



Wilderness Fellow Position Description

Title: Wilderness Fellow

Reports To: SWS National Program Manager

Classification: Hourly

Location: 10 Positions are available, located in the following: Hungry Horse, Montana; Helena, Montana; Jackson, Wyoming (2 positions); Central Sierras, California; Tahoe, California; Rutland, Vermont; Rhinelander, Wisconsin; Hoonah and Yakutat, Alaska; Ketchikan, Alaska.

Duration: June 10, 2019 – December 3, 2019

Time: Full Time, Seasonal

Salary: \$600 weekly stipend

Benefits: 1 earned personal day per month (vacation is not eligible to be cashed out at any time) and federal holidays; Forest Service housing provided.

Closing Date: April 26th, 2019

Partners

The Society for Wilderness Stewardship (SWS) is a non-profit organization seeking to promote excellence in the professional practice of wilderness stewardship, science, and education to ensure the life-sustaining benefits of wilderness. In other words, we are a professional society working to set the standard for wilderness management.

The Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute (Leopold) is dedicated to the development and dissemination of knowledge needed to improve management of wilderness, parks, and similarly protected areas. Leopold was established in 1993 under the Rocky Mountain Research Station and has been the wilderness research arm of federal agencies ever since. The Institute operates under an interagency agreement among the federal agencies that have wilderness management or research responsibility – the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) was founded by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1905, and today oversees 445 wilderness areas, or 33% of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Inaugural Chief of the USFS, Gifford Pinchot, stated that the USFS existed to “provide the greatest amount of good for the greatest amount of people in the long run.”

Program Overview

The Wilderness Fellows Program is a collaborative of the three organizations above, and was created in order to complete Wilderness Character Baseline Assessments, thereby continuing important assessment work that has been underway since 2001, and fulfilling the USFS Wilderness Stewardship Performance (WSP) element “Wilderness Character Baseline”. The Wilderness Character Baseline requires that steps be made to determine a baseline and provide the foundation for evaluating trends in wilderness character. These trends indicate the outcome of management actions and success at ‘preserving wilderness character’ as directed by the Wilderness Act.

As stated in [Keeping It Wild 2: An Updated Interagency Strategy to Monitor Trends in Wilderness Character Across the National Wilderness Preservation System](#) (Landres et. al, 2015), “the results of wilderness character monitoring provide [agency staff who manage wilderness day-to-day, and regional and national staff who develop wilderness policy and assess its effectiveness] some of the key data they need to improve wilderness stewardship and wilderness policy.” The report goes on to say that, “Implementing this monitoring strategy does not guarantee the preservation of wilderness character, but it informs and improves wilderness stewardship, and ensures managers are accountable to the central mandate of the 1964 Wilderness act – to preserve wilderness character.”

In 2001, the USFS Wilderness Monitoring Committee developed the first national framework for Wilderness Character Monitoring (WCM). Progression was attained by the USFS in 2006 with WCM pilot testing occurring in every FS region, the publication of the [Applying the Concept of Wilderness Character to National Forest Planning, Monitoring and Management](#) in 2008, and the 2009 distribution of the [Technical Guide for Monitoring Selected Conditions Related to Wilderness Character](#).

The USFS and Leopold now stand at the brink of publishing the second generation Technical Guide (expected June 2019), a tool that promises to advance WCM across the nation. Wilderness Fellows will apply the tools in the Technical Guide to carry out wilderness character baseline assessments. Fellows will complete base level work for numerous wilderness areas that will inform future targeted assessments.

Position Overview

The Wilderness Fellow Program is seeking qualified candidates to fill Wilderness Fellow positions. Fellows are based in locations around the country, with a significant amount of travel within their base region. Work is roughly 80% office based and 20% field based, and is performed at USFS offices to directly support the goals of a collaborative wilderness character monitoring initiative currently underway in the USFS.

Primary Wilderness Fellow Responsibilities

- Attend one week training in Granby, Colorado (travel provided).
- Work out of remote USFS locations, residing in USFS housing.
- Coordinate meetings with USFS resource specialists and line officers to gather information regarding wilderness character.
- Research, compile and analyze legislative and administrative historical data per wilderness area.
- Travel to and into wilderness areas.
- Compile and analyze data for selected monitoring indicators and complete components of a baseline assessment for wilderness character monitoring.
- Implement inventory and monitoring strategies for tracking wilderness character.
- Participate in weekly conference calls.
- Set and meet benchmarks and deadlines for data collection, meetings, and draft and final reports.
- Create a narrative report for each wilderness area worked in.

Key Qualifications

- Bachelor’s degree in a related field, Master’s degree preferred.
- Educational background in Wilderness Management, Protected Area/Natural Resource Management, Recreation Resource Management, Conservation Social Science, Environmental Policy, Natural, Biological and/or Physical Science.
- Deep interest in wilderness/resource management and the U.S. Forest Service.
- Outstanding written and oral communication skills.
- Research skill and attention to detail and organization.
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively on projects, high degree of initiative.
- Understanding and ability to use GIS is a plus.
- Results-oriented with the ability to set and follow realistic goals and objectives.

Flexibility to adapt when faced with changing needs and priorities.
Proficiency with Microsoft Office, comfort with technology.
Ability to travel to training and remote field locations (travel provided), and to relocate if necessary (assistance not provided).

To Apply: E-mail a resume, cover letter, a one-to-two page writing sample, and three professional or academic references to Heather MacSarrow at: hiringmanager@wildernessstewardship.org

Essential Functions: Employee may be required to sit, stand, and lift objects up to 50 lbs. Employee may be required to travel and camp in the backcountry, and to drive or fly to remote project locations.

The Society for Wilderness Stewardship is an equal opportunity employer.

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other protected status.