



Marin Islands National Wildlife Refuge



Volunteer Position: Volunteer Boat Driver

About Marin Islands National Wildlife Refuge: The Marin Islands National Wildlife Refuge is located in San Francisco Bay less than a mile away from mainland San Raphael, CA, and is closed to the general public. It is comprised of two islands and submerged tidelands, frequented by waterfowl, shorebirds and songbirds. The West Marin Island historically hosted one of the largest heron and egret rookeries in Northern California. The 10.28 acre East Marin Island incorporates seven distinct habitat types and over 100 species of native plants.

Volunteer Position Overview: The Volunteer Boat Driver will use their own boat to shuttle volunteer work crew passengers to and from the East Marin Island from Loch Lomond Marina. This volunteer may or may not participate in on-island workday activities, but will remain at the East Island for the duration of the volunteer workday, and will stay aware of local weather and tidal conditions. Should conditions become unsafe, this volunteer will instruct the Volunteer Crew Leader to stop the workday and will return the crew to the Marina.

Responsibilities:

- Responsible for the safety of all passengers onboard while these passengers are in the vessel, and while boarding and disembarking the vessel
- Responsible for meeting all USCG/USFWS/State of California boating requirements for both the vessel and operator
- Provide a safety orientation to all individuals on board, as agreed upon with Refuge Wildlife Biologist
- Coordinate trip schedule with Volunteer Crew leader
- File and follow USFWS float plans with Refuge Wildlife Biologist
- Monitor environmental and tidal conditions, as outlined by the Refuge Wildlife Biologist
- Responsible for the transport of their own vehicle and boat to and from the Loch Lomond Marina

Qualifications:

- Must be familiar with SF Bay tidal and atmospheric conditions
- Must be willing to make multiple trips to and from the islands on a single outing



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Qualifications (cont.)

- Must have a vessel with a minimum capacity of 4 individuals
- Vessel must be able to operate in shallow water (at least 2ft NAVD)

Time Commitment: Volunteer must be available during the work week (Monday through Friday) for 4 to 5 consecutive hours, at least once a month. The season for this position is May through the end of February. This Volunteer Boat Driver must commit to volunteer for at least one year.

Work Environment Including Job Hazards: San Rafael Baylet between Loch Lomond and Marin Islands is on average 2 feet deep. Boats may run aground when tides are less than 2ft NAVD. Therefore, tides must be 2ft NAVD or above for the duration of the trip to the Islands. Two sandbars spread out to the north from the north side of the East Island. These should be avoided to keep propellers safe. Winds can pick up suddenly in this section of the Bay, especially after noon. This volunteer must stay alert to weather conditions and call an end to the volunteer trip if winds exceed 10mph.

The Refuge is an unpopulated island with no services (cell service does work). Poison oak is abundant across the islands, scorpions are present though scarce, and island sides consist of cliff faces and/or friable terrain. Within the past 5 years approximately 90% of the Monterey Pine trees on East Island have died, and trees are in various states of falling. Broken and fallen tree branches pose special hazards. Protective Tyvek suits and rubber gloves are available to prevent contact with poison oak. You will be working outdoors in a relatively remote area with emergency services 3/4 of a mile away by boat. Accessing the island requires transiting from boat to a dock.

Reasons to Volunteer: Actively contribute to the mission of the USFWS: *to work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.* Make a significant difference to the health and conservation of Marin Islands Refuge habitats through critical environmental management. Access a San Francisco Bay Island gem that is generally closed to the public, and experience firsthand this outdoors natural history museum. Receive environmental education/interpretation and learn about the history of this special location in the Bay. There will be opportunities to meet and network with other volunteers and Refuge staff.

Contact: Nick Asfaha (Park Ranger) at 510-737-1252 or nicholas_asfaha@fws.gov



For more information about Marin Islands or the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex visit:

www.fws.gov/refuge/marin-islands