



**Position Title:** Summer Visitor Center Assistant

**Position Service Site:** Ottawa National Forest Visitor Center – Watersmeet, MI

**Service Time:** May 19 – August 29, 2026 (450 hours total, 15 weeks, 32 Hours/Week)

**Benefits:** Living stipend total for the whole term = \$6,510 (\$434 per week). An AmeriCorps Education Award of approximately \$1,900 will be awarded upon successful service completion. \$175 WisCorps boot reimbursement benefit. *Onsite shared **housing** is available. Members should be prepared to live communally with other people.*

**OVERVIEW:** The Ottawa National Forest is located in the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan on over one million acres of land. The area is known for its remote character, picturesque lakes and streams, vast northern hardwood forests, and abundant wildlife. The Ottawa National Forest offers numerous recreational opportunities including high-quality stream and lake fishing, deer and small-game hunting, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, hiking, birding, cross-country and downhill skiing, and more. The half million acres that make up the southern portion of Ottawa National Forest contain numerous glacial lakes, which are home to bald eagles, ospreys, loons, smallmouth and largemouth bass, walleye, northern pike, and other native fish and wildlife species. Three designated Wilderness Areas lie within this area-- Sylvania, McCormick, and the Sturgeon River Gorge, each offering its own unique features.

**SERVICE DESCRIPTION:** The Summer Visitor Center Assistant is primarily responsible for staffing the Ottawa National Forest Visitor Center in Watersmeet, MI. Service will primarily be performed in an office setting but may include field components when opportunities arise. Duties include providing visitor information and helping respond to inquiries about recreation facilities, user permits, points of interest, and related activities. The Placement will also educate visitors on Leave No Trace principles that will reduce negative impacts on the Ottawa National Forest. Opportunities to participate in and develop interpretive programs may be provided as part of this position. The Placement may also help to deliver interpretive and environmental education programs and assist in developing or updating media and exhibits for use in the Visitor Center and other areas of the forest.

The Assistant may also periodically rotate into the Recreation and Wilderness Crews, performing maintenance tasks at developed and dispersed recreation sites. Associated duties include maintaining and restoring sites that visitors use for recreational purposes in order to prevent resource damage and minimize impact on the land. The team also maintains facilities to reduce sanitation impacts throughout the forest. Finally, the Assistant may assist with field data collection and input utilizing a tablet or GPS unit. These service tasks will be performed in a small crew setting.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Manage Ottawa National Forest Visitor Center operations as necessary.
- Greet visitors and answer phone calls while operating the Visitor Center front desk.
- Assist visitors by providing them with information about specific recreation opportunities and activities.
- Inform visitors of the rules and regulations applicable to the various areas within the Ottawa National Forest.
- Use initiative to carry out recurring assignments independently. Detailed instructions are provided for new assignments. Unfamiliar situations or deviations from established practices are referred to a supervisor.
- Support Visitor Center staff with the design and implementation of educational programming.
- Assist with developing and presenting interpretive and educational programming for special events, school groups, and other community outreach activities.
- Provide visitor education and interpretation in front-country and backcountry Wilderness settings.
- Occasionally assist with field data collection and input utilizing a tablet or GPS unit.
- Complete periodic backcountry maintenance of trails, campsites, and portages using crosscut saws, axes, etc.

- Periodically join the Watersmeet Recreation Crew to perform day-to-day maintenance, monitoring, clean-up, issues reporting, and simple construction projects for Recreation sites. Day-to-day maintenance includes:
  - Mowing, trimming, tree clearing, and debris pick-up.
  - Cleaning and maintaining fire rings, campsites, bathrooms, beaches, and other facilities.
  - Assisting the public with questions related to camping and recreation opportunities in the district.
- The WisCorps member may on rare occasions take part in overnight trips to maintain backcountry wilderness sites involving complex portage and campsite projects where the main mode of travel is by canoe and on foot.

#### **HOUSING:**

- If housing is available, members should be prepared to live in communal housing with other staff.
- Members should expect to have 0-5 roommates in a shared house, and no pets are allowed.
- Members must inform staff of any housing preferences or required accommodations.
- Housing accommodation includes a private, lockable dorm room with a twin mattress and limited closet space.
- Shared living spaces include a large living and dining room, laundry, full-service kitchen, and two full bathrooms.
- The bunkhouse is located within 30 miles of Iron River, MI, and Eagle River, WI, which offer several amenities.

#### **TRAININGS OFFERED:**

- First Aid/CPR training
- Defensive Driving training
- Radio/SPOT device and Avenza mapping software trainings
- WisCorps will provide NOLS Wilderness First Aid and Chainsaw Safety trainings

#### **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
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Excellent communication skills
- Understanding of or willingness to learn various conservation practices
- Passionate about outdoor recreation
- Must possess a valid driver's license, and a reliable personal vehicle is recommended
- Ability to perform position duties in a service environment which regularly requires the service member to be outdoors in wooded areas, on uneven natural paths, on open water, and in the presence of biting insects
- Physically able to serve long days and navigate outside in seasonal inclement weather, hiking on and off trail
- Ability to carry up to 50 pounds of equipment with carrying, lifting, stooping, and bending
- Ability to serve in a variety of weather conditions such as temperatures ranging from below freezing to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, high winds, intense sunshine, rain, and high humidity
- Ability to perform the essential duties of the position with or without reasonable accommodation
- Ability to multitask and shift schedule and priorities to meet changing conditions
- 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.

*WisCorps provides equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran per applicable federal, state, and local laws. We are committed to assuring equal employment opportunity and equal access to services, programs, and activities for persons with disabilities. If you have a disability, and need to access information in an alternative format, or need it translated into another language, please contact us at 608-782-2494, by email at [staff@wiscorps.org](mailto:staff@wiscorps.org) or dial Wisconsin Relay 711.*