

Visitor Services/Interpretive Guide

Location: Ottawa Visitor Center

Watersmeet, MI

Housing Possible

One Position to fill at the Visitor Center

A. INTRODUCTION

The Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (WTCAC) is offering this Internship opportunity for Native American students pursuing degrees in the Natural Resources sciences. The Ottawa Visitor Center (VC) serves as many as 10,000 visitors and residents as well as local and visiting students per year. This 4,000 square foot facility is located in Watersmeet, Michigan, on the corner of US 2 and Hwy 45. Co-located with the Watersmeet/Iron River Ranger Districts Administrative Office, the VC is responsible for customer service support to the District, as well as information services for all visitors to the area. An interpretive trail is located on site and receives frequent use throughout the spring, summer and fall seasons. The VC provides conservation education programming throughout the summer as well as local and regional visitor information services. On site at the VC is our partner, the Ottawa Interpretive Association. This unique partnership helps ensure that the Ottawa can provide high-quality conservation education programming through the proceeds of merchandise at our gift shop, the "Bear's Den." The gift shop is operated by personnel from the Interpretive Association with support from Forest Service staff.

Interns at the VC will have opportunity to work with professionals from many different resource areas, including wildlife biologists, fire management specialists, timber staff, fish biologists, recreation specialists, hydrologists, and a highly motivated and professional visitor services staff. Interns at the VC in the past have worked with Youth Conservation Corps crews, presented conservation education programs to the public, led hikes on our interpretive trail, and engaged in special projects such as our summer speaker series.

Potential projects for 2013 include the implementation of our ongoing summer programs, public conservation education programs for multiple age groups, management of service learning projects including trail maintenance, and opportunities for field trips with Forest personnel as they work on other projects across the Ottawa.

B. MAJOR DUTIES & REQUIREMENTS

Interpretive and Conservation Education Program Services 35%

- Greets visitors and may perform scheduled interpretive talks.
- Researches, prepares, and delivers conservation education programs to school/youth groups and civic organizations.
- Evaluates programs for effectiveness and meeting program goals and objectives.
- Performs a variety of support duties, such as keeping records of visitors; program attendance; operating public address systems and visual and animated displays.
- Performs library research to verify obscure facts or answer inquiries.

Program, Event, or Exhibition Planning & Coordination 20%

- Assists with planning and implementing public programs, special events, and celebrations.
- Coordinates programming with state and federal agencies at the visitor center and assures that activities support and complement agency/visitor center interpretive themes.
- Assists in arranging publicity for events and programs.
- Works with others to communicate agency themes and key resource messages.

Reception and Visitor Services 35%

- Monitors and maintains information desk, information kiosks, operating materials and inventories. Ensures safe and operational work environment,
- Greets visitors and provides trip planning and travel information services.
- Provides information about the visitor center including its functions, activities, and planned events. Coordinates visitor services with other state and federal agencies.
- Provides public relations and or marketing support activities including making use of brochures, promotional media, and equipment to present information regarding agency activities, programs, and services

Visitor Facilities Operations Support Activities 10%

- Performs routine visitor center operations duties including opening and closing the visitor center, updating weather and road condition reports, and operating the theatre program.
- Operates a variety of audio visual equipment including CD players, VHS, DVD and Blu Ray players, lap tops, and public address systems.
- Provides customer service to both internal and external customers.

C. Evaluation Factors

Knowledge Required by Position

- General knowledge of natural resources.
- Ability to prepare programs and communicate effectively with people.
- Ability to make information personally relevant, and valuable, to the visitor.
- Ability to encourage visitors to try new things, through experiential learning available at the Center and all around this region.

Supervisory Controls

This is considered a training position. Assignments and activities are indicated by the supervisor, and are performed by the incumbent on a continuing basis. Clear procedural instructions are available and new assignments are accompanied by suggested work procedures. Problems and technical matters not covered by the instructions are referred to the supervisor or higher-grade specialist. The work is reviewed for technical adequacy and conformance with agency procedures.

Physical Demands

The assigned work requires regular and recurring sitting, standing and walking. Bending, lifting, and stretching are routine daily activities for the assigned projects.