Ecosystem Preserve Stewardship Intern Job Description

Title: Ecosystem Preserve Stewardship Intern

Wage: $10.60 per hour

Department: Calvin Ecosystem Preserve

Locations: Calvin Ecosystem Preserve & Native Gardens (1750 E. Beltline Ave SE 49546), Ecosystem Preserve Headquarters (3770 Lake Dr. SE 49546), and Flat Iron Lake Nature Preserve (11570 Hart St. 48838)

Supervisor: Jen Howell, Land Manager – jlh89@calvin.edu or (616) 526-2576

Positions Available:

- Ecosystem Preserve Stewardship Intern (Summer): 2 positions which serve from early May through early August.
  - Summer Ecosystem Preserve Stewardship Interns are expected to work 40 hours per week (typically Mondays through Fridays) from 8 am until 4:30 pm with an unpaid lunch break from noon-12:30 for the duration of the summer field season. A week of unpaid vacation is scheduled for the week after the 4th of July. Application period is January through mid-February with the specific application deadline posted on the Preserve’s website.

- Ecosystem Preserve Stewardship Intern (Academic Year): 2 positions which serve from late August through late April.
  - Academic year Stewardship Interns are expected to work 5-8 hours per week for the duration of the school year as their academic schedules allow. Application period is July through mid-August with the specific application deadline posted on the Preserve’s website.

Purpose of Positions (Summary): Ecosystem Preserve Stewardship Interns are responsible for working under the guidance of the Land Manager to monitor and actively manage Calvin's two nature preserves: The Ecosystem Preserve & Native Gardens on Calvin’s campus (95% of time) and the Flat Iron Lake Nature Preserve (5% of time) located near Greenville, MI.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Perform a variety of land management tasks [(i.e. maintaining and constructing trails and trail structures (repair trail edging, install woodchips, maintain bridges, boardwalks, fencing, etc.) for preserve access and hiker safety, manually and chemically control invasive plant species, construct and/or maintain interpretive materials, etc.)] to allow Calvin University to pursue active stewardship of the Ecosystem Preserve (30% of time).

- Conduct a variety of ongoing long-term ecological monitoring projects including: small mammal population monitoring, breeding bird survey, bluebird nest box monitoring, invertebrate species
• Inventory, vegetation monitoring of deer exclosures and native tree census (conducted every 5 years) (20% of time).
• Maintain restoration plantings by weeding, watering, pruning, transplanting and installing native plants (20% of time).
• Actively participate in hands-on training (i.e. herbicide use and safety, tool use, plant identification, etc.) to develop the knowledge and skills needed to maintain and expand proficiency in subject-matter content, field science process and land management skills (15% of time).
• Assist with GIS mapping, database management and educational programming as needed (10% of time).
• Perform other duties (i.e. building maintenance) as assigned by supervisor (5% of time).

Required Skills/Experience/Qualifications:
• Strong interest in pursuing a career in land/natural resource management, ecology or similar field
• Enthusiasm for performing manual labor outdoors in a variety of adverse weather conditions and exposure to poison ivy, biting insects, thorns, etc.
• Prior experience working with hand and power tools (i.e. shovels, rakes, hand saws, pruners, loppers, hammers, string trimmers, riding and push mowers, rototillers, etc.)
• Basic plant and animal identification skills and the ability to use a dichotomous key for positive identification of unknown species
• Eagerness to learn and excellent oral and written communication skills
• Ability to follow instructions, work effectively with a diverse group of people, and work independently when needed
• Attention to detail and effective follow-through on projects
• Passion for caring for God’s creation and commitment to the Ecosystem Preserve & Native Garden’s mission

Preferred Skills/Experience/Qualifications:
• Commitment to working the entire summer field season @ 40 hours per week for the summer positions or the entire academic school year at 6-10 hours per week for the academic year positions
• Entry level working knowledge of GPS/GIS mapping
• Possession of a valid driver’s license and the ability to achieve Calvin University’s “Approved Driver” status to be able to drive university owned vehicles on public roads

Physical Requirements: Applicants must have tolerance for working outdoors in a variety of weather conditions and exposure to biting insects, poison ivy, thorns, etc. Ecosystem Preserve Stewardship Interns must have the ability to safely lift at least 30 pounds and should expect manual labor to be a regular requirement of the job.

Outcomes: Stewardship Interns gain valuable experience (and build resumes and portfolios) towards pursuing a career as a land manager, restoration ecologist, conservationist, naturalist, park ranger, etc. Ecosystem Preserve Stewardship Interns will work alongside professional mentors and will be exposed to a variety of land management techniques and research methodologies while spending time outdoors and learning more about God’s Creation.

How to Apply: To apply for this position, applicants must fill out an Ecosystem Preserve Student Employee Application online at https://calvin.edu/ecosystem-preserve/resources/calvin-student-employment/ in addition to submitting a resume with 3 references. Completed application materials should be submitted to Jen Howell, Land Manager, at: jlh89@calvin.edu before the application deadline indicated on the Preserve’s website.