



Position Description

Position Title: Naturalist	Reports To: Director of Nature Education
Dept/Location: Education-Severson Dells	Salary Range: \$18.76 - \$23.07 DOQ
FLSA Status: Full-time/Nonexempt (Hourly)	Last Revision: August, 2022

POSITION SUMMARY

This position will support and carry out the missions of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County (hereinafter referred to as FPWC) and Severson Dells Nature Center (hereinafter referred to as SDNC). This is accomplished primarily by providing high quality experiences through educational programs for all ages, volunteer habitat restoration efforts and supporting research efforts. The position is responsible for planning and implementing environmental education programs, managing on-site volunteer restoration efforts in partnership with the Director of Natural Resources and support the planning of lectures, guided hikes and public programs. This position helps ensure that each individual involved has a positive experience in nature and appreciates the joy and wonder of our natural world.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES

- Collaborates in developing, implementing, delivering and evaluating nature activities to be used with guided school groups, in-school settings, scout groups, summer programs, and the general public.
- Conducts on-site volunteer workdays in ecological restoration including scheduling with volunteers, promoting workdays and maintaining all tools necessary to conduct workdays.
- Develops, prepares, presents, and evaluates research and survey projects as they pertain to our mission. Research is accomplished at Severson Dells by developing university and agency partnerships as well as conducting independent research and analyzing citizen science datasets.
- Integrates methods and results of environmental monitoring projects into programs for youth and adults.
- Collaborates in outreach programming through marketing and public relations with new target audiences.
- Collects program fees for guided outdoor education programs and for in-school programs.
- Helps keep program and activity materials ready to use and in good working order.
- Helps with set-up and cleanup of school educational programs.
- Assists in providing accurate natural history information for visitors and people who inquire by other means.
- Manages Natural Resource AmeriCorps member(s) serving at the Nature Center.
- Actively participates in special events.
- Assists with planning and carrying out volunteer appreciation activities.
- Assists other staff members as needed.
- Understands and adheres to all risk management and safety programs and procedures.
- Other duties as assigned.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS and ABILITIES REQUIRED FOR THE JOB

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed here are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions, assuming they do not result in an undue hardship to FPWC.

Demonstrated ability to coordinate, develop, and conduct nature programs; previous program teaching experience required. Knowledge of northern Illinois species and ability to utilize field identification procedures for plants, flowers, birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and other natural resources. Ability to lead and instruct programs for physical outdoor recreational activities such as, but not limited to, hiking and canoeing, is preferred. Motivation as a self-starter, able to demonstrate a superior work ethic and have the ability to multi-task, be detail oriented, plan efficiently, and to represent the Preserves and the Nature Center enthusiastically. Excellent written and verbal communications skills; effectiveness as a strong team player and public speaker; professionalism, leadership skills, tact and sensitivity with the public, students, staff, and volunteers. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with volunteers, fellow employees, various organizations, and the general public, especially children. Must have the ability to work evenings, limited holidays and weekends, as required, and the ability to travel, including some overnight travel. Maintain a working knowledge of and adhere to all risk management and safety programs and procedures. Must successfully obtain and maintain CPR and basic first-aid certification. Must possess a valid driver's license.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's degree with a major in Biology/Environmental Sciences or related field preferred with at least two years of experience working with school-aged children in an outdoor setting required, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Experience working with volunteers and experience with habitat restoration are highly desired. Combination of experience and education must relate directly to program responsibilities with an emphasis on environmental education. One year of experience scheduling, planning and supervising nature programs and activities is desirable.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Ability to read, analyze, and interpret general business periodicals, professional journals, technical procedures, or governmental regulations. Ability to write reports, business correspondence, and procedure manuals. Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions from staff, volunteers, children, and the general public.

MATHEMATICAL SKILLS

Ability to accurately perform addition, subtraction, multiplication and division computations involving rational numbers is necessary. Must also be able to interpret and produce line graphs, bar graphs and pie charts.

MACHINES/TOOLS, AND/OR EQUIPMENT SKILLS

Knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite and Google Docs is essential. Knowledge of basic hand tools for restoration and willingness to gain advanced tool certifications (chainsaw training, etc.) Knowledge of the Squarespace website platform and working knowledge of social media is desirable.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

This position requires the ability to stand, walk, stoop over, kneel, crawl, reach and lie on ground. Must be able to walk up to three miles on uneven or varied terrain. Frequently must lift objects up to 25 pounds and occasionally lift and/or move objects up to 50 pounds.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Normal office environment, as well as frequent work in the field. Outside work during wet, cold, windy, dusty or hot weather conditions is often necessary. Walking over uneven ground through woods and climbing stairs. Travel to schools by private vehicle frequently required (mileage is reimbursed at the IRS rate).