Member will contribute to the following program goals:**

- Improve park land
- Expand educational and interpretive programs
- Increase volunteer capacity\*
- Enhance outreach and awareness of state parks
- Participate in service activities including National Days of Service\*\*
- Respond to disasters, when called upon to do so by the program

**Specific Position Responsibilities:**

- Improve park land
  - Conduct noxious weed control by chemical, mechanical, and biological methods to improve lands within the parks and to encourage native plant growth. Conduct weed monitoring and mapping to maximize weed control efforts.
  - Conduct biannual trail assessments to catalog and track trail maintenance needs. Assessments will be used to assign work to staff/volunteers and in project planning.
  - Conduct trail maintenance, including but not limited to, clearing yucca/cactus, tread upkeep, vegetation trimming, and water management.
  - Plan and lead trail workdays for both staff and volunteers. This will include handling logistics and leading crews.
  - Monitor and maintain trail tools for each park. Conduct regular checks of tools to ensure they are sharp and in proper working order.
- Expand educational and interpretive programs
  - Member will develop and conduct educational and interpretive programs at the parks.

- Develop and conduct events or workdays at the parks with educational components that will get participants active, teach them about certain topics and complete work for the parks.
- Assist with the Junior Ranger programs by developing and delivering programs to help expand our offerings to reach more kids.
- Increase volunteer capacity
  - Recruit businesses and organizations that offer group volunteer opportunities to volunteer at the parks.
  - Foster relationships with local community service groups and offer volunteer work to those that are required to engage in community service.
  - Plan volunteer workdays focusing on weeds and trails projects.
- Enhance outreach and awareness of state parks
  - Represent the parks on local media and at community events that target people looking for information on local recreational and volunteer opportunities.
  - Enhance the parks' presence on social media with photos, videos, stories, etc.
  - Partner with local outdoor businesses to table at events (sales, open houses...) to promote the trails and volunteer needs.
  - Promote the trail systems at both parks by working with groups such as Visit Great Falls (local tourism office) and by highlighting why trail users enjoy the trails.

**Minimum Requirements:**

- Over 18 with a high school diploma or GED; college degree or equivalent work experience preferred
- A United States citizen, United States National, or legal permanent resident alien
- Demonstrated leadership skills
- Ability to take initiative, handle multiple projects, track details essential to project completion, analyze information, and meet deadlines
- Strong ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing with diverse groups of people
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Basic computer proficiency
- Passion for the outdoors and enthusiasm for enhancing Montana's state parks
- A driver's license and personal means of transportation within the state of Montana
- Must pass the requirements of the National Service Criminal History Check

**Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps 2024 Required Trainings and Events (subject to change):**

- January 16: First Day of Service
- January 22-25: Member Orientation; Lubrecht Experimental Forest
- March 4-8: Certified Interpretive Guide Training; Lubrecht Experimental Forest

- March 13-15: 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Serve Montana Symposium; Helena
- June 10-14: All Member Gathering; Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park
- July 19-20: Bannack Days; Bannack State Park
- August 31-September 1: Day of Honor; Chief Plenty Coups State Park
- November 14-15: Close of Service; Helena

**Physical and Environmental Demands:**

- Work is performed in both an indoor and outdoor environment.
- Frequently works in adverse outdoor conditions including temperature extremes, snow and rain, dust, and mosquito infested areas.
- Works with public and may inform public of site rules and regulations.
- May be required to lift over 25lbs across rugged terrain.
- The position may require some travel. The incumbent will be required to work odd hours, weekends, and holidays.

**Benefits:**

- Living allowance of \$444.00/week (taxed) with a \$300.00/month housing stipend
- An AmeriCorps Education Award of \$6,895 upon successful completion of service. This award can be used to pay education costs at qualified institutions of higher education, for educational training and resources, or to repay qualified student loans. Members aged 55 and over may transfer the education award to a child, grandchild, or foster child.
- Eligible for deferment on qualified student loans
- Guaranteed health benefits and childcare assistance if qualified
- Experience and training working in the fields of outdoor recreation, parks management, interpretive services, education, community outreach, and volunteer management
- Opportunity to live, work and be part of the team amid the natural wonders and cultural heritage of Montana State Parks

**To Apply:**

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps only accepts applications through the my.americorps.gov portal. To apply, you can follow the link [HERE](#) to our application within my.americorps.gov. Please note, there is only one application for all our 1715- hour positions, placement preference will be assessed during the interview process.

**Application Deadline:**

Applications are due by December 8, 2023.

\* Volunteer activity facilitated by AmeriCorps members supports the management and operation of State Parks. These activities do not include any prohibited or unallowable activities as outlined in AmeriCorps regulations.

\*\*Service activities will center around the preceding program goals as well as provide unique opportunities for members to engage in service to non-profit community organizations that provide support to those in need,

including victims of national disasters, individuals and families in poverty, veterans, homeless animals, and other groups. Service projects will take place on and around designated National Days of Service as well as other AmeriCorps organized events, such as member trainings. Service activities will not include any prohibited or unallowable activities as outlined in AmeriCorps regulations.

*The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps Program, as administered by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, shall provide equal access to opportunities provided by the Program and shall not discriminate against any person because of race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Minority candidates are encouraged to apply. Reasonable accommodations will be provided for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. The accommodation must be essential for the Member to perform his/her service successfully. Funds for reasonable accommodations are available for use by members with disabilities who have been offered a position with an AmeriCorps Program and require an accommodation to fulfill the essential functions of their service.*