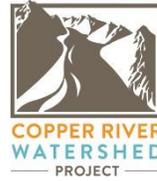


# **VETSWORK – ENVIRONMENT**

## **AMERICORPS POSITION DESCRIPTION**



**POSITION TITLE:** Aquatic Resources Management Assistant

**PARTNER ORGANIZATION:** Copper River Watershed Project and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

**WEBSITE:** [copperriver.org/](http://copperriver.org/)

**PROJECT LOCATION:** 511 1st St, Cordova, AK 99574

**SERVICE DATES:** February 7, 2022 to December 16, 2022 (1700-hour position)

**POSITION SUMMARY:** In partnership with the Mt. Adams Institute (MAI), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Copper River Watershed Project (CRWP), and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) will sponsor a VetsWork AmeriCorps Intern to serve in Aquatic Resources Management. This Intern will have the opportunity to assist biologists with a broad range of aquatic resource management projects, including aquatic and terrestrial invasive species monitoring and control, fish passage improvement projects, stream habitat restoration, fisheries and aquatic ecology research, support of project management activities and youth education. The Intern will work closely with the Copper River Watershed Project (an environmental non-profit organization), the USFS Chugach National Forest, and NOAA Fisheries Restoration Center. The internship is located in Cordova, AK, a small remote fishing community with a population of just over 2,000 people. Most of the fieldwork will take place on the Copper River Delta, the largest wetland on the Pacific Coast of North America. Although challenging, this position may be the adventure of a lifetime working alongside dedicated and experienced professionals and gaining connections and experience in one of the most scenic parts of Alaska. This position is funded through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the intern will have the opportunity to engage with NOAA's salmon habitat restoration activities as part of the experience.

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS (TO INCLUDE, BUT NOT LIMITED TO):**

- Habitat restoration work with aquatic and terrestrial plants growing alongside and in water bodies used by salmon. Work will include mowing and deadheading reed canary grass and orange hawkweed, and assisting with *elodea canadensis* surveys and treatments. Option to acquire State of Alaska herbicide applicators license to assist with herbicide treatments. Option to assist with marine invasive species monitoring.
- Partnership management, project outreach, fish trapping and re-location, and streambank restoration to support fish passage restoration projects.
- Collect data in the field to support studies of fisheries, water quality, and habitat quality.
- Organize data related to fieldwork activities on standard data sheets, computer databases, and through tablet applications, following quality control protocols.
- End of season reporting of survey and treatment accomplishments. Use of AnecData and AKEPIC for invasive plant tracking and management.
- Help plan and implement hands-on educational experiences for youth at community events and through field-based outings.
- Assist with nonprofit outreach efforts, including assisting with annual events, mailings, and social media/newsletter content development.
- Attend and complete all MAI/AmeriCorps trainings and service requirements including orientation, trainings and team meetings.
- Complete and submit all necessary MAI/AmeriCorps paperwork and reports in a timely manner.
- Wear MAI identifiers and required safety gear while performing service or attending official events.

### **POSITION REQUIREMENTS:**

#### **Service Site**

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- Must have a valid driver's license, clean driving record and ability to provide documentation.
- Comply with all Partner Organizations safety policies and procedures.
- A commitment to maintain a safe and inclusive workplace.
- The physical ability to hike over rough terrain, safely wade in fast flowing streams, carry objects weighing up to 50 pounds, and repetitively crouch, bend, and stoop while performing fieldwork. The intern must be willing to work in a temperate rainforest in all weather conditions, including wind, heavy rain, and snow.
- Comfortable working in and around cold water, including riding in motorboats and paddling a kayak.
- Comfortable working in brown bear habitat (safety training provided).
- Willingness to learn how to use a microscope to sort aquatic macroinvertebrates (training will be provided).
- An interest in youth outdoor education programs.
- Willingness to spend extended periods in the office to enter data and write reports, assist in project management activities and outreach materials.
- Willingness to contribute to social media for agency/organization websites and outreach.
- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Effective written and oral communication to a wide range of audiences including research scientists, equipment operators, community members and school-aged youth.

