

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:

NATURAL RESOURCES

POSITION TITLE:

Co-Steward

COMMITMENT:

2+ Years/ (30+ hours/year)

LOCATION:

District-wide – Assigned preserve

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

None

MINIMUM AGE:

21



DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE POSITION

This position involves assisting staff in accomplishing the restoration goals for an ecologically valuable natural area. They are responsible for some substantial aspect of the site's volunteer natural resource management which may include: overseeing one or more aspects of volunteer work at the site, seed collecting, education and outreach, invasive species control, record keeping, updating plant inventories, etc.

Co-stewards are members of the Volunteer Stewardship Network of The Nature Conservancy, who contribute significantly to the restoration of a site but do not need to have the commitment and knowledge of a steward.

Volunteer stewards supervise and mentor co-stewards. Volunteers will occasionally interact with the public and respond to questions and requests for information. Duties may vary at the discretion of the District staff.

Direction and training is received from staff.

PRIMARY VOLUNTEER DUTIES TO BE PERFORMED

- Assists staff and Steward in completing mutually agreed upon restoration goals.
- Attends and acquires pertinent information from District workshops, meetings or training sessions.
- Acknowledges all verbal and written updates from NR staff and Stewardship Program Coordinator.
- Accurately completes required District forms and returns them at least once a month.
- Records accurate volunteer hours monthly on Volgistics for the government accounting standards report.
- Reports personal physical injuries, new immediate threats to natural area communities and anything else of an urgent nature within 24 hours.
- Works cooperatively with District staff and other volunteers.
- Adheres to District's ordinances, safety guidelines, as well as regulations about confidentiality for sightings of endangered, threatened, or other rare plant and wildlife species.
- Assists with volunteer restoration workdays.
- Adheres to ethical and ecologically-sound principles. All ecological management work must receive pre-approval by the Stewardship Program Coordinator.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Required knowledge is provided at mandatory trainings and orientations regarding District rules, regulations, policies, and procedures; proper safety precautions. Additional skills needed are: ability to interact positively with the public and staff, effective communication skills, ability to interpret and apply written and verbal instructions, willingness to learn from staff and accept feedback.

- Interest in natural areas and ecological restoration.
- At least 21 years old and willing to make a minimum two-year commitment.
- Complete District volunteer application packet, including waiver and consent for criminal background check.
- Completes interview with Stewardship Program Coordinator; receives approval before apprenticeship.
- Is assigned to mentor under a steward for at least six months (minimum of 36 hours) before assuming the duties of co-steward. An exception may be made if a steward candidate has previous academic or professional experience, has participated in a similar volunteer program for at least six months, and/or has outstanding ecological knowledge and organizational skills.
- Approval required by site steward and Stewardship Program Coordinator after mentorship is complete. Must attend orientation to review forms, site information, and other related materials.
- Must have exceptional planning and managerial skills to ensure safe and efficient workdays supervising other volunteers.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by a volunteer to successfully perform the duties of the volunteer position.

While volunteering, the volunteer is regularly required to stand; walk; use hands to feel, finger or handle; reach with hands and arms; talk or hear. The volunteer is frequently required to climb, balance or stoop; sit, kneel, crouch or crawl and may frequently lift and/or move up to 25 pounds and occasionally move up to 50 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this position include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception and ability to adjust focus.

VOLUNTEER ENVIRONMENT

The volunteer environment characteristics described here are representative of those a volunteer encounters while performing the duties of the volunteer position.

While performing the duties of this volunteer position, the volunteer is regularly exposed to outside weather conditions, and rough of uneven terrain. The volunteer may encounter all kinds of weather including, hot, humid, cold, wet or windy conditions. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate. The volunteer occasionally performs duties in dim or low light.

PROVISIONS

This is an unpaid volunteer position, which exists to assist staff and to provide supplemental support for the District's programs. This position is undertaken freely on the part of the volunteer with no payment or expectation of payment of salaries, wages, compensation or other types of benefits. The District may from time to time alter or terminate volunteer positions and programs. Volunteer status may be changed or discontinued by the District at any time and for any reason, including a volunteer's failure to comply with District ordinances, policies and direction governing conduct in the performance of volunteer duties in the field or on District premises.

PURPOSE

The purpose of Volunteer Services Program at the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County is to engage volunteers who are willing to donate their time, talents and resources to support the programs and staff in carrying out the mission, purpose, and guiding principles of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and the volunteer programs.

FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF DUPAGE COUNTY MISSION

As mandated by the Illinois Downstate Forest Preserve Act, our mission is "to acquire and hold lands containing forests, prairies, wetlands, and associated plant communities or lands capable of being restored to such natural conditions for the purpose of protecting and preserving the flora, fauna and scenic beauty for the education, pleasure and recreation of its citizens."

PURPOSE

To acquire, preserve, protect and restore the natural resources in DuPage County while providing opportunities for people to connect with nature.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Stewardship, Sustainability, Community Engagement, Innovation, Empowerment, and Diversity & Inclusion.
Visit dupageforest.org to learn more.

For more information contact the Volunteer Services Department at (630) 933-7233 M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.