

Position Description

1715 Hour AmeriCorps Member

Location: Giant Springs State Park

Education and Interpretation



Term of service: January 17, 2023 – November 17, 2023

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: Giant Springs State Park is a gem in the Montana State Park system. Giant Springs is situated just outside of Great Falls (Montana’s 3rd largest city) along the banks of the Missouri River and is comprised of 4,600 acres of diverse land. The park’s landscape varies from dense trees and manicured lawns to natural prairie. 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, photography, and simply enjoying nature.

The AmeriCorps member plays an integral role at Giant Springs State Park and is critical to the park’s success. Due to the park’s high visitor volume, large acreage and small staff numbers, there is no lack of work. The member will assist park staff in maintaining and improving Giant Spring’s land and trails. The member will develop and deliver educational/interpretive programming to school classes, tour groups and park visitors. The member will play a large role in recruiting and managing volunteers to assist in staffing and maintaining the park. Lastly, the member will promote the park through various outlets to keep us visible and to ensure the public knows what’s happening at the park.

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:

- **Expand educational and interpretive programs**
 - Grow relationships with local and surrounding area schools. Develop and present in person, virtual and park centered programs. Develop at least 1 new program/tour to give returning groups new options for programming.
 - Develop at least 3 educational or interpretive programs that can be run over the course of the season (not school related programs) here at Giant Springs. These can focus on the member's interests and community partners can be invited to help (Public Library, local Audubon Chapter...). Programs typically last 1 hour but longer events can be planned.
 - Create new educational worksheets/activities for kids (of a variety of ages) to complete in the park for. These are our "no-contact activities" that allows kids or families to learn without us having to lead programs.
 - Assist the Giant Springs Ranger with developing and running the park's Jr. Ranger program. This is typically a 4-part series that is run June-September.
 - Lead the park's Trivia in the Park program. Develop categories/questions, solicit donations for winning teams and help lead the trivia events.
- **Improve Park Land**
 - Manage the park's volunteer program, as related to improving park land. This will be discussed in greater detail below.
 - Assist with weed management in the park (non-trails). Tasks will include weed mapping, weed pulling, the use of biologic controls, weed spraying, and organizing volunteer weed pull events.
 - Assist the Joint Buffalo Jump/Giant Springs AmeriCorps Member with trail maintenance. Tasks will include clearing yucca/cactus, tread upkeep, vegetation trimming, and leading crews on workdays.
 - Focus on maintaining and improving the park's landscaping beds. Develop plan for beds, purchase/install new plants and weed beds. Create volunteer workdays, schedule staff workdays or tackle on their own.
- **Increase volunteer capacity**
 - Build relationships with past volunteers and recruit new volunteers. Reach out to local businesses to inquire about service days, partner with schools to fulfill volunteer requirements and connect with community service programs.
 - Help the park continue to revamp our volunteer program. Focus areas for the year will be retention and recognition of volunteers.
 - Develop a volunteer schedule that allows volunteers sign up for specific activities. Send out monthly newsletters outlining needs for the coming month and highlighting outstanding volunteers.
- **Enhance outreach and awareness of state parks**
 - Focus on connecting with younger age groups and getting them involved at the park. The goal will be to provide educational/interpretive programming in exchange for volunteer service.
 - Take the lead on the park's social media pages, ensuring that they are up to date and actively working to grow the park's following.

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

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 \$19,538 over 44-week term of service
- An AmeriCorps Education Award of \$6,495 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 1715- hour positions, placement preference will be assessed during the interview process.

Application Deadline:

Applications are due by December 12, 2022.

* 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.