



# Is VetsWork GreenCorps Right for Me?

VetsWork GreenCorps is an AmeriCorps program that trains U.S. military veterans for a potential career in wildfire landscape management, wildland firefighting and/or other potential public land management and natural resource work. It was developed with the dual purposes of: 1.) supporting the transition of veterans from a military career to a civilian career while 2.) addressing the unmet needs of our nation's public lands/natural resource management agencies.

VetsWork GreenCorps is a 13-week program in which participants learn new skills, gain new knowledge and build professional contacts within the integrated fuels management sector. Members spend their time in trainings and working on an extensive thinning project on the Umatilla National Forest. The goal of VetsWork GreenCorps is to help participants increase their opportunity to secure permanent jobs and assist potential employers in identifying qualified veteran candidates.

After reading our related FAQ, answer the following questions. It is important to consider the personal, financial, and professional commitments to VetsWork GreenCorps in order to determine if this experience is a good fit for you.

1. *During the VetsWork GreenCorps term of service you will not be assigned to work on any fires. You will receive continual training and your daily work will support the skills you are developing to be a wildland firefighter. When not in training, you will be working up to 10 hours a day on a thinning project supporting the Forest's integrated fuels management objectives. This means you will be cutting small trees down, stacking limbs, and creating future burn piles. This is monotonous work that can be exhausting and boring. You may be out in the sun, rain, or even snow.*

Are you prepared to work for 13-weeks before you have the opportunity to work on an actual fire call?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2. *VetsWork GreenCorps is physically arduous -- Participants will regularly carry loads of more than 50 pounds, they could hike 5-10 miles per day, they will be on their feet for up to 10 hours day, including bending, squatting, lifting and utilizing a variety of hand tools and power tools. Participants will also have to pass the "pack test" – walk 3 miles with a 45 pound pack within 45 minutes that will occur on the first day of the program.*

Are you physically able to handle the requirement of the program?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_



3. *VetsWork GreenCorps participants commit to a 13-weeks (3 months) full time position. The intent is that this experience helps you develop skills, direction, and professional contacts that will lead to job opportunities in this field. If you leave the program early, it could negatively impact your likelihood of securing employment.*

Can you commit to the entire 13-week term of service? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

4. *VetsWork GreenCorps is located in a remote, rural area. The nearest town is Ukiah, OR. The nearest towns with full services to Ukiah are Pendleton, OR (50 miles) and La Grande, OR (54 miles). The living accommodations are located at Frazier Bunkhouse (17 miles east of Ukiah and 37 miles southwest of La Grande) where you will live and work with 19 other crew members. There is limited cell coverage and internet access at Frazier Bunkhouse. You will likely need to spend one of your days off traveling to Ukiah, La Grande or Pendleton for grocery shopping, personal business, using the internet, etc...*

Are you able to live and work with others in a remote location with limited access and services?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

5. *Because of VetsWork GreenCorps' remote location many participants must temporarily relocate and be away from friends and family. This may have been typical of your military experience, but it can present obstacles. There may be considerations such as family, pets, storage of furniture or simply the strain of assimilating into a small town where you don't know anyone.*

Are you able to temporarily relocate? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

6. *VetsWork GreenCorps provides members with a living stipend of \$350/week (pre-tax) for the 13-weeks. This is your only income from the program. Most members qualify for food stamps and you will receive free housing. Consider your monthly financial obligations (car payment, insurance, fuel, food, fun). Do they add up to more than \$900 to \$1,000 per month?*

Can you manage your financial obligations on a VetsWork GreenCorps AmeriCorps stipend of approximately \$350 per week, pre-tax? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

7. *The VetsWork GreenCorps experience can present some real (though temporary) challenges: little money, potential relocation, adapting to a new work culture, etc. The ultimate value of the program is the opportunity to learn new skills while demonstrating your value to a potential future employer. Getting your foot in the door and building relationships with supervisors and decision-makers is the key benefit as statistics demonstrate that over 50% of jobs come through personal connections.*

Does the potential value of VetsWork GreenCorps outweigh the identified challenges for you?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_



8. *VetsWork GreenCorps participants will be exposed to a variety of situations which mimic real-world wildland firefighting scenarios. These scenarios can include noises (helicopters, flare guns, radio traffic), locations, gear, personnel, etc...which have the potential to trigger Post Traumatic Stress symptoms. You may not be made aware ahead of time that these potential triggers may be occurring. We don't know your history. We want you to be able to decide for yourself if you have any concerns.*

Are you prepared to discuss and address any unexpected situations which could trigger Post Traumatic Stress symptoms with supervisors? Are you willing to get outside help should this become disruptive to your ability to work?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

9. *While VetsWork GreenCorps does not require a degree or prior related employment experience, it does require a desire to pursue this career field. The more experience you have in your personal and professional life, the more appealing you will be as a candidate. Your passion for working in natural resources and public lands will also set you apart.*

Do you have experience with and/or a desire to work in the field of natural resource management?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you answered YES to all of the above questions, then you may be a good fit for the VetsWork GreenCorps Program. We look forward to receiving your application and/or inviting your participation in the program.

If you answered NO to any of the above questions or had reservations about your ability to meet the conditions of the program, you may need to consult with your family, friends, or trusted advisor before applying to the program and/or accepting a position.

Mt. Adams Institute staff are always available to answer questions and provide additional information.

