



GEOSCIENTISTS-IN-THE-PARKS Internship Program

2019 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

NPS UNIT: BUFFALO NATIONAL RIVER		PD #: 2019017
<p>Position Title: Natural Resource Management Assistant</p> <p>Position Type: GIP Intern</p> <p>Primary natural resource discipline: Biological resources</p> <p>Project keywords: birds, bats, habitat, GIS, IPM, wildlife</p> <p>Location: Harrison, Arkansas</p>		
PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND WORK PRODUCTS		
<p>Position Description: The intern will work on a wide variety of biological monitoring projects which may include bird surveys, bat acoustic surveys, other wildlife surveys, pollinator surveys. The intern will also assist with the Terrestrial Habitat Management Program. Duties related to this may include planting native grass and forb seeds, baiting and trapping feral hogs, and mechanically removing populations of exotic invasive species. The intern will also be required to keep notes and process data in a computer.</p> <p>Buffalo National River was established in 1972. At the time of establishment there were many areas in pastoral settings. NPS attempts to retain some of that pastoral setting in locations where it is ecologically appropriate. Buffalo National River is recognized as an "Important Bird Area" by Arkansas Audubon.</p> <p>The southern Ozarks are the first significant rise in elevation north of the western Gulf Coast. This has ecological significance for a number of species of plants and animals. The intern will help NPS ensure important habitat for a range of species is conserved in an area of ever shrinking wild lands.</p> <p>This position is offered through the National Park Service's Geoscientists-in-the-Parks (GIP) Internship Program in partnership with Stewards Individual Placement Program (Stewards) and The Geological Society of America (GSA).</p> <p>Work Products: The project will result in several bird survey reports which will be shared with Audubon and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. The project will also result in numerous bat echolocation call surveys which can be tied to the specific habitat and weather conditions present in the same spatial and temporal location. The project will help arrest the spread of invasive exotic vegetation.</p>		
QUALIFICATIONS		
<p>The best qualified applicants will have or be pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in the natural sciences, such as biology, environmental science, botany, or ecology. Field and laboratory experience, as well as data management and entry skills, are desirable, particularly related to bird and bat surveying. The ability to work as part of a team is a must. The individual selected for this position should possess the physical ability to hike in relatively steep terrain over long distances. Strong oral and written communication skills are also desired.</p> <p>The applicant must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent legal resident ("green-card-holder") between the ages of 18 and 35 years old. Prior to starting this position a government security background clearance will be required.</p>		
VEHICLE/DRIVER'S LICENSE REQUIREMENTS		
<p>Applicant must have a valid driver's license and a good driving record. A valid driver's license and personal vehicle are required for this position. The intern will be staying in park housing located within park boundaries</p>		

and will need a vehicle to commute to and from grocery stores and other facilities necessary for daily living. S/he will also be required to drive a government vehicle to and from field sites.

If the GIP is required to drive a park vehicle for their position, Stewards will perform a driving records search, and the GIP's ability to drive a park vehicle during work hours will be contingent upon the results. GIPs will have to have had their license for 3 years or be over the age of 21 to be insured as drivers under Stewards insurance policy. Examples of things that will preclude a GIP from driving a park vehicle include: GIP under the age of 21 years old that has been licensed less than three years, DUIs, multiple moving vehicle violations, suspended or revoked license, or three or more accidents (regardless of fault) in the last 3 years. If the driver's search is favorable, Stewards will provide driver's liability insurance while the intern is driving a NPS vehicle for their GIP position. If the GIP is denied coverage by Stewards, they will not be permitted to drive during work hours.

HOUSING

Park housing is provided at no cost to the participant. In-park housing will be available. Specifically, the housing will likely be located near the Toney Bend Research Learning Center. The intern will share a furnished single-family home with seasonal park staff members, but will have access to his/her own private lockable bedroom. The kitchen, bathroom, and living room will be shared between house occupants. The intern will need to bring kitchen, bathroom, and bed linens. Some dishes and utensils will be available, but the intern may wish to bring additional kitchen items. Driving to the nearest grocery store in Yellville, AR takes approximately 30 minutes (20 miles). The intern will work with the Biologist whose duty station is the Toney Bend Research and Learning Center which is less than 1 mile from the housing.

INTERNSHIP START/END DATES

Start Date: 5/13/2019

Number of weeks: 20 weeks

Flexibility of dates: Yes

LIVING ALLOWANCE

20 weeks (\$350/week = \$7,000)

TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

\$250

AMERICORPS PROGRAM



AmeriCorps is a program that engages individuals in intensive community service work with the goal of "helping others and meeting critical needs in the community". The GIP Program is supported through AmeriCorps by providing a Segal Education Award in addition to the GIP's living stipend and travel/housing allowance.

Upon successful completion of the GIP position, the GIPs (AmeriCorps members) are eligible for a \$1,612 - \$6,095 pre-tax education that can be used for paying back student loans or for continuing their education. The amount of the education award is based on the length of the position.

AmeriCorps limits the number of terms an individual can serve to 4 terms. If an applicant has previously completed 4 GIP or other AmeriCorps positions, he/she will not be eligible to apply for an additional GIP position.

PHYSICAL/NATURAL & WORK ENVIRONMENT

Physical/Natural Environment: Buffalo National River was established by Congress in 1972 (Public Law 92-237) as the country's first national river. Although approximately 135 miles of the free-flowing river are included within the boundaries of the national river, only 11% of the overall watershed is under direct NPS management. Originating in the Boston Mountains of the Ozark Plateau, the river generally flows in an easterly direction to its confluence with the White River. Flanking the river are multi-colored bluffs of eroded sandstone, limestone and dolomite that tower in some places to heights over 400 feet. The karst geology of the region is reflected in a landscape marked by numerous caves, cliffs, sinkholes, waterfalls, springs, and rock formations.

A wide variety of plant and animal species are supported by the diversity of habitats found along the river, influenced by varied elevations, soil types, moisture levels and exposure. Hunting and fishing are allowed in the national river under state and NPS regulations. A diverse range of cultural resources and historic sites are protected within the national river, including prehistoric village and shelter sites, historic farmsteads, mining sites, and Civilian Conservation Corps structures.

The park's 94,293 acres (a total of 95,730 acres are legislated) are divided into three management districts. Park headquarters are located in Harrison (Boone County), Arkansas. Park visitation has averaged more than 800,000 visitors a year. In addition to visitor water-based activities with multiple launch points along the river, the park offers more than 100 miles of hiking trails and designated trails for horseback riding. Three designated wilderness areas are included in the park boundaries (the Upper Buffalo Wilderness Area, the Ponca Wilderness Area, and the Lower Buffalo Wilderness Area). Because there are few roads which parallel the river and few accessible overlooks, river and trail trips are among the best ways to experience the park. Access to Buffalo National River can be found at various points throughout the length of the river. Summer weather conditions are generally warm and humid, with occasional pop-up thunderstorms.

Work Environment: The intern's main duty location will be at the Toney Bend Research Learning Center near Yellville, AR. S/he will be provided a desk and computer in the shared natural resource office space. S/he should be prepared to work outdoors (i.e. wear proper warm weather clothing and bring water) in summer weather, which is generally warm and humid. Footwear appropriate for hiking should be worn while in the field. The intern may wish to wear clothing that will dry quickly, as s/he will likely get wet while collecting water samples. The individual selected for this position should possess the physical ability to hike in relatively steep terrain over long distances. The intern should be prepared to encounter ticks and biting insects, in addition to possibly encountering venomous snakes.

MENTORING AND LEARNING GOALS

Mentoring: After initially arriving at Buffalo National River, the intern will be orientated to the National Park Service, Buffalo National River, park staff, and the park's resources and challenges. Throughout the internship, s/he will work closely with and be mentored and trained by the park's Biologist and Natural Resource Manager, among other natural resource staff. S/he will have opportunities to interact with park seasonal and permanent staff during work hours and more casually outside of work hours during regularly organized informal events (e.g. cookouts). S/he will also have ample opportunity for professional development with staff from the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, U.S. Geological Survey, and other federal and state agencies. Opportunities to learn about and be mentored on cave mapping and data collection will be available during periods when the Cave Research Foundation is working at the park. Opportunities to assist with other natural resource projects may be available when other researchers are utilizing the Toney Bend Research and Learning Center.

Learning Goals: The Natural Resource Assistant will be exposed to a range of real-world natural resource challenges faced by natural resource managers and learn how scientists collect, process, and interpret natural resource data, particularly related to biological resources, for informing better park management practices and policies. The intern will gain hands-on technical experience by collecting, processing, and analyzing environmental data. S/he will learn about federal and state employment opportunities and the many career options available in the federal government and will be mentored by seasoned and developing park staff members who come from a myriad of backgrounds with diverse experiences. S/he will be encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities and given opportunities to shadow park staff from other divisions. Skills that may be improved or gained include analytical and technical skills, critical thinking skills, interpersonal skills, interpretive material and programming development skills, and public speaking skills.

SUPERVISORS	
Primary Supervisor: CD Scott	Secondary Supervisor: Chuck Bitting
Title: Biologist	Title: Natural Resource Program Manager
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