### AmeriCorps

- Must have served in US Armed Forces and have a DD214 with an honorable discharge.
- At least 21 years of age at beginning of service term.
- U.S. citizen, national or lawful permanent resident.
- Possession of a high school diploma or equivalent, or commit to earning one prior to receiving education award.
- Ability to commit to the full 45-week term of service.
- Attend virtual MAI Orientation (February 7-11) and Intern trainings.
- Selection, placement and retention are contingent upon passing the National Sex Offender Public Registry, state of service and state of residence criminal history check and a national FBI check.
- Members are eligible to serve up to four terms of service and receive AmeriCorps Education awards for each term of service up to the value of two full time education awards only.
- **Must be fully vaccinated** against Covid-19 with the ability to provide documentation or have an approved medical or religious exemption prior to the start of the position. *Exemption forms can be found on our [website](#) and once submitted, they must go through a review and determination process before being approved.*
- **Must follow all Covid-19 policies** at the service site including any changes that are implemented throughout the course of the program. Policies may include masking/social distancing, remote/virtual work, altered field duties and other restrictions determined to be necessary to keep site staff, partners and the public safe. Accepting a position means accepting the current requirements and any updates to those requirements while enrolled in the program.

### PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Undergraduate level knowledge of basic principles of fisheries biology, hydrology or environmental science.
- Experience developing and/or implementing outdoor education.

### BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- VetsWork is an apprenticeship program approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Labor. Members with G.I. Bill benefits may be able to dual enroll as an apprentice and access their Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) of up to approximately \$2,400 per month. Actual benefits vary by individuals' qualified benefits.
- \$16,875 living allowance paid over the 10 ½ -month term of service (\$375 weekly, before taxes).
- \$6,495 education award (qualified student loans and/or education expenses)
- Loan Forbearance
- Health Care Insurance

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- Child Care Reimbursement
- Professional development, trainings and networking opportunities.

### **HOUSING:**

- A \$500 per month housing stipend is provided.
- USFS bunkhouse space is available. The room is single occupancy in the winter months and potentially double occupancy in the summer (contingent on COVID safety), with a shared kitchen and bathroom. Internet is available in the bunkhouse. The bunkhouse is alcohol and drug free, and only for interns—no pets, spouses or children. Cost for this is approximately ~\$60/week.
- Rentals in the community are limited and typically cost \$750-\$1000/month for a one-bedroom apartment.

### **TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION:**

- Airfare is provided at the start of our program; from Intern’s location to the Service Site (up to \$700)
- Upon successful completion of the program, airfare is provided from Service Site to Intern’s home (up to \$700).
- Cordova is “off the road system” and is only accessible by air or water. Currently the community is serviced by daily commercial air flights and infrequent visits by a state-operated ferry. The following are links with information about living in Cordova:
  - Chamber of Commerce: [cordovachamber.com/visitor-info/](http://cordovachamber.com/visitor-info/)
  - City of Cordova: [cityofcordova.net/#](http://cityofcordova.net/#) (in particular visit the “living in Cordova” tab)
- The USFS bunkhouse and most rentals are located within walking distance (bunkhouse - 15 min) of downtown Cordova. The bunkhouse has a few communal bicycles available for resident use. A motor vehicle is nice to have for accessing trailheads and sight-seeing, but it isn’t necessary for day-to-day life. Especially in the summer season, there are often other seasonal employees in Cordova who will also be interested in weekend adventures and could coordinate transportation logistics.
- There is a car rental business, one taxi, and boat and bush plane charter services, however, transportation services like Lyft and Uber are not available.
- Agency/Organization vehicles are available for work-related travel.

### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Northern Latitude, Temperate Rainforest Climate: Cordova is on the edge of the Copper River Delta, Prince William Sound, and backed by the Chugach Mountains. This incredible, breath-taking landscape results in rain-dominated weather patterns. Cordova receives an average of 130 inches of rain/year, and it’s not uncommon for multiple inches to fall in one day, or for many days in a row. The temperatures typically range between 25-40°F in the winter and 50-65°F in the summer, although it can get warmer in the summer and colder in the winter. High winds are not uncommon, especially in the winter. The shortest day of the year in December is approximately 5 hours long, while on the longest day in June it barely gets dark, with the sun above the horizon for 18 hours.
- While the climate is rough, the outdoor recreational opportunities are world class and include hiking, kayaking, canoeing, sport fishing (marine and freshwater), hunting, etc. While Alaska might make you think of snow, the winter climate is milder in Cordova. Snowboarding, skiing (cross-country, backcountry, and downhill from our local ski lift), and ice-skating are possible but not guaranteed.
- Small-town living: There is a small “downtown” in Cordova that includes three small grocery stores, two banks, a Salvation Army thrift store, a few restaurants, a gym and swimming pool, library, medical clinic and pharmacy, churches of numerous denominations, daycare, the Copper River Watershed Project office, and the Forest Service office.
- The population year-round is roughly 2,000 people, but this more than doubles in the summer with the return of seasonal workers like commercial anglers, cannery workers, and other agency field crews. The seasonal nature of the population also drives the seasonal nature of business, and some restaurants are not open year-round.
- It is not possible to drive to neighboring communities and therefore there is no access to other forms of entertainment, stores, or dining. However, there are numerous opportunities to explore and recreate outside.

- Most items ship here, but it might take longer depending on shipping method. USPS and UPS are most reliable.
- Internet and cell services, offered by three local providers and some national plans (ATT, Verizon), are reliable. Some recreational activities will take you out of cell service depending on who your provider is and how far you adventure.
- Due to the cost of shipping things into Cordova, things like groceries are more expensive. The stores all have items available in bulk, which can make things like cereal, peanut butter, condiments, etc. more cost-effective.
- While CRWP and USFS will supply all PPE and chest waders/boots for field work projects, the following is recommended gear for living and enjoying the temperate rainforest and marine adventures around Cordova:
  - Rain gear: Gortex is good, rubber is better.
  - Durable rubber boots: The most common brand worn in Cordova are Xtratuff boots and they are available in local marine supply stores. Muck Boots and Boggs are also common brands.
  - Warm jacket(s), winter hat, and gloves. "Ice grippers" for shoes are also handy for winter months when roads and sidewalks can be quite slippery.
- Any personal camping / hiking / recreational gear for free time.
- Items to support your hobbies: musical instruments (lots of musicians in Cordova), binoculars, camera, art supplies, etc. There is also a local arts supply store that sells yarn, paints, beads, etc. and offers a variety of classes throughout the year if you're interested in trying new hobbies.

### **DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION:**

MAI celebrates equity, diversity, and inclusiveness and does not discriminate against any person or group based on race, ethnicity, culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, expression, gender identity, ability, national origin or ancestry, veteran status, social economic class, religion, professional status, pregnancy, or parents/guardians with children. MAI is committed to a diverse workplace and to supporting our Interns and staff with trainings and career development opportunities.

MAI provides reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees. Applicants with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation and/or alternative formats at any point in the employment process.

### **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:**

Email the following documents to Katie Schmidt at [katie@mtadamsinstitute.org](mailto:katie@mtadamsinstitute.org):

- Resume
- Cover Letter (One for each position applying to).
- Three Professional References (someone who has **supervised** you; military, civilian, or academic) – Information to include: Name, Title, Relation to you, email & phone number.
- Supplemental Questions:
  - What is your motivation for applying to VetsWork?
  - What are you hoping to get out of this experience?
- DD 214 – (with Honorable Discharge):
  - "General under honorable conditions" discharge are considered on a case-by-case basis
  - Must be long form "Member 4 copy" (has 30 total boxes of information).

### **PROCESS:**

1. MAI screens application materials, conduct pre-interviews, and recommends qualified applicants for Service Site interviews.
2. Service Sites interview candidates, conduct reference checks and recommend placement.
3. If position is offered, additional paperwork will be required.

***Due to Covid-19 parts of our programming may change***

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

- More information at "[VetsWork Frequently Asked Questions](#)"  
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- Cover letter information can be found at <https://www.macslis.org/articles/cover-letters>

**QUESTIONS? CONTACT:**

**Katie Schmidt**

Recruitment Coordinator | 503-504-5994

[katie@mtadamsinstitute.org](mailto:katie@mtadamsinstitute.org) | [mtadamsinstitute.org](http://mtadamsinstitute.org)



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