



2018 Wilderness Ranger Internship

Since 2009, the goal of the Wilderness Ranger Intern (WRI) program has been to train, educate, mentor and provide employment development opportunities for the next generations of wilderness professionals, while providing skilled support to the US Forest Service to accomplish priority wilderness work.

The loss of funding for wilderness management has created a steep decline in wilderness stewardship “boots on the ground”. There has also been a decline in the number of working wilderness professionals. Each year, there are fewer professionals who can pass on their wilderness management skills to the next generations.

This is a 14-week internship for students and military veterans in under-graduate or graduate programs in conservation, resource management, wilderness, recreation or related fields. This internship offers 2 full weeks of wilderness skills training—crosscut saw use and certification, hand tool use, stock handling and packing, Leave No Trace, Wilderness First Responder training- and weeks of working in the wilderness with trained professionals, US Forest Service managers and volunteers.

The WRI will also learn about the Wilderness Act and how it established an overarching framework for wilderness stewardship, what wilderness character is and how to conduct wilderness character monitoring.

The mission of the SBFC is to connect citizens and communities to provide wilderness stewardship for the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church- River of No Return Wilderness areas and surrounding wildlands. Through the WRI program, we meet our mission by engaging young women, men, and military veterans in wilderness stewardship experiences, through education, skills training, and boots on the ground work. The internship is also an opportunity to gain training and experience to help launch a wilderness career in government, private, or non-profit sectors.

Requirements

Applicants must be currently enrolled in a college or university, or have graduated from college or university the semester immediately preceding the beginning of the internship. Preferred applicants may be enrolled in under-or graduate programs with majors and coursework in wilderness, conservation science, biology, botany, resource management or related fields. This internship is open to women, men and military veterans. Transcripts will be requested.

A Wilderness Ranger Intern is required to backpack for multiple hitches of up to 9 days. Hitches will generally be 9 days on and 5 days off, but are subject to varying lengths. A WRI should be fit enough to carry a 50+ pound backpack and tools associated with duties (e.g. shovel, saw, etc.)

Applicants must be experienced in backpacking and backcountry travel, have a high level of physical fitness and be self-reliant. Applicants should be familiar with the Wilderness Act, wilderness ethics and Leave No Trace principles, including tolerance and respect for wildlife such as rattlesnakes, wolves, large cats, bears, and more.

Applicants must have strong communication skills. WRI's are expected to be fully contributing team members and also communicate with agency managers, wilderness visitors, and project volunteers. Applicants should know basic computer applications. Additional computer experience with ArcGIS, Microsoft Access, and photo editing software is desirable, but not required.

You must be able to commit to beginning work on May 14, 2018 and working through August 17, 2018. These dates are firm!

If there are important days you must take off during the season, please notify us when you apply so that we can work around them.

Project Work

As a WRI, you will be an integral member of the wilderness team in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness or Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. You will work with at least one other WRI and an SBFC Wilderness Steward. Interns will be expected to learn and take on many full-time wilderness ranger duties. You will primarily be working under the supervision of SBFC professional Wilderness Stewards and US Forest Service wilderness rangers and will not work alone. Periodically, WRI's may work with other SBFC staff and volunteer groups.

Work in the field will include trail maintenance, using primitive tools and wilderness character monitoring that includes solitude, invasive species, and other elements, and maintaining trails to meet the undeveloped quality of wilderness. You will camp in the wilderness for an extended amount of time, work in a variety of weather conditions and hike extensively over rough, varied terrain. You will be expected to help with tool maintenance, volunteer project and meal preparation, support, education and training. You may also work with pack stock.

Work in the front country will include meal planning, food and supply shopping, tool maintenance, blogging about your experience and submitting project reports.

Project Locations, Schedules, Transportation

The SBFC office in Missoula, Montana is where the program will start and finish up.

SBFC operates on the Forest Service bi-weekly, 14-day work schedule. Wilderness Ranger Interns generally, but not always, work for 9 days at a time, in the field, with office work on either end of the work hitch. This is followed by 5 days off, every two weeks. Work is required on many weekends and holidays. Wilderness stewardship projects are in the backcountry, where there is NO cell or internet service. Bunkhousing will be provided at a remote FS duty station—DO NOT expect Wi-Fi or cell service. Off work travel to and from duty stations is not provided by SBFC and we suggest carpooling.

Personal vehicles will sometimes be used for travel to and from worksites and bunkhouses during a scheduled work hitch. When a personal vehicle is used for work-related activities, reimbursement will be at the rate of .35 cents per mile and you must keep a log of your miles.

Interns who do not have a personal vehicle can arrange transportation with SBFC for pick-up in Missoula (airport, bus depot, etc.) at the beginning and end of the internship. Work-related trips through towns surrounding the wilderness areas will usually provide opportunities to go to the grocery store, post office, pharmacy, restaurants, etc. For off-work travel, it may be possible to make arrangements with other staff or interns to carpool to Missoula, Boise, or elsewhere. For travel during non-work days, it is recommended that interns have a personal vehicle available.

Benefits

This is an AmeriCorps position and WRIs will receive a *living allowance of \$3,750 –paid in monthly increments. Taxes will be deducted from this amount.* An education award of about \$1,500 will also be awarded at the close of service, providing the dates of service are completed. Housing will be provided during your work-days and a *travel stipend of \$200* will also be given at the end of service. Additionally, Wilderness First Responder training is offered at no charge. Most interns will participate in one to two multi-day volunteer projects and food will be provided. WRI's are otherwise responsible for providing their own food.

Training

The SBFC 14-week Wilderness Ranger Internship opens with two weeks of intensive wilderness skills training that includes Wilderness Act education in the classroom, crosscut saw certification, hand tool use, packing and horsemanship and Wilderness First Responder medical training. Interns will also receive mentoring and the opportunity to learn how to navigate the federal jobs system. Upon completion of training, Interns will then pair off and work for the remaining 10 weeks on one of the four forests in the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness areas, the largest wilderness complex in the lower-48 states.

Academic Credit

SBFC will work with colleges or universities that offer natural resource courses to provide all

necessary coordination, documentation and evaluation for the Internship. Please discuss this with SBFC staff at the beginning of the internship.

Alcohol Policy

Wilderness Ranger Interns are not allowed to consume alcohol while on duty. This includes front and backcountry locations and any time and place while the Intern is participating in an SBFC work project.

Wilderness Ranger Intern Terms and Expectations

Responsibilities Include

At the close of service, Interns must prepare and present to SBFC staff and board, our Forest Service partners, community members and others. You will be asked to create a fairly detailed presentation with photos and a narrative about your experience: the highs, the lows, what made you laugh or cry, what you learned, personal change, what resonated with you, the spectrum of your experiences!

Wilderness Ranger Interns will:

- Commit to completing the full 14-week internship.
- Work collaboratively with staff, volunteers and other interns to implement wilderness project logistics for monitoring, trail maintenance and reconstruction and duties as requested.
- Share work planning meals food and supply shopping, tool maintenance, blogging about your experience and submitting project reports.
- Perform annual and deferred wilderness maintenance including campsite and fire ring cleanup and naturalizing.
- Interact with public in Wilderness, providing education and information. Inform Wilderness visitors of rules and regulations.
- Perform inventorying and monitoring of campsites to measure trends in wilderness character; restore campsites that are out of compliance with standards.
- Inventory, install and remove signs in Wilderness and at trailheads, as requested.
- Explain use regulations to visitors according to the Wilderness Act. Inspect Wilderness areas to determine compliance with regulations or specifications. Patrol Wilderness to ensure that areas are operated, used, and maintained in accordance with Wilderness management plans. Provide detailed historical and cultural information about Wilderness areas to visitors and recreational user groups; explain rules and regulations. Use education as the primary method of disseminating Wilderness rules and regulations to the public.
- Collect evidence and provide documentation for cases of misuse of Wilderness. Document destruction to, or impacts on, campsites.
- May assist with maintenance, care and packing of pack and saddle stock under the guidance of a professional packer.

- Manage collected data in both hardcopy and digital format, including the input of data into databases and filing of digital photographs.
- Backpack for up to 10 days over varied terrain, in a variety of weather conditions, in primitive, wilderness landscapes, with a backpack of 50 pounds or more, including tools associated with Wilderness Ranger duties.