



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

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

**Service Time:** May 19 – August 14, 2026 (450 hours total, 40 Hours/Week). 30 hours/week will be served with Mississippi Valley Conservancy, and 10 hours/week will be served with Friends of the Blufflands.

**Benefits:** Living stipend total for the whole term = \$6,500 (\$500/week), plus an additional housing stipend of \$125 per week. An AmeriCorps Education Award of approximately \$1,900 will be awarded upon successful completion of service.

**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 southwest 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. They also protect and manage several nature preserves throughout 9 Wisconsin counties where they restore prairies, savannas, and woodlands to protect clean water and to preserve and enhance biodiversity.
- **Friends of the Blufflands** is a nonprofit 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 users who value the area blufflands for their increased quality of life. Friends of the Blufflands leads volunteer days and educational activities in the La Crosse blufflands. They also restore prairie, savanna, and woodland habitat in the blufflands.

**SERVICE DESCRIPTION:** The Land Steward and Outreach position will provide opportunities to gain practical land stewardship and environmental outreach skills while exploring career options in the conservation field. This position will promote a spirit of community service and environmental awareness through engagement with people and the land. NOLS Wilderness First Aid and Chainsaw Safety trainings will be provided to the service member by WisCorps.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

##### *Land Stewardship*

- Assist with habitat management and restoration of native prairie, forest, oak savanna, and wetland habitat on protected land throughout southwest Wisconsin.
- Gain skills and expertise in several aspects of wildlife habitat management, including species identification, timber stand improvement, invasive species control, trail maintenance, and oak savanna and prairie restoration.
- Operate and maintain chainsaws, brush cutters, herbicide applicators, mowers, hand tools, 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 volunteers to expand land management activities on Conservancy nature preserves.
- Help promote, coordinate, and lead volunteer workdays and engage members of the public on habitat management projects throughout southwest Wisconsin.
- Keep detailed records of volunteer hours, program activity, and event attendance for continual program improvement and grant reporting.
- Assist with writing articles, social media posts, and/or blog posts to highlight service activities.
- May participate in additional outreach activities such as media interviews or community education events.

## TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT:

- Motorized equipment such as chainsaws, brush cutters, weed whippers, and mowers
- Non-motorized equipment such as herbicide sprayers, shovels, wheelbarrows, and other hand tools
- UTV operation as needed
- Drive pickup trucks, haul and park loaded ball hitch equipment trailers

## QUALIFICATIONS:

- Minimum age requirement is 18 years old
- A citizen of the United States, a United States national, or a legal permanent resident of the United States
- Willingness and ability to use herbicides, chainsaws, and any other tools required to complete assigned tasks
- Possess a valid driver's license and a working vehicle
- Physical demands and service environment regularly require the service members to be outdoors in wooded areas and on steep, uneven natural terrain
- Physically able to work long days outside in seasonal inclement weather, hiking on and off trail
- Willing and able to lead occasional volunteer workdays during evenings and weekends
- Able to carry up to 50 pounds of equipment
- Work in the presence of biting insects and in a variety of weather conditions, such as temperatures ranging from below freezing to 95 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 is preferred
- Forestry, ornithology, or other natural resources specialty is preferred
- First Aid and CPR certification is preferred
- Herbicide/pesticide applicator certification is preferred
- Advanced SAW, FISTA, or other chainsaw certification is 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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