

Outdoor summer jobs available for college students

by Jetta Minerva



Fee rangers, one of the seasonal positions the Refuge is hiring for, are shown here cleaning firepits at Hidden Lake Campground.

Do you know a college student who likes to work hard in the outdoors, doesn't mind getting their hands dirty, and is looking for work this summer? The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge has a few challenging, yet rewarding, job opportunities. These outdoor summer positions provide students with the experience of working for a large federal resource agency responsible for managing a two million acre national wildlife refuge.

The following STEP (Student Temporary Employment Program) requirements must be met to qualify for the positions: a valid driver's license, have housing in the community, have completed at least one year of college, be currently enrolled in at least six credits at an accredited college, and be returning to college in the fall, taking at least six credits.

Fee Ranger: three Positions for College Students. The Refuge will be hiring three fee rangers to handle fee collection and record keeping for Hidden Lake Campground and Upper Skilak Campground, both located within the Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area.

Fee rangers perform field patrols by vehicle and on foot to assess conditions of campgrounds and trails to assist visitors. Fee rangers handle housekeeping and

maintenance duties for facilities, restrooms, grounds, and signs. They assist the campground hosts in campground operations and special projects. Fee rangers work independently and as part of a team.

Fee rangers will be trained in bear safety, First Aid & CPR, and Refuge policies, procedures, and regulations. Applicants should be prepared to work weekends with weekdays off. A typical workweek will have a combination of early and late shifts. Fee Ranger positions begin May 12 and last until August 15. Pay is \$12.26 per hour.

Applications can be picked up at the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center on Ski Hill Road, Soldotna. Application packages for Fee Ranger positions must be turned into Jetta Minerva, Park Ranger by February 20, 2009. Eligible applicants will be interviewed by March 6th. After interviewing, final selections will be made by March 10th and selected applicants will be notified. Jetta Minerva can be contacted at 907-262-7021.

Trail Crew: The refuge will be hiring college students for the Kenai trail crew. The trail crew works to complete new construction and rehabilitation projects on refuge hiking trails, remote backcountry routes and wilderness canoe trails. Projects will include trail reroutes, construction