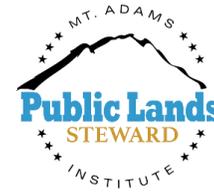


Public Lands Stewards Program Overview



PUBLIC LANDS STEWARD PROGRAM

AMERICORPS OVERVIEW

[AmeriCorps](#) is a national service program that engages more than 75,000 Americans in intensive service each year at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, community, and faith-based groups across the country. All Public Lands Steward Interns are enrolled as AmeriCorps members for the duration of the program.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The [Mt. Adams Institute \(MAI\)](#) mission is to strengthen the connection between people and the natural world through education, service learning, career development and research. One of the programs that helps us meet that mission is the Public Land Stewards (PLS). This is a MAI AmeriCorps career development program for young adults, ages 21-30, interested in learning more about public lands and natural resources management. The PLS program places participants in a 25-week (940 hour) internship with agencies like the Forest Service, Fish & Wildlife Service and environmental nonprofits throughout Washington and Oregon. Mt. Adams Institute also operates a summer camp that includes PLS Interns in both a 20-week (685 hour) and 13-week (490 hour) internships.

Intern placements vary from wilderness ranger positions, trail maintenance and construction, invasive species mitigation and wildlife impact surveys, environment education and volunteer coordination. These projects typically occur May to October and are suitable for individuals interested and/or experienced in working and living outside for extended periods of time. Participants earn a modest living allowance and an AmeriCorps education award while working in some of the most beautiful landscapes in the Pacific Northwest.

We provide Interns with opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to serve effectively, and promote an ethic of social and environmental responsibility. We expect that our Interns will be dedicated to the service they provide and actively support the values of our program.

PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS

Interns are placed with [Partnering Organizations](#) such as, the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and NW environmental non-profits. Public Lands Steward positions focus on a wide variety of public lands management careers. Most day-to-day supervision and mentorship for participants comes from these on-site partners. MAI plays a support role through human resource functions, a network to resources, assistance in career development and finding meaning in your career through your connections to the natural world.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- Between 21-30 years of age at beginning of service term.
- U.S. citizen, national or lawful permanent resident.
- Ability to commit to 25-week program

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

MAI staff, Project Supervisors and Interns, are made up of individuals with varying backgrounds, experiences, beliefs, values, communication styles and goals. We welcome each Intern to bring their full and total self with them into our program, including their varying levels of knowledge about racial equity, social justice, community service, and environmental stewardship. We will do our best to continually center and uplift the voices and experiences of those who are historically marginalized – both within our program and out in the community. We are committed to creating a place in which to share our differences and dialogue in a climate of equity, inclusion, mutual respect, trust and professionalism.

COMMITMENT

Joining the Public Lands Stewards is not just a commitment to a 25-week term of service; it is a commitment to join a local and National Service movement dedicated to making a difference in the community. Interns will need to support the goals of AmeriCorps, MAI and the Project Partners by being a positive ambassador who upholds all values and policies.

CHALLENGE

Our program is designed to promote individual growth through challenge and opportunity. We recognize that both challenges and opportunities show up differently for different people. We prioritize supporting Interns as they lean into their growth edges without putting folks at risk. No matter what your level of experience, we ask that you come to this program expecting and seeking the opportunity to grow and learn.

COVID-19

Mt. Adams Institute (MAI) is committed to the health and safety of its staff, Interns, board, Partnering Organizations and community members. With the spread of COVID-19, a respiratory disease caused by SARS-Co V-2 virus, MAI must remain committed to its responsibility to help mitigate the outbreak and keep all MAI associates safe. Everyone involved with our program must be willing to respond to COVID-19 restrictions as they arise. Interns will be required to follow the policies at their service site while serving and living in site housing, and this includes any changes that are implemented throughout the course of the program. These policies may include masking/social distancing mandates; remote/virtual work; altered field duties and other restrictions determined 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 you are enrolled in the program.

During the service site interviews, it is important to inquire and understand each site's current requirements.

VACCINATIONS

In accordance with Mt. Adams Institute's duty and commitment to provide and maintain a workplace that is free of known hazards, we are adopting an organization wide policy requiring COVID-19 vaccinations.

We take this action with consideration of the importance of individually held rights / beliefs, and the desire to safeguard the health of our employees and their families; our participants; our partners; and the communities in which we live and serve; from COVID-19, for which vaccinations significantly reduce risk of transmission. See our [website](#) for policy details.

All positions are contingent upon proof of vaccination against Covid-19 or an approved [medical](#) or [religious](#) exemption prior to the start of the position.

This policy will comply with all applicable laws and is based on guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and local health authorities, as applicable.

