

Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge Volunteer Opportunity at the Annual Henshaw Creek Weir Science Camp, July 19-30, 2012.



Students at Henshaw Creek Science Camp spend full week camping and learning in nature's classroom.

SUMMARY: We are looking for a friendly, down to earth volunteer to teach at our annual science camp, held in Kanuti Refuge in July at the Henshaw Creek Salmon Weir. The volunteer will help set up the camp, will act as a primary teacher during the full length of the camp (5 days), and will help break down camp when it is over. The volunteer will camp alongside other camp teachers, staff and the students. Camping gear (except a sleeping bag, personal items, 2 towels and clothing), food and transportation between the camp and Allakaket (village nearest to the camp) and Fairbanks (nearest city of departure to the camp) will be provided. This opportunity is an outstanding chance to help connect youth with nature and to experience Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge's beautiful remote wilderness.

Announcement/Overview: This 11 day opportunity begins with the volunteer's arrival in Fairbanks, AK on July 19th. The volunteer will overnight at the Alaska Fire Service Barracks, and will depart for the village of Allakaket by plane on July 20th, where he/she will meet up with Kanuti staff. The volunteer and Kanuti staff will spend time preparing for the camp and will overnight in Allakaket at the Tribal Council Office at no cost. On July 21, the volunteer and staff will boat down the Koyukuk river to the Henshaw Creek Salmon Weir (personal flotation devices provided) and will begin to set up camp. July 22nd is the day Elders and camp staff will arrive, and is another day of set up and preparation for the camp. Camp begins on Monday July 23rd in the afternoon, and ends on Friday July 27th in the morning. On July 28th, the volunteer and Kanuti staff will break down the camp. On July 29th, the volunteer and Kanuti staff will travel to Allakaket and then will fly back to Fairbanks. On July 29th or 30th, the volunteer will fly from Fairbanks, AK back to their home.



Students preparing to visit the Henshaw Creek Weir are engrossed with the introduction for this lesson, which is a favorite experience at science camp for both students and teachers.

Description of Area Where Camp is Held: Henshaw Creek Salmon Weir is a functioning salmon weir located on Henshaw Creek in Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge. During the camp, students, camp staff, native Elders and volunteers all camp on the sandbar that lies next to Henshaw Creek. All

though students share tents with each other and with the camp chaperones, all adults at the camp are provided with private tents and cots (including chaperones, who move between the student tents and their own private tents). Screen tents are set up for lessons during rainy times or when the mosquitoes are obnoxious, while other lessons take place around the camp fire and or out on the open sandbar when there is warm sunshine. A separate cook tent is set up for the camp cook, who cooks all the meals for the full length of the camp. The relaxed outdoor atmosphere is a wonderful learning environment and provides students with a rare opportunity to study salmon on their spawning grounds. Evenings are a quiet time of reading stories around the fire, and a time when Elders share special stories with everyone.



Science camp life often revolves around the big fire. It is a place where everyone gathers for meals, to prepare for lessons, to relax during free time, and at the end of the day to unwind.

A few more details: Teachers at the camp typically work together, deciding each evening which lessons they would like to teach the following day. Though a general curriculum and schedule will be prepared and ready to use each day, we have always found that there are many changes to the schedule for a variety of reasons. With that in mind, we will plan each day loosely, and will make adjustments each day based on the lessons we did or did not complete the previous day. Also, if any volunteer or staff member is inspired to teach a lesson not in the curriculum but one that fits with the camp, there is certainly room for those adjustments as well. Or, if a volunteer is so inclined and

wishes to be more involved in the planning of the lessons for the camp, that is certainly welcome too.

Most importantly, because it is summertime, and we've asked the students to leave their summer vacation for a whole week, though the curriculum for the week is certainly educational, it is in no way demanding like lessons might be in a school setting. There is a real emphasis and focus on providing a relaxed and fun atmosphere. The purpose of the daily lessons is more about exposing students to information and ideas in an engaging way and is not about requiring the students to perform demonstrations of the knowledge they gain while at the camp. The biggest, overall goal of the camp is to have the students go away with a real sense of stewardship for refuge lands and with experiences that will lead them to be interested in careers in natural resources, and with new skills and an awareness of the many skills they already hold that are important to those careers. The camp is also very much about building relationships, and about providing an opportunity for students to spend time with Elders and with each other. Elders provide lessons during the camp on traditional native ways of doing things such as setting fish nets, cutting and drying fish, building fish racks without nails, trapping and skinning demonstrations, oar carving, etc.



Traditionally cut salmon from a lesson on subsistence and fish cutting is drying on a rack made by Elders from forest resources.

Training Description: The volunteer will need to complete a USFWS approved bear safety and bear spray training. This will be arranged based on available trainings. Often, this type of training can be hard to schedule, so the volunteer will need to work closely with Kanuti staff to ensure it is completed before departure to camp

Skills Required: Applicants should have experience and/or enjoy working with students in the age range of 6-12 grade. US citizenship and the ability and willingness to undergo a required criminal

history background check and fingerprinting is required. Also, a sense of humor helps greatly when the volunteer is asked to complete quite a bit of required paperwork!

Skills Desired: We are hoping to find a lively person who enjoys working with youth and a variety of people, possibly someone with a background in teaching and/or someone who is comfortable teaching lessons each day for the full length of the camp for 8-12 students. We are also looking for someone who is comfortable camping in a remote location for 8 days in a place that does not have showers or running hot water (we filter cold water from the creek to drink, and adults are welcome to heat water as needed for "bird baths" inside their private tent). A self-starter who is able to take the lead and sees things that need to be done and does them is also desired.

Flexibility for Arrival and Departure Dates: Unfortunately, flexibility here is extremely limited. We really need a volunteer who can come for the full time. This means arrival into Fairbanks, on July 19th, and departure from Allakaket back to Fairbanks on July 29th or 30th.

Travel: Round trip transportation between Fairbanks and Allakaket will be provided. For volunteers who are members of the Friends group, please speak to the Friends Outreach Coordinator about possible reimbursement of the cost of plane tickets from your home, to Fairbanks, and for tickets from Fairbanks to Allakaket (this has been provided to Friends members in the past). The details of these arrangements will be known and finalized in a "volunteer service agreement" that is signed before travel begins.

When in Fairbanks, the Service will provide the volunteer with housing in the Alaska Fire Service barracks at Fort Wainwright, if available, or in a local motel if otherwise necessary. The Service will also provide the volunteer with transportation while in Fairbanks (the vehicle may be used for official purposes only). Volunteers will also receive the daily per diem allowance that employees receive while in Fairbanks, which is \$40 per day. This should cover food expenses while in Fairbanks. Once the volunteer leaves Fairbanks for the science camp, food will be provided.

What to Bring: The volunteer should bring light clothing and a bug jacket and bug repellent for warm/hot temperatures and plenty of warm clothing including hats, gloves, warm jackets, long sleeve shirts, fleece, long underwear and long pants for cold temperatures. Bear spray to use during the camp will be provided. More information on "what to bring" and for answers to further questions about logistics, Kanuti staff will talk with the volunteer via telephone as much as needed, well before the volunteer arrives ☺.

How to Apply: Due to very slow mail service, qualified applicants should email (rather than snail mail) a resume and short cover letter or the volunteer application to Kristin Reakoff, Interpretive Park Ranger for Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge, at kristin_reakoff@fws.gov, or call Kristin Reakoff at the Coldfoot Field Office at (907) 678-2007. For questions or additional information about the volunteer opportunity, please email or use the telephone number provided above. Address: Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge, Coldfoot Field Office, POB 9037, Coldfoot, Alaska 99701-999.