

Position Description

1700 Hour AmeriCorps Member

Flathead Lake State Park-Interpretive Naturalist,
Bigfork, MT



Term of service: January 18, 2022 – November 18, 2022

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:

As the largest, natural, freshwater lake west of the Mississippi, Flathead Lake provides some of the best water-based recreational opportunities in the western United States, including fishing, camping, hiking, sightseeing, wildlife-viewing, and boating. Because of its world-class recreational opportunities, Flathead Lake State Park receives over 300,000 visitors annually. With six state park units located around the lake, the park includes Wayfarers, Yellow Bay, Big Arm, Finley Point, West Shore, and Wild Horse Island—the only island state park in the Montana State Park system. At over 2,000 acres, Wild Horse Island is home to bighorn sheep, mule deer, waterfowl, bald eagles, and falcons, as well as five wild horses.

This AmeriCorps position will be based out of the Flathead Lake Ranger Station located in Flathead Lake State Park – Wayfarers unit on the south side of Bigfork, Montana. Bigfork is a quaint, charming lakeside village with all the amenities of a larger town, conveniently located near world-class hiking, skiing, rafting, and fishing.

The AmeriCorps member will be exposed to a variety of experiences at Flathead Lake State Park. The main project will consist of researching and developing interpretive signs for various units of Flathead Lake State Park. This position will also focus on our QR interpretive hike on Wild Horse Island and unit specific nature ID booklets. They will develop and lead some guided hikes and evening programs: increase volunteer capacity by recruiting volunteers to the parks and hosting projects with volunteers to improve park land. In addition, the member will continue developing a relationship with Bigfork and Polson’s Schools. The member will develop skills in park improvement and management by working on the trail systems, war on noxious weeds and other projects. The member will also identify opportunities for future programs, events and interpretive displays throughout the Flathead Lake State Park.

Montana State Parks AmeriCorps members perform capacity building activities. Their service revolves around the program goals listed below in order 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
 - Assist with the annual trail events: Earth Day, NPLD, Trails Day and Kids to Park Day
 - Assist with monitoring the nearly 10 miles of trails spread amongst the 5 units that we oversee. By conducting detailed trail inspections, then coordinating volunteer events, youth trail day events to tackle any projects.
 - Coordinating several noxious weeds workdays with local groups or general public.
- Expand educational and interpretive programs
 - Research and develop Interpretive signs for various units of Flathead Lake State Park
 - Monitor and edit the QR interpretive hike for Wild Horse Island State Park.
 - Research and develop unit specific natural ID guidebooks to lend out to staff and visitors.
 - Develop and lead some guided hikes and evening programs from the Spring through the Fall
 - Assist with the Summer Junior Ranger series focusing on relevant STEM topics, such as geology, marine biology, and wildlife management, and expand educational programming with the Bigfork and Polson School Districts
 - Assist in our Spring/Fall field trips
- Increase volunteer capacity
 - Help recruit and build a core group of community volunteers
 - Getting in touch with local non-profits whose mission lines up with ours to protect Flathead Lake
 - Coordinate reoccurring volunteer events over the summer
 - Coordinate at least two separate volunteer events and assist with planning a volunteer appreciation event.
- Enhance outreach and awareness of state parks
 - Lead Flathead Lake State Park's social media efforts
 - Develop posters advertising volunteer events and programs

- Attend Local Farmers Markets and local tabling events

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

Benefits:

- Living allowance of \$16,000 over 44-week term of service
- An AmeriCorps Education Award of \$6,345 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 State 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 of our 1700 hour positions, placement preference will be assessed during the interview process.

Application Deadline:

Applications are due by December 10, 2021.

* 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 State 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.