Here are some resources about the Covid-19 vaccination:

- [What are the different vaccines available?](#)
- [How does the vaccine work?](#)
- [The vaccination is free to people living in the United States](#)
- [How do I find and schedule a Covid-19 vaccine?](#)
- [How do I obtain a vaccination card record?](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions about the Covid-19 vaccination](#)

EXEMPTIONS

MAI employees and AmeriCorps Interns in need of an exemption from our vaccination policy due to a medical reason, or because of a sincerely held religious belief, must submit a completed [Medical Exemption](#) or [Religious Exemption](#) form at the time a position is offered.

All exemptions go through a review process through Mt. Adams Institute and the service site and a determination is made to either approve or deny the accommodation request. Accommodations will be granted where they do not cause Mt. Adams Institute or the service site undue hardship; pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others; and may require the individual receiving exemption to follow additional safety protocols not required of vaccinated staff.

If an exemption is approved, staff and Interns are expected to adapt and meet both MAI and service site safety protocols. These protocols may change as guidance and new data dictate. Protocols and expectations may impact the work site, office space, agency vehicles and shared living quarters and could include: daily temperature taking, weekly testing (at individual's expense), inability to ride in vehicle with others and potentially no shared housing options. These protocols will need be followed at all times throughout the term of service

COMMUNICATION

Effective service requires thorough communication. We expect Interns who join our program to work to communicate effectively with other Interns, MAI staff, Project Supervisors and community stakeholders. We believe that strong, positive communication will help us:

- Build stronger relationships across differences.
- Be more equitable and culturally responsive
- Improve programmatically to meet the changing needs of the region.
- Explore solutions to resolve issues
- Share the challenges and celebrations of the service we do.
- Promote professionalism.

POSITIONS

All positions are created specifically for the PLS program. Interns do not displace or eliminate existing jobs within Partnering Agencies. MAI Partners are seeking individuals who will expand the agency's ability to meet project goals. Interns help to get project work done, and in turn are able to build their resume, network and experience the inner workings of natural resources agencies.

MAI Staff asks that all applicants consider the specific duties and requirements of a position to make sure that they are fully capable (with reasonable accommodations) to take on the physical elements of a position. If the position is office oriented be sure that you can comfortably sit at a desk for periods of time. If the position requires extensive hiking be sure that you are fully capable of doing this.

SCHEDULE

Intern schedules vary dramatically depending on the Partnering Organization and placement. Some Interns will serve a typical Monday through Friday 8-hour day schedule while other Intern will be "on" for 8 days straight then have 4 or 5 days off. Some service sites may require weekends, holidays and evenings hours. Interns will coordinate and communicate with Project Supervisors to set up a calendar that balances the schedule needs of the project site, MAI events and requirements, and a healthy work/life balance.

AmeriCorps requires a minimum of 940 hours for this placement. In addition to the hours requirement, interns must complete the program from start date to end date, including attending a graduation on the last day of service.

While MAI strives to notify Interns and their supervisors ahead of time regarding schedule changes, we also recommend that Interns approach their service term with flexibility.

HOUSING

Some of our sites have low cost or free housing, but not all. Housing options vary according to our Partnering Organization's capacity. Specific details about housing are listed on each position description and should be discussed in your interviews with both MAI Recruitment staff and Site Supervisors

TRANSPORTATION

Interns are responsible for their own transportation to and from their service site. In most cases service site vehicles will be available for work related travel. There may be some sites that require a personal vehicle for work purposes and this will be stated in the position description. In these cases, we recommend you discuss the expectations and mileage reimbursement policies during your interview.

Travel to and from MAI related events like training, may be eligible for reimbursement if the intern has the appropriate insurance coverage and their vehicle is in good working order. MAI vehicle insurance minimums are \$100,000 per occurrence for bodily injury per person in an accident; \$300,000 for all bodily injuries in an accident; and \$50,000 for property damage in an accident.

PAPERWORK

As a federally funded program, our Interns are required to document their service and submit necessary paperwork. Interns will complete monthly timesheets, reports, evaluations, etc. Our expectation is that all paperwork will be completed correctly and turned in on time. Our staff is available to answer questions and provide the necessary direction and support.

EVALUATION

We value constructive feedback and strive for continuous improvement within all aspects of our program. Our improvement process relies heavily on input from our Interns, Project Supervisors and community stakeholders. As a result, Interns will be asked to provide feedback for many aspects of our program. In addition, each Intern will participate in two formal performance evaluations during their term of service. These evaluations are designed to provide constructive feedback to the Intern regarding his/her performance. Interns are responsible for collecting the information necessary to report on their project site accomplishments.

IDENTIFIERS

All Interns are issued AmeriCorps gear. Interns will use their own discretion as to which type of identifier is appropriate for the project situation and site.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

All positions (Staff and Interns) with MAI, AmeriCorps Program are required to complete a National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) that is compliant with CNCS standards. Enrollment and retention with our program are conditional upon receipt of a satisfactory criminal history report from the following: National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW), State of Residence, State of Service and FBI criminal identification systems. MAI uses the following providers to obtain these checks:

- Fieldprint - Conducts FBI criminal identification fingerprint checks.
- Truescreen - Conducts State of Service, State of Residence, and National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) checks.

