

Position Description

1715 Hour AmeriCorps Member

Education Specialist

Location: The Bitterroot District

Duty Station, Lolo, Montana



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:

The Bitterroot District encompasses many sites. Not only do we serve State Parks but also, Fishing Access Sites (FAS) and Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). The district spans the length of the Bitterroot Mountain Range and offers many different habitat types. It is home to a diverse world of recreation through every season. This district offers opportunity to learn about public land management, visitation patterns, and balancing the resource with the needs of the people. The heart of the Bitterroot District is Travelers Rest State Park.

Travelers’ Rest State Park marks the intersection of cultural and natural history. The park’s 65 acres encompass the only archaeologically-verified campsite of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, a gathering place used by the Bitterroot Salish and other tribes for millennia, and riparian habitat for hundreds of species of plants and animals.

Each year more than 33,000 visitors, including more than 2,100 school children from 20 communities, visit Travelers’ Rest State Park to experience the stories of the people and creatures who have come before them.

Place-based education and interpretation lie at the heart of Travelers’ Rest State Park with standards-based field trip curricula related to the Corps of Discovery, Native American culture, and natural history. The education program is funded and administered by the Travelers’ Rest Connection (TRC), the nonprofit partner of the park.

The AmeriCorps member selected for this position will work closely with the park and TRC staff to design and deliver high-quality educational experiences for multiple generations, including field trips, camps, community events, and more. The member will engage with various audiences (volunteers, teachers, donors, the general public, etc.) to promote awareness of the park and its many activities. They will also help to improve the park through projects like trail development, native landscaping, and restoration within the riparian area.



In addition to serving at Travelers' Rest State Park, the AmeriCorps member will serve at Fort Owen State Park in Stevensville, MT. Fort Owen State Park (FOSP) preserves some of the earliest Euro-American histories in Montana. This small park is on the grounds of a trading post operated by John Owen from the 1850s-1870s. Originating by Jesuit missionaries, Fort Owen was the site of many historic "firsts" in Montana – the first grist mill, the first sawmill, the first water right, and the first permanent Euro-American settlement.

AmeriCorps members in this position will have the opportunity to learn about and develop volunteers while working with park managers and staff to continue developing volunteer programs at both Travelers' Rest and Fort Owen State Parks.

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**
 - Work with park staff and other regional AmeriCorps members to develop and organize region wide service days that include trail maintenance and/or construction, weed control, habitat enhancement, stream bank stabilization and historic building preservation.
 - Work with Park staff and volunteers in our ongoing effort to re-introduce native plant species to Travelers Rest State Park or other FWP properties.
 - Contribute to park improvement projects including trail development, native landscaping, and stream bank restoration.
 - Discover and identify Fishing Access Site's in need of land improvements.
- **Expand educational and interpretive programs**
 - Administer field trip program including communicating with teachers, scheduling field trips, coordinating volunteer educators, and can develop new standards-based curricula with TRC Executive Director and the Park Manager.
 - Collaborate with TRC, park staff and volunteers to establish an annual calendar of educational events designed to celebrate the convergence of human and natural history.
 - Oversee the Trekker Kids Program, with an emphasis on year-round activities

designed to immerse children in the rich natural habitat and cultural history of the district.

- Contribute to planning and execution of public programs as needed within the bitterroot district. Help others in marketing such programs and events.
- **Increase volunteer capacity**
 - Recruit and train at least 1 new volunteer educator at TRSP or FO to increase program capacity and provide training opportunities for existing volunteers to improve skills in classroom management, interpretation, and curriculum delivery.
 - Working with the TRC Executive Director, the member will identify opportunities to recognize volunteers and design cost effective and meaningful rewards for volunteer service.
 - Work with teachers and education organizations to identify potential new sources for peak season volunteers.
 - Maintain positive relationships with current volunteers and encourage volunteers to expand curriculum based knowledge.
- **Enhance outreach and awareness of FWP properties**
 - TRC and Travelers' Rest State Park have strong partnerships with other community organizations which include reciprocal presentations at events and festivals. The member will develop and present children's programming at these events and festivals and may also participate on community-wide planning committees for event.
 - The member will work with TRC on a variety of events related to nonprofit management, fundraising, and donor stewardship. (annual auction, member only reception, etc.).
 - Help Park staff and others maintain strong social media presence.

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: 19th 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.