



**Position Title:** AmeriCorps Land Steward and Outreach

**Position Service Site:** Mississippi Valley Conservancy and Friends of the Blufflands (La Crosse, WI)

**Service Time:** May 30 – August 18, 2023 (450 hours total)

- 30 Hours/Week with Mississippi Valley Conservancy and 10 Hours/Week with Friends of the Blufflands for a total of 40 Hours/Week)

**Benefits:** Living stipend total for whole term = \$6,000 (\$500 per week) Education Award = \$1,824.07 upon successful completion of service.

**Requirements:** Covid-19 Vaccine Required

**OVERVIEW:** Mississippi Valley Conservancy (the Conservancy) and Friends of the Blufflands (FBL) collaboratively work to protect and restore the unique habitats of the Driftless Area of SW Wisconsin.

- Mississippi Valley Conservancy is an accredited nonprofit land trust that works with conservation-minded landowners who choose to permanently protect land through conservation easements and land acquisition efforts.
- Friends of the Blufflands is a nonprofit based in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Their mission is to promote sound conservation practices in the Coulee Region blufflands and to be a voice for a wide variety of blufflands users who value the area blufflands for the increased quality of life they provide.

**SERVICE DESCRIPTION:** The AmeriCorps Land Steward and Outreach Member will provide opportunities for gaining practical conservation stewardship and outreach skills while exploring career options, to promote community service and environmental awareness through community engagement and volunteerism in the outdoors.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

##### *Land Stewardship*

- Assist with habitat management and restoration of native prairie, forest, oak savanna, and wetland habitat on Conservancy-protected land throughout southwest Wisconsin
- Gain skills and expertise in several aspects of wildlife habitat management, including species identification, timber stand improvement, prescribed burning, prairie planting, oak savanna and prairie restoration, invasive species control, and trail maintenance
- Operate and maintain chainsaws, brush cutters, herbicide applicators, mowers, and UTVs to accomplish habitat management tasks as assigned
- Assist with installing, improving, and updating kiosks, signs, and trails
- Help supervise school and volunteer groups during land restoration workdays

##### *Outreach*

- Help broaden the base of habitat restoration volunteers to expand land management activities on nature preserves

- Help schedule and lead volunteer workdays and guided nature discovery walks for participating families and individuals to help them feel confident and prepared for working on their own
- Keep detailed records of volunteer hours, program activity, and event attendance for continual program improvement and grant reporting
- Use basic budgetary and financial guidelines to manage expenses

#### **TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT:**

- Chain saws, brush cutters, shovels, wheelbarrows, Pulaski, pickaxe, and other hand tools
- UTV operation as needed

#### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Willingness and ability to use herbicides, chainsaws, and any other tools required to complete assigned tasks
- Possess a valid driver's license and working vehicle
- Physical demands and service environment regularly requires the service member to be outdoors in wooded areas and on steep, uneven natural terrain.
- Physically able to work long days outside in inclement weather, hike on and off trail
- Able to carry up to 50 pounds of equipment
- Work in a variety of weather conditions such as temperatures ranging from below freezing to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, high winds, intense, sunshine, rain, and snow
- Ability to multitask and shift schedule and priorities to meet changing conditions
- Ability to work independently to complete assigned tasks.
- Knowledge of habitat restoration principles and practices preferred
- Forestry, ornithology, or other natural resources specialty preferred
- First aid, CPR certification preferred
- Herbicide/pesticide applicator certification preferred
- Advanced SAW, FISTA, or other chainsaw certification preferred
- Prescribed or wild land fire experience preferred
- Ability to perform the essential duties of the position with reasonable accommodation
- Upon hire, a criminal background check will be conducted. Service with WisCorps will be considered probationary until all results are returned and have been reviewed

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