MAI will share the results within the program, as appropriate, to make final hiring decisions. Staff and Interns have the right to review the factual accuracy of the result before action is taken to exclude them from a position.

CELL COVERAGE

Many of our positions are in remote locations. Your carrier may not be accessible at your site. Check with your supervisor to learn the best carrier for your service area.

EQUIPMENT

The service site will provide the equipment needed for Interns to perform their duties. The exceptions are personal clothing including, but not limited to work boots, rain gear, warm clothing, gloves, etc. It is important to check with the service site during your interview about local weather conditions and personal equipment they feel may be necessary.

PRIOR SERVICE EXPERIENCE

Interns may have previously served in an AmeriCorps program. While AmeriCorps has the same guidelines nationwide, each program can be very different. It is important to approach each term of AmeriCorps with an open mind.

AmeriCorps Interns can enroll in multiple terms of service that add up to the value of two full-time education awards. In other words, you can blend summer, part-time and full-time service positions and receive awards as long as the combined service terms don't exceed two full education awards. (You can also serve without receiving an Education Award up to a maximum number of terms outlined below.)

In blending summer, part-time, and full-time terms, you can serve a maximum:

- 4 with AmeriCorps State and National (includes MAI's positions)
- 5 one-year terms with VISTA
- 2 with NCCC

It is the applicant's responsibility to indicate on their application whether they have had previous terms of AmeriCorps. Misinformation or omission of information may result in disqualification and/or termination.

POSITION FUNDING & PARTNER CONTRACTS

All positions are contingent on funding from AmeriCorps and MAI Partners as well as finalization of contracts/agreements.

BENEFITS

Service Term	Living Allowance	Education Award	Leave	Term Dates
940 hrs (25-weeks)	\$9,375 (\$375 weekly)	\$3,247.50	60 hrs	May 3, 2022 to October 22, 2022
685 hrs (20 weeks)	\$7,500 (\$375 weekly)	\$2,474.27	35 hrs	May 3, 2022 to September 16, 2022
490 hrs (13 weeks)	\$4,875- (\$375 weekly)	\$1,718.25	30 hrs	May 31, 2022 to August 25, 2022

SERVICE TERM

Depending on the position, Public Lands Stewards AmeriCorps Interns will be required to serve a minimum:

- 940 hours over 25 weeks. Start and end dates are May 2, 2022 to October 21, 2022.
- 685 hours over 20 weeks. Start and end dates are May 2, 2022 to September 16, 2022.
- 490 hours over 13 weeks. Start and end dates are May 31, 2022 to August 25, 2022.

Interns are required to successfully complete all of their specific program requirements and serve the entire term of service.

LIVING ALLOWANCE

Mt. Adams Institute (MAI) Interns receive a living allowance of \$9,375 paid over 25 weeks (\$375 weekly, before taxes). Deductions, such as FICA and federal and state taxes (when applicable), will be withheld each month.

The living allowance is distributed by direct deposit to the Intern's bank/credit union or Visa Payroll Card. This living allowance is dispensed in monthly installments on the 10th of the month. Interns will receive their first check on June 10, 2022 and their last one on November 10, 2022; If either date falls on a weekend or holiday the living allowance is deposited on the first business day following the weekend or holiday.

LIFE ON THE LIVING ALLOWANCE

Life on the AmeriCorps living allowance has inherent challenges, and for some people can be quite stressful. We encourage applicants to consider their finances and their ability to support their basic needs prior to accepting a position.

It is very important that Interns consider, in advance, if this financial situation will prevent them from accessing a positive and meaningful service experience with MAI. We welcome your questions, thoughts or concerns at any time during the recruitment process.

[Here is an interactive budget worksheet](#) you can use as a resource to determine if this program is financially feasible for you.

EDUCATION AWARD

The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award is a benefit AmeriCorps Interns receive upon successful completion of their term of service. The education award is \$3,172.50 that can be used to pay for "cost of attendance" fees at federally recognized schools and/or repay qualifying student loans. There are [general terms](#) that guide the use of the award and a process to follow to access your funds. The education award subject to federal taxes, in the calendar year that it is used.

FORBEARANCE

Interns are eligible to temporarily postpone the repayment of qualified student loans through an action called forbearance. While in [forbearance](#), payments do not need to be made on loans, but they will continue to accrue interest. When the term of service is successfully completed, Interns must request that the National Service Trust pay the interest that accrued during the service period.

