



Position Description

Position Title	Wilderness Ranger (2 positions)
Partner Organization	Gifford Pinchot National Forest
Website	www.fs.usda.gov/giffordpinchot
Project Location	Mt. Adams Ranger District, 2455 WA-141, Trout Lake, WA 98650
Internship Dates:	May 11 to October 23, 2026 (24-weeks, 40 hours/week)

Position Summary

In partnership [Mt. Adams Institute \(MAI\)](#), the Gifford Pinchot National Forest will host two Land Steward interns to work as Wilderness Rangers in the beautiful forest of the Mt. Adams Ranger District. The Interns will patrol and monitor trails on projects that are both individual and crew-based. These projects will focus on engaging visitors to the forest by educating them on: Leave No Trace principles, the value and history of congressionally designated Wilderness, Forest Service wilderness management, backcountry travel skills, local geography and recreation opportunities. In addition, Interns will perform trail maintenance and participate in climbing patrols. This position is perfect for a person who has a passion for being outdoors and has experience working safely in a backcountry setting.

Essential Functions

To include, but not limited to:

- Patrol trails in Wilderness areas and initiate public contacts to enhance the visitor experience and promote safe recreation.
- Perform climbing patrols on Mt. Adams. Patrols will begin at an elevation of approximately 5,600' and end at approximately 9,200' (the location where most climbers camp prior to making the summit. Overnight stays at 9,200 will be required).
- Learn Leave-No-Trace principles and backcountry use ethics & practices and share these principles with visitors. (training provided)
- Learn and promote an understanding of public lands.
- Document Wilderness visitor contacts and trail conditions; maintain daily logs.
- Assist in organizing volunteers including climbing patrols, restoration projects, data collection projects, etc.
- Maintain wilderness & non-wilderness trails safely using tools like handsaws, axes, hoes, loppers, and shovels.
- Perform routine maintenance at recreation sites including fire-ring clean up, trailhead stocking, site naturalizing, and litter removal. This will include Maintaining restrooms and scat pack collection bins at Wilderness trailheads.
- Become educated on current issues and controversial-use practices (national and regional) affecting recreation on public lands.
- Complete internship requirements and submit all necessary paperwork and reports in a timely manner.

Position Requirements

- Valid driver's license, clean driving record, and ability to provide documentation when requested.
- Between the ages of 18-30 years (up to 35 for military veterans), at the start of the program.
- A U.S. citizen, U.S. permanent resident, or a non-citizen with specific authorization to work in the U.S.
- Commitment to the full internship.
- Safely carry heavy backpack loads (45-55 lbs.) for long distances, at times, encountering steep elevation gains (as much as 2000-5000 vertical feet a day).

- Travel, work and live safely in both mountainous wilderness and remote community settings for extended periods of time, both alone and/or with small crews.
- Safely use and manage tools and backpacking/camping equipment.
- Communicate clearly and professionally with all working groups.
- Work in an office setting and utilize a Forest Service computer and manage emails.
- Tolerate extreme heat and cold; season will start with snow on the ground and end with snow on the ground, in between it will be hot and dusty.
- Be enthusiastic about all types of wilderness trail recreation and desire to promote environmental stewardship.
- Attend program orientation, MAI trainings, and other required MAI meetings.
- Selection, placement, and retention are contingent upon receipt of a satisfactory criminal history report.
- Must follow all health and safety policies and procedures, including any changes that are implemented throughout the course of the internship.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience hiking and backpacking in the backcountry for extended periods of time.
- Experience in safe use of hand tools (this could be from things like farming, gardening, orchard work, landscaping, carpentry, construction, etc.).
- Experience with high-alpine travel/mountaineering.
- Experience communicating with the public.
- Knowledgeable about Leave No Trace ethics, designated wilderness recreation and management, and high elevation/fragile ecosystems.
- A passion for being involved with wilderness and environmental stewardship.

Benefits

- \$13,200 stipend for 24 weeks; \$550 weekly (before taxes).
- Observance of federal holidays (site-specific).
- Professional development, trainings, and networking opportunities.
- Live and work in a beautiful setting with many opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Housing

- Forest Service bunkhouse-style housing is available at no cost to the interns.
 - Housing is bunkhouse style and will be shared with other Forest Service seasonal staff. The bunkhouse is located on the Forest Service compound, where the Intern will report to work.
 - All utilities (water, power, heat) are included. Wifi and laundry are on the compound, but may not be in the specific bunkhouse the Intern will be placed in.
 - Pets, firearms, alcohol, and drugs (including marijuana) are prohibited in the bunkhouse. Under federal law, marijuana & cannabis products are still classified as a controlled substance. Even though it may be legal in certain states, it is illegal on Federal lands, including campgrounds, buildings, and other facilities.

Transportation Information

- Agency/Organization vehicles are available for work-related travel.
- Forest Service provides all transportation between the Ranger Station and the trailheads.
- It is highly recommended that the interns have their own vehicle transport for supplies/equipment for days-off. It is the responsibility of the interns to get between the housing and the amenities of town.

Other Considerations

- The duty station and bunkhouse are in Trout Lake, WA. The intern will work mainly in the Wilderness areas of the Mt. Adams Ranger District; these include Indian Heaven, Trapper Creek, and Mt. Adams Wildernesses.
- Mt. Adams Wilderness is 47,122 acres along the west slope of Mt. Adams and its summit. This area is a blend of dry “east-side” and moist “west-side” ecosystems, allowing diverse vegetation and wildlife to flourish. Areas along

the flanks of Mt. Adams burned in wildfire over the last several decades, providing contrast with the lush unburned forests nearby and a glimpse at how landscapes regenerate after fire.

- Trout Lake has a post office, general store, café, coffee shop, gas station, pizza food truck, and one restaurant. The hours of these establishments vary and are not always consistent. The closest towns with full-service grocery stores and resources are White Salmon, WA (30 mins away) and Hood River, OR (40 mins away). Cell phone service in Trout Lake can be spotty, especially in the wilderness areas.

About Mt. Adams Institute

Mt. Adams Institute is a nonprofit organization based in the rural community of Trout Lake, Washington with a mission of strengthening the connection between people and the natural world through education, service learning, career development, and research.

MAI Land Stewards is a career development internship for young adults, ages 18-30 (up to 35 for military veterans) interested in learning more about public lands and natural resources management. Land Stewards interns are placed at local, state, and federal land management agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and environmental nonprofits throughout Washington and Oregon.

Equal Opportunity Employer

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.

How to Apply

Submit the following to Erica Keleher at erica@mtadamsinstitute.org:

- **Cover letter** - include your motivation for applying; and your experience as it relates to the position if it is not represented in your resume. If you are applying for more than one position, submit a cover letter for each position you are applying for (3 maximum).
- **Resume**
- **Three Professional References** (former supervisors, mentors, colleagues, etc. - military, civilian, or academic. Do not include family members.
 - Include - Name, relation to you, email & phone number.

Interview Process

1. **Mt. Adams Institute**
 - Screens Applications
 - Conducts interviews
 - Recommends applicants for Service Site interviews
2. **Service Sites**
 - Interviews candidates
 - Conducts reference checks
 - Recommends placement

Additional Information

- [Land Stewards Program Overview](#)
- [Land Stewards Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)

Questions? Contact:

Erica Keleher

MAI Program Manager

erica@mtadamsinstitute.org

mtadamsinstitute.org