

Position Description

1700 Hour AmeriCorps Member

Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park



Term of service: January 18, 2021 – November 19, 2021

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 40-50 miles between Bozeman and Butte Montana, 1 hour from historic Virginia City and about 2 hours from Yellowstone National Park. The park is fairly remote; the closest communities are Whitehall and Three Forks which are both 15-20 minutes from the Main Visitor Center.

This park plays a special role with our 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 of these elements lead to a myriad of challenges, and this is where AmeriCorps comes 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 State Parks AmeriCorps members perform capacity building activities. Their service revolves around the program goals listed below in order to ensure that they do not displace workers or take part in any prohibited or unallowable activities as outlined in AmeriCorps regulations. Montana State 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:

- Improve park land
 - The AmeriCorps member will assist park maintenance in the continued remediation of invasive weed species, working as often as two days per week in spring and fall performing mechanical and chemical methods of weed control.
 - This person will also organize, advertise, and recruit volunteers for a combined trails repair and weed eradication effort near Earth Day, during heavy shoulder-season trails use.
 - In early October, this person will organize, advertise, and recruit volunteers for Cave Restoration (you will become an expert in cave cleaning!) near National Public Lands Day.
- Expand educational and interpretive programs
 - Along with the 900-hour member, continue past AmeriCorps successful Paradise Cave Tour offerings, increasing to five per day, thus accommodating visitors with physical challenges or with small children. Train with the provided manual and learn to book reservations.
 - 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. Coordinate with local colleges, schools, and youth organizations to recruit for topics of interest and to advertise to the targeted education groups.
 - Develop and present original programs 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. As learned during the 2020 Covid-19 challenges, taping these and uploading onto social media increases the impact and range of viewers.
- Increase Volunteer Capacity
 - 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. Use social media and community visits to further contacts.
 - Create a directory of volunteers for the area utilizing other state park, Montana Wild, college, and service organizations contacts to gain broader information.
 - Host one recruitment event in the spring to spark interest in Park volunteering. Design an appreciation event or reward to recognize those who participate,

realizing that some will be unable to attend a ceremony. Brainstorm ways you would like to be acknowledged or rewarded.

- Enhance outreach and awareness of state parks
 - With the Park Ranger, 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.
 - Participate in local community events, specifically Whitehall Frontier Days, Bannack Days, Butte Folk Festival, and other possible dates to be shared with the 900-hour AmeriCorps member. Harness your enthusiasm- discover what do you love about AmeriCorps, state parks, the caverns or Montana then share with others!
 - 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

Benefits:

- Living allowance of \$14,279 over 44-week term of service (\$325/week)
- An AmeriCorps Education Award of \$6,195 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 child care 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 State 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 of our 1700 hour positions, placement preference will be assessed during the interview process.

Application Deadline:

Applications are due by December 4, 2021.

* 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 State 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.