

# Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge

## 2015 Biology Internships

The Friends of Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge are sponsoring several Biology internships at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge for 2015. Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge is a unique ecological restoration project featuring endangered tallgrass prairie and oak savanna ecosystems. Located 20 miles east of Des Moines, Iowa, it is one of the first large-scale prairie reconstruction projects ever attempted. Since its inception in 1990, the 5600-acre Refuge has become a home to hundreds of prairie plant species; re-introduced bison, elk, and regal fritillary butterflies; Henslow's sparrows, short-eared owls, bobolinks, and other rare grassland birds; and many other species dependent on large areas of prairie or grassland. Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



**Duties:** Biology interns will be a crucial part of monitoring and performing prairie and savanna restoration work, including monitoring plants and possibly wildlife, propagating plants in a greenhouse, planting seedling prairie plants, hand-harvesting seeds of native prairie plants, and data entry and management.

**Benefits:** Internships will run 9 - 12 weeks each. Timing of internship is flexible, with positions available spring, summer, and fall. Each intern will receive a stipend of \$3600 to \$4800 for 9-12 weeks. Housing will not be provided, but nearby housing is available for rent. Refuge staff will work with students to fulfill internship credit requirements at individual universities. Non-students are also eligible to apply.

**Qualifications:** Any qualified person 18 years or older with a valid driver's license is eligible for an internship. Biology interns must have an interest in **native plants** and a strong desire to learn about prairie and savanna ecosystems and restoration. Experience identifying prairie plants is strongly preferred. Must enjoy working outdoors and be willing to walk through dense, tall grass, do physical work outside during hot, humid weather, and tolerate stinging and biting bugs and plants and other discomforts of working in nature. Most important are sincere interest, enthusiasm, and a good work ethic. Other desirable skills for Biology interns include experience in greenhouse propagation, GPS, computer skills, writing skills, and research field experience.

**To Apply:** Submit the following: 1) a one-page **cover letter** highlighting your qualifications and describing why you would like to participate in this internship program and what you hope to gain from this experience. Please **include dates you are available**.; 2) a detailed **resume** noting education, experience, and skills, including 3 references and their contact information; and 3) a **letter of recommendation** written by an educator or employer. For Biology Internships, information should be **mailed** to: Karen Viste-Sparkman, Wildlife Biologist, Neal Smith NWR, P.O. Box 399, Prairie City, IA 50228. Applications received via email or fax will not be considered.

Intern applications including letters of recommendation must be postmarked by February 14, 2015.

For additional information visit [http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal\\_Smith/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal_Smith/) or <http://www.tallgrass.org/> or contact Karen Viste-Sparkman at (515) 994-3400.