

SCIENTISTS IN PARKS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMER 2021

NPS UNIT: MANASSAS NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK	PD #: 2021007
<p>Project Title: Natural Resource Management Assistant (1) Primary natural resource discipline: Biological Sciences Project keywords: Bobwhite Quail, Habitat Improvement, Habitat Evaluation, GIS, Grasslands, Birds Location: Manassas, Virginia</p>	
COVID-19 NOTICE	
<p>As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to change and evolve, project timelines and structure remain flexible and it may be necessary to postpone start dates, begin work remotely, or reformulate the project's description. Should any development in the COVID-19 outbreak impair a project's timeline or results, the SIP Team will work with the park and project mentors to assess the situation and determine the best course of action at that time.</p>	
PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND WORK PRODUCTS	
<p>Position Description: Manassas National Battlefield Park preserves approximately 4,400 acres of rolling hills, forests and grasslands where the 1st and 2nd Battles of Manassas occurred. The Park is home to many different natural communities that support biologically diverse populations of flora and fauna. As the surrounding lands become urbanized by a rapidly growing population, the battlefield has become a regionally significant natural oasis. With warm season grassland habitat in decline, Manassas Battlefield provides a home and resting stop to over 160 species of birds. Manassas Battlefield has an established program for monitoring the Northern bobwhite quail population and assessing the quality of their habitat. After assessing the ecological suitability of our grasslands, efforts must be made to improve the quality of the habitat in the park's warm season grasslands.</p> <p>In addition, There have been many articles written about how power line right of ways can be managed to create valuable wildlife habitat. Post- disturbance, the right-of-ways planted with a diverse selection of native plants and treated selectively for any tall growing species have the potential to benefit wildlife while being cost effective and compatible with the goals of the utility industry. This method of management is expected to be a more beneficial alternative to non-selective mechanical and chemical treatments for both the utility company and the ecological community. In 2009, Dominion Virginia Power upgraded existing towers and utility lines on the western border of the Stuarts Hill and Brawner Farm Tracts. Extensive ground disturbance occurred during the installation of the new towers and lines, which required re-vegetation of the entire corridor. These areas were planted with native seed mix and managed as early succession habitat; selectively treating tall growing species over the past 6 years. However, to date, the park has not determined the success of vegetative establishment or the use of these areas by wildlife. Early succession habitat is rapidly declining due to urban and industrial development, forest succession, and agricultural practices. This habitat type provides food, nesting and shelter for numerous species of wildlife populations that are in decline. Information is needed to determine if the habitat is being used by wildlife species that depend on early successional habitat, to assess the vegetative diversity of the habitat and to determine what actions could contribute to improving the habitat. Ideally, this habitat is being used by pollinators, Northern bobwhite, American woodcock, Whip-poor-will, Eastern Towhee and other species of decline.</p>	

The park would like to utilize a SIP internship to conduct an inventory of the flora and fauna of the 65 acre power line right-of-way that borders the Brawner Farm and Stuarts Hill tracts of the battlefield. Some studies have suggested that right-of-ways provide roughly 80% of the Northeast's early successional habitat. This habitat type is known to provide refuge for many species of concern or that are in decline including but not limited to: Northern bobwhite, Rose-breasted grosbeak, American woodcock, Yellow-breasted chat, Eastern loggerhead shrike, and several invertebrates. Methods of inventory would include: vegetation survey plots, pan trap collection, bird surveys and camera trapping. The inventory would occur from early spring through the fall, with the final project report being written in the fall. Results from the inventory will help the park to determine the success of the early succession right-of-way management approach and assess if any additional management is needed.

This project directly ties to the NPS mission of providing quality habitat for a variety of species. Management of habitats with a changing climate is a moving target and this project will help us navigate management of our grasslands and early successional habitats.

In addition the intern will help with associated work in surrounding habitats such as bobwhite quail monitoring and habitat improvement, exotic plant management, and habitat improvement projects.

This position is offered through the National Park Service's Scientists in Parks (SIP) Program in partnership with Stewards Individual Placement Program (Stewards) and The Geological Society of America (GSA).

Work Products: The intern will create a final report using GIS maps, photographs and text, that highlights the data collected, the habitat improvements created, and suggestions for future work. Goals of the internship would include: 1) Completing the necessary surveys and management actions needed to monitor and improve power line habitat, 2) Developing an understanding of the National Park Service and learn about employment opportunities; and 3) Advancing skills in research and natural resource management.

QUALIFICATIONS

Applicant should have a strong background in wildlife biology or ecology, GIS and natural resource management. Applicant must be comfortable performing physically arduous tasks in extreme environmental conditions. This is an internship that will require a mixture of field work and office work. Applicant must have a valid driver's license and a good driving record. Prior to starting this position a government security background clearance will be required.


The applicant must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent legal resident ("green-card-holder") between the ages of 18 and 30 years old, inclusive, or veterans up to age 35. Prior to starting this position, a government security background clearance will be required.

VEHICLE AND DRIVER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Applicant must have a valid drivers license and a good driving record.

A personal vehicle is REQUIRED for this position.

If the SIP is required to drive a park vehicle for their position, Stewards will perform a driving records search, and the SIP's ability to drive a park vehicle during work hours will be contingent upon the results. SIPs 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 SIP from driving a park vehicle include: SIP 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 SIP position. If the SIP is denied coverage by Stewards, they will not be permitted to drive during work hours.

HOUSING	
<p>Park housing is available and will be provided at no cost to the participant. Housing is available within the park. This is shared housing, often with a roommate, with shared kitchen and living area. A vehicle is needed to travel for groceries and entertainment, and from the housing to the work office.</p>	
NATURAL AND PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT	
<p>Manassas National Battlefield Park, established in 1940, preserves the sites of the First and Second Battles of Manassas. These important battlegrounds and associated monuments are nestled in over 4,400 acres of meadows, woodlands and streams. The Resource Management division oversees these historic lands for their important contribution to local and regional biodiversity. The Manassas National Battlefield is located in Prince William County, Virginia which has a population of 40,600 and offers many opportunities for shopping and cultural activities. The park provides over 40 miles of hiking and equestrian trails, and fishing ponds. It is conveniently located near several recreational parks and approximately 30 miles from the nation's capital and 40 miles from Shenendoah National Park and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Weather during the summers can be quite hot and humid.</p> <p>Work will include field work, physical labor, and office work. Applicant must be comfortable with arduous work in extreme environmental conditions. Exposure to plants, insects, and wildlife is to be expected and conducted safely.</p>	
INTERNSHIP DATES	
<p>Start Date: 5/10/2021 Number of Weeks: 26 Weeks Flexible Start Date: Yes</p>	
LIVING ALLOWANCE	
26 Weeks (\$400/week =\$10400)	
RELOCATION ALLOWANCE	
\$350	
AMERICORPS PROGRAM	
<div>  <p>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 SIP Program is supported through AmeriCorps by providing a Segal Education Award in addition to the SIP's living stipend and relocation allowance.</p> <p>Upon successful completion of the SIP position, the SIPs (AmeriCorps members) are eligible for a \$1,638 - \$6,195 pre-tax education award 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.</p> <p>AmeriCorps limits the number of terms an individual can serve to 4 terms. If an applicant has previously completed 4 SIP or other AmeriCorps positions, they will not be eligible to apply for an additional SIP position.</p> </div>	
SUPERVISORS/MENTORS	
<p>Primary: Allison Hay Allison_hay@nps.gov 703-754-1861 ext. 1112</p>	<p>Secondary: Bryan Gorsira Bryan_Gorsira@nps.gov 703-754-1861 ext. 1109</p>