

# Position Description

## 1700 Hour Montana Education Specialist

### Location: Travelers Rest and Fort Owen State Parks



**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:**

Travelers’ Rest State Park marks the intersection of cultural and natural history. The Park’s 65 acres encompass the only archaeologically-verified campsite of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, a gathering place used by the Bitterroot Salish and other tribes for millennia, and riparian habitat for hundreds of species of plants and animals.

Each year more than 33,000 visitors, including more than 2,100 school children from 20 communities, visit Travelers’ Rest State Park to experience the stories of the people and creatures who have come before them.

Place-based education and interpretation lie at the heart of Travelers’ Rest State Park with standards-based field trip curricula related to the Corps of Discovery, Native American culture, and natural history. The education program is funded and administered by the Travelers’ Rest Connection (TRC), the nonprofit partner of the Park.

The AmeriCorps member selected for this position will work closely with both Park and TRC staff to design and deliver high-quality educational experiences for multiple generations, including field trips, camps, community events, and more. The member will engage with various audiences (volunteers, teachers, donors, general public, etc.) to promote awareness of the Park and its many activities. They will also help to improve the Park through projects like trail development, native landscaping, and restoration within the riparian area.

In addition to serving at Travelers’ Rest State Park, the AmeriCorps member will be serving at Fort Owen State Park in Stevensville, MT. Fort Owen State Park (FOSP) preserves some of the earliest Euro-American history in Montana. This small park is located on the grounds of a trading post operated by John Owen from the 1850’s- 1870’s. Originated by Jesuit missionaries, Fort Owen was the site of many historic “firsts” in what is now Montana – the first grist mill, the first saw mill, the first water right and the first permanent Euro-American settlement.



In 2019, Montana State Parks welcomed an agreement with the newly-formed Friends of Fort Owen to support visitor services, community outreach and historic preservation efforts at FOSP. AmeriCorps members in this position will have the opportunity to work with park managers and FFO to develop a volunteer program to assist Montana State Parks and the FFO meet mutually agreed upon goals.

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.

### **Specific Position Responsibilities:**

- Improve park land
  - Work with park staff and other regional AmeriCorps members to develop and organize region wide service days that include trail maintenance and/or construction, weed control, habitat enhancement, stream bank stabilization and historic building preservation.
  - Work with Park staff and volunteers in our ongoing effort to re-introduce native plant species to Travelers Rest State Park
  - Contribute to park improvement projects including trail development, native landscaping, and stream bank restoration.
- Expand educational and interpretive programs
  - Administer field trip program including communicating with teachers, scheduling field trips, coordinating volunteer educators, and developing two new standards-based curricula with TRC Executive Director and the Park Manager.
  - Collaborate with TRC, Park staff and volunteers to establish an annual calendar of educational events designed to celebrate the convergence of human and natural history.
  - Develop, market, and implement 2 summer day camp opportunities.
  - Oversee the Trekker Kids Program, with an emphasis on year-round activities designed to immerse children in the rich natural habitat of the Park.
  - Develop at least 2 new field trip curricula for Travelers Rest and Fort Owen State Parks under consultation with Park Manager.
  - Contribute to planning and execution of public programs including Expedition Days, Summer Storytelling, Demonstration Days and more.
- Increase volunteer capacity\*
  - Recruit and train at least 1 new volunteer educator to increase program capacity and provide training opportunities for existing volunteers to improve skills in classroom management, interpretation, and curriculum delivery.
  - Working with the TRC Executive Director, the member will identify opportunities to recognize volunteers and design cost effective and meaningful rewards for volunteer service.
  - Work with teachers and education organizations to identify potential new

- sources for peak season volunteers.
  - Work with the park manager to develop a volunteer program at Fort Owen State Park, including assisting with training volunteers in interpretation.
- Enhance outreach and awareness of state parks
  - TRC and Travelers' Rest State Park have strong partnerships with other community organizations which include reciprocal presentations at events and festivals. The member will develop and present children's programming at these events and festivals and may also participate on community-wide planning committees for event.
  - The member will work with TRC on a variety of events related to nonprofit management, fundraising, and donor stewardship. (annual auction, member only reception, etc.)
  - The member will work with FFO and the park manager on mutually agreed upon preservation and education projects at Fort Owen with local community organizations.
- Participate in service activities including National Days of Service\*\*
  - Working with cooperative community groups to organize and direct volunteer groups to improve park lands and facilities.
- Respond to disasters, when called upon to do so by the program

**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](https://my.americorps.gov) portal. To apply, you can follow the link [HERE](#) to our application within [my.americorps.gov](https://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, 2020.

\* 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.*