



Wilderness Fellow Position Description

Title: Wilderness Fellow

Reports To: SWS National Program Director

Classification: Hourly

Location: Petersburg, AK

Duration: June 2024- December 2024 (6 month contract)

Time: Full Time (40hr/week), Seasonal

Salary: 19\$/hr

Benefits: 1 week personal time off and paid federal holidays off. USFS Housing provided in Petersburg, AK.

Transportation to/from Petersburg, AK will also be provided.

Initial Application Review Begins: 02/24/2024

To Apply: Email a cover letter, resume, and 3 professional or academic references in 1 pdf document to Julia Cotter, hiringsmanager@wildernessstewardship.org. Please include the position title and location you are applying for in the subject line of your email.

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 U.S. Forest Service (USFS) For more than 100 years, the Forest Service has brought people and communities together to answer the call of conservation. The USFS seeks to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Program Overview

The Wilderness Fellows Program 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 goal of Wilderness character monitoring is to evaluate trends in wilderness and wilderness management over time. As such, 5 years after the baseline for each wilderness was established, trend reports are needed to visualize trends. The Tongass National Forest completed all WCM baseline reports on the Petersburg Ranger District in 2018, and they completed WCM baseline reports for all 19 wilderness areas on the Tongass in 2023. This fellow will be tasked with compiling the first trend reports for 3 wilderness areas (Kuiu, Petersburg Creek Duncan Salt Chuck, and Tebenkof Bay) all on the Petersburg Ranger District of the Tongass National Forest.

Position Overview

The Wilderness Fellow Program is seeking qualified candidates to fill Wilderness Fellow positions. This fellow will be based out of a USFS bunkhouse and work with USFS staff on the Tongass National Forest. Work is roughly 80% office based and 20% field based, and is performed at USFS offices to directly support the goals of the interdisciplinary wilderness character monitoring initiative currently underway in the USFS. This fellow will work closely with wilderness and other staff to produce a wilderness character trend report, pulling data from the last 5 years to establish a trend in wilderness monitoring and preservation.

Petersburg, Alaska, is a relatively small (pop 3,000) community in Southeast Alaska and is in the heart of the largest temperate rainforest in the Northern Hemisphere. This fellow will be based out of a USFS bunkhouse in Petersburg. Transportation to and from Alaska will be provided. Fellows are expected to remain at their duty station for the duration of their season. Transportation for field work will be provided or reimbursed. Field work will be conducted alongside USFS personnel, and training on field safety will be provided. Fellows should feel comfortable living and working in remote areas, working in grizzly bear habitat, and traveling on small planes or boats to conduct field work. Kayaking experience is a plus. Personal cars are not needed or encouraged for this location, as transporting cars to this area is difficult and there are few roads. Applicants interested in landscape conservation, wilderness stewardship, and working in partnership with the USFS are encouraged to apply.

Primary Wilderness Fellow Responsibilities

- Attend one week training at Powell Ranger Station, near Missoula, Montana (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.
- Travel to and into wilderness areas.
- Compile data for selected monitoring and implement inventory and monitoring strategies for tracking wilderness character.
- Complete 5-year trend assessments for the three wilderness areas on the Tongass National Forest
- Participate in weekly conference calls.
- Set and meet benchmarks and deadlines for data collection, meetings, and draft and final reports.

Key Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in a related field or work experience equivalent to a Bachelor's degree.
- 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 US 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 software 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.
- Ability to travel to training and remote field locations (travel provided), and to relocate if necessary
- Ability to work and live in remote locations

To Apply: Email a cover letter, resume, 1-2 page writing sample, and 2 professional or academic references to Julia Cotter, hiringmanager@wildernessstewardship.org, by 5:00p (MST) on Friday, February 24th, 2023. Please include the position title and location you are applying for in the subject line of your email.

Essential Functions: Employees may be required to sit, stand, and lift objects up to 50 lbs. Employees 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.