

Position Description

1715 Hour AmeriCorps Member

Education Steward

Location: Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park



Term of service: January 16, 2024 – November 15, 2024

Service schedule: Member will serve a minimum of 1,715 hours over a 44-week term, averaging 41 hours per week with 80 hours of “Time Not Scheduled to Serve” to be used as sick, vacation, or other personal leave.

Position Summary:

As Montana’s first State Park, Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park is a unique place located midway between Bozeman and Butte Montana, 1 hour from historic Virginia City and about 2 hours from Yellowstone National Park. The park is remote with the closest communities are Whitehall and Three Forks which are both 15-20 minutes from the Park’s Main Visitor Center.

The site plays a special role with the local communities due to the various recreation opportunities the park offers along with long ties to the history of the area. Nestled in the scenic Jefferson Canyon of the London Hills, Lewis & Clark Caverns is one of the largest Montana State Parks including 1400 vertical feet elevation change over 3000 acres of park land. The facilities of the park feature ten miles of popular hiking/mountain biking trails, two picnic areas, river access, the renowned caverns with three types of tour and a well-used campground. The park offers fantastic scenery and strong biodiversity.

All these elements lead to a myriad of challenges, and this is where AmeriCorps members come in. This position will have strong interaction with youth as well as disabled and elderly visitors. It will cover a multitude of interpretive projects. Park AmeriCorps members will also work to engage the local communities to increase volunteerism in the park to help augment staff and address weed and trail issues as well as several projects aimed to improve the park’s aging infrastructure. While a few programs already require predetermined AmeriCorps involvement (like Paradise Tours May-September), there is still ample opportunity to adjust to new possibilities. A creative, well-organized individual could make such a difference!

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps members perform capacity building activities. Their service revolves around the program goals listed below to ensure that they do not displace workers or take part in any prohibited or unallowable activities as outlined in AmeriCorps regulations. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps members will likely participate in activities that involve recurring contact with vulnerable populations.

Member will contribute to the following program goals:

- Improve park land



- Expand educational and interpretive programs
- Increase volunteer capacity*
- Enhance outreach and awareness of state parks
- Participate in service activities including National Days of Service**
- Respond to disasters, when called upon to do so by the program

Specific Position Responsibilities:

- **Expand educational and interpretive programs**
 - Along with another 1715-hour member, this member will continue offering the ever-popular and successful Paradise Cave Tours, thus accommodating visitors with physical challenges or with small children. This person will train with a provided manual.
 - This position will book guest presenters and work closely with the Park Ranger to expand campground program offerings and issue news releases, program posters, and promote on social media for all park events. Member can coordinate with local colleges, schools, and youth organizations to recruit for topics of interest and to advertise to the targeted education groups.
 - Member will develop and present original programs or events relevant to Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park; possible dates of interest include National Caves and Karst Day, Kids to Parks Day, Jr. Ranger program, Music Days, Birding Day, etc. Member can adjust to best use the skills/interests within to expand the park offerings on site and in local communities; taping these programs and uploading onto social media increases the impact and range of viewers.

- **Improve park land**
 - The AmeriCorps member will assist park maintenance in the continued remediation of invasive weed species and repairing trails, working when available during Spring and Fall.
 - This person will also organize, advertise, and recruit volunteers for a Cave Cleaning Event tied to National Public Lands Day

- **Increase volunteer capacity**
 - This position will advertise, recruit, and promote Montana State Parks volunteer opportunities targeting longer commitment options such as docents and Wild Cave Tour sweeps as well as single day work events, using social media and community visits to further contacts.
 - Member will update the directory of volunteers for the area utilizing other state park, Montana Wild, college, and service organizations contacts to gain broader information.
 - This person will also host one recruitment event in the spring to spark interest in Park volunteering. Member will also work with the volunteer liaison to design an

appreciation event or reward to recognize those who participate, realizing that some will be unable to attend a ceremony, and brainstorm ways volunteer would like to be acknowledged or rewarded.