Loan providers are required to allow AmeriCorps Interns loans forbearance while serving. Once enrolled, AmeriCorps Interns can easily and quickly request the forbearance on-line through [My AmeriCorps](#). When the term of service is complete, loans will automatically revert to repayment status.

AmeriCorps cannot approve or disapprove forbearance requests; it can only verify your status as enrolled in a national service position. If a loan is in default, or in forbearance more than 3 times, it may not be eligible for this forbearance. **It is important to check with your loan provider to make sure your loan applies.**

LEAVE

Flexibility is built into the calendar to accommodate holidays, sick and personal leave. 940 hour Interns have 40 hours of personal/sick leave and are responsible for communicating time off needs with their supervisor. Living allowances will be paid during personal leave, but service hours will not be earned during this time. This is based on a 40-hour average service week.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Formerly and commonly known as the Food Stamp Program, SNAP is a food assistance program that is provided by each state. AmeriCorps Interns may be eligible for assistance, but MAI cannot guarantee it. MAI will provide a letter of appointment at Orientation confirming the AmeriCorps living allowance is not counted towards the wage calculation. Interns will be responsible for signing up for the program on their own time, if they choose. Application materials are located at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap>.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

To be eligible for MAI medical insurance coverage, Interns must be serving in a 1700 or 1200-hour position, so Public Lands Steward Interns do not qualify for MAI medical insurance coverage.

CHILDCARE ALLOWANCE

The AmeriCorps Child Care Benefit Program is available for qualified, active, full-time AmeriCorps Interns who need the benefit to serve. Childcare allowance is provided through [GAP Solutions](#) and to be eligible you must be: 1) a full-time, active Intern; 2) the parent or full-time guardian of a child under 13 years of age who resides with the Intern; and 3) meet the [family income guidelines](#). Childcare benefits are paid directly to qualified childcare providers for all or part of the Intern's childcare costs.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

INTERN ORIENTATION & TRAINING

Interns are required to attend orientation at the start of their service term. Orientation is coordinated by MAI staff and focuses on building relationships, learning program elements, risk management, and gaining skills to be successful. Interns are also required to attend a professional development training during their service term. The 2022 orientation will be held virtually, and the professional development training is still TBD.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Interns can expect to spend up to 20% of their service year in activities involving professional development. Professional Development hours are defined as the hours spent on activities that support an Intern's growth and development within MAI's professional development goals. These goals include the following:

- **Managing workflow to support health/wellness** - Identify and implement strategies that create efficiency and productivity at work while supporting personal physical and mental health and well-being.
- **Diversity Equity & Inclusion** - Increase awareness and understanding around practices of diversity, equity, and inclusion, in an effort to strengthen communities, workplace and self.
- **Career development/transition** – Provide resources that increase skills that directly relate to career development, job-seeking, and overall confidence in securing future employment.
- **Public lands careers** - Develop an understanding of public lands management and the employment opportunities that exist within the natural resources field.
- **Community service** - Promote a lifelong ethic of service by connecting with community organizations to support their goals to be safer, stronger, and healthier.

Interns can expect to spend up to 20% of their service year in activities involving training and development. MAI will provide formal development opportunities as part of the program and interns are encouraged to work with their Site Supervisor to examine their individual development goals for site specific opportunities. MAI provides resources,

assistance, and connections for Interns who seek to develop specific skills. Professional Development will be explained in more detail during the Intern's Orientation.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

Federal law and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) policy prohibit AmeriCorps Programs and Interns from engaging in certain activities while using Corporation funds or on Corporation time. Interns are not prohibited from engaging in any of these activities in their personal capacities and on their own time. If there is any question about whether a certain activity is permissible, please contact the Program Director. Examples of prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:

- a. Attempting to influence legislation;
- b. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts or strikes;
- c. Assisting, promoting or deterring union organizing;
- d. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- e. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- f. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation or elected officials;
- g. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
- h. Providing a direct benefit to:
 - i. a business organized for profit;
 - ii. a labor union;
 - iii. a partisan political organization;
 - iv. a non-profit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent Interns from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken on their own initiative; and
 - v. an organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support the religious activities;
- i. Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
- j. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
- k. Such activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

THANK YOU

Thank you for considering an internship with Mt. Adams Institute's Public Lands Steward Program. We appreciate your service and welcome the opportunity to work with you as you explore and create career opportunities in the natural resource management and public lands management fields. We strive to be as transparent and informative about the program elements as possible so that all potential applicants feel empowered to decide if PLS truly is the "right fit". MAI and Program Partner staff are looking for a full commitment to the 25 weeks of the program, and we ask that you review the provided information fully and critically. Consider speaking with a trusted loved one or mentor as you move through the application process. Mt. Adams Institute Staff values relationship building and open communication; we are available to discuss any issues or concerns at any point during the application process. Don't hesitate to call / email / text.

We look forward to working with you.

Erica

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Erica Bingham

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