



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Summer 2022

NPS UNIT: Mojave Desert Network

Position #: 50

Position Title: Ecology Assistant

Primary natural resource discipline: Biological Sciences

Position Keywords: Monitoring, Vegetation, Desert, Mojave Desert, Great Basin Desert

Location: Boulder City, Nevada

COVID-19 NOTICE

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.

POSITION DESCRIPTION AND WORK PRODUCTS

Project Description: MOJN has developed and standardized monitoring protocols to collect scientifically rigorous data on a prioritized set of vital signs that will aid parks in managing their natural resources. While in the field, the intern will primarily assist with the monitoring of vegetation communities ranging from desert scrub to bristlecone pine forests. General duties include: collecting vegetation monitoring data following established protocols; walking long distances over uneven or boulder terrain; hiking up to 12 miles in a day with backpacks that weigh 30+ pounds; conducting quality analysis/quality control (QA/QC) for all data collected, both in the field and in the office; collaborating with MOJN staff in project planning and oversight of field safety and logistics; and equipment organization and maintenance. Specific methods or activities in the field include line point-intercept, basal gap, canopy gap, frequency plots, identifying vegetation to the species level, measuring DBH, measuring tree height, and navigating using mobile devices. This position will require travel and camping during the field season in order to collect data for the vegetation protocols. Most camping gear can be provided; this position will primarily "car-camp" at campgrounds or primitive, dispersed sites as opposed to backpacking. Work may require long days of 10+ hours including early mornings, and potentially 8 day field hitches followed by 6 days off. While in the office, general duties will include data entry, data QA/QC, equipment organization, and equipment maintenance. These tasks may involve sitting and looking at a computer screen for extended periods of time.

Work Products: MOJN monitoring protocols collect various ecological data that assist park managers with managing resources within their parks. Expected work products include entry and review of data in our database. Future reports written by NPS staff will also utilize these data. The intern will gain experience in vegetation monitoring field methods and data management practices. They will work closely with NPS scientists and learn what is like to work as a scientist for a federal agency.

NATURAL & PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT



POSITION DESCRIPTION Summer 2022

The Mojave Desert Network (MOJN) is based at Lake Mead National Recreation Area in Boulder City, Nevada, which is a small town located 30 miles south of Las Vegas, Nevada. Our team includes 8 to 12 people, and we frequently work with park staff at Lake Mead and other parks in our network. Boulder City has a grocery store, hardware store, gym, and a variety of small shops and restaurants. Nearby Henderson has the full suite of amenities, retailers, and entertainment. Outdoor recreation opportunities are abundant throughout the public lands surrounding Las Vegas and include hiking, mountain biking, climbing, birding, and skiing/snowshoeing (weather-dependent). This position will be carried out in the field and in the office. Field work is often conducted in remote, backcountry locations where services are limited or non-existent. Driving may occur over unmaintained dirt roads in poor condition. Hiking and camping during the winter may occasionally involve sub-freezing temperatures, snow, and high wind. Additionally, temperatures may be hot during the shoulder seasons in late fall and early spring. Some hikes cover long distances of 8 miles or more over uneven and/or loose terrain. Occasionally, work sites may be above 8000 ft elevation. Other hazards include venomous snakes and stinging insects. Due to Covid-19, office work may be conducted from home. Risks associated with office work include eye strain from computer use and ergonomic issues related to sitting for long periods of time. MOJN takes safety very seriously, and training will be provided in recognizing and avoiding hazards as well as in using field communications devices. We have safety protocols for the pandemic and update our plans as conditions change.

QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum qualifications include a bachelor's degree in a related field (e.g., biological science, Ecology, Botany), experience hiking up to 10 miles a day for multiple days in potentially challenging weather conditions and on steep or uneven terrain, and experience camping for multiple days. Preferred qualifications include experience monitoring vegetation communities and identifying plants of the Mojave and Great Basin regions.

The applicant must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent legal resident ("green-card-holder"). Prior to starting this position, a government security background clearance will be required.

VEHICLE AND DRIVER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Applicant will not need to drive a government vehicle.

A personal vehicle is recommended 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

Park housing is NOT available. The intern will be responsible for finding housing in the nearby area. Park housing unavailable, however previous interns have been able to find rooms to rent in the local area at a reasonable price and we plan to assist them in their search for housing as much as possible.

INTERNSHIP DATES

Start Date: 05/02/2022

Number of Weeks: 12

Flexible Start Date: Yes



POSITION DESCRIPTION Summer 2022

LIVING ALLOWANCE

12 Weeks (\$525.00/week =\$6300.00)

RELOCATION ALLOWANCE

350.00

AMERICORPS PROGRAM



AmeriCorps

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.

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.

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.

Partners

This position is offered through the National Park Service's Scientists in Parks (SIP) Program in partnership with various organizations.