- **Enhance outreach and awareness of state parks**
 - With the Park Ranger, member will develop the park's calendar of events for distribution at the park, on the webpage, at community events and during local service organization/partnership meetings.
 - The position will participate in local community events, specifically Whitehall Frontier Days, Bannack Days, Butte Folk Festival, and other possible dates to be shared with the other on-site AmeriCorps member. Individuals are encouraged to harness their enthusiasm- sharing what you love about AmeriCorps, state parks, the caverns or Montana with others!
 - Member might attend local meetings to investigate new partnership options or strengthen past partners such as the Whitehall library and Rotary Club.

Minimum Requirements:

- Over 18 with a high school diploma or GED; college degree or equivalent work experience preferred
- A United States citizen, United States National, or legal permanent resident alien
- Demonstrated leadership skills
- Ability to take initiative, handle multiple projects, track details essential to project completion, analyze information, and meet deadlines
- Strong ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing with diverse groups of people
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Basic computer proficiency
- Passion for the outdoors and enthusiasm for enhancing Montana's state parks
- A driver's license and personal means of transportation within the state of Montana
- Must pass the requirements of the National Service Criminal History Check

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps 2024 Required Trainings and Events (subject to change):

- January 16: First Day of Service
- January 22-25: Member Orientation; Lubrecht Experimental Forest
- March 4-8: Certified Interpretive Guide Training; Lubrecht Experimental Forest
- March 13-15: 19th Annual Serve Montana Symposium; Helena
- June 10-14: All Member Gathering; Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park
- July 19-20: Bannack Days; Bannack State Park
- August 31-September 1: Day of Honor; Chief Plenty Coups State Park
- November 14-15: Close of Service; Helena

Physical and Environmental Demands:

- Work is performed in both an indoor and outdoor environment.
- Frequently works in adverse outdoor conditions including temperature extremes, snow and rain, dust, and mosquito infested areas.
- Works with public and may inform public of site rules and regulations.
- May be required to lift over 25lbs across rugged terrain.
- The position may require some travel. The incumbent will be required to work odd hours, weekends, and holidays.

Benefits:

- Living allowance of \$444.00/week (taxed) with a \$300.00/month housing stipend
- An AmeriCorps Education Award of \$6,895 upon successful completion of service. This award can be used to pay education costs at qualified institutions of higher education, for educational training and resources, or to repay qualified student loans. Members aged 55 and over may transfer the education award to a child, grandchild, or foster child.
- Eligible for deferment on qualified student loans
- Guaranteed health benefits and childcare assistance if qualified
- Experience and training working in the fields of outdoor recreation, parks management, interpretive services, education, community outreach, and volunteer management
- Opportunity to live, work and be part of the team amid the natural wonders and cultural heritage of Montana State Parks

To Apply:

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps only accepts applications through the my.americorps.gov portal. To apply, you can follow the link [HERE](#) to our application within my.americorps.gov. Please note, there is only one application for all our 1715-hour positions, placement preference will be assessed during the interview process.

Application Deadline:

Applications are due by December 8, 2023.

* Volunteer activity facilitated by AmeriCorps members supports the management and operation of State Parks. These activities do not include any prohibited or unallowable activities as outlined in AmeriCorps regulations.

**Service activities will center around the preceding program goals as well as provide unique opportunities for members to engage in service to non-profit community organizations that provide support to those in need, including victims of national disasters, individuals and families in poverty, veterans, homeless animals, and other groups. Service projects will take place on and around designated National Days of Service as well as other AmeriCorps organized events, such as member trainings. Service activities will not include any prohibited or unallowable activities as outlined in AmeriCorps regulations.

The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps Program, as administered by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, shall provide equal access to opportunities provided by the

Program and shall not discriminate against any person because of race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Minority candidates are encouraged to apply. Reasonable accommodations will be provided for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. The accommodation must be essential for the Member to perform his/her service successfully. Funds for reasonable accommodations are available for use by members with disabilities who have been offered a position with an AmeriCorps Program and require an accommodation to fulfill the essential functions of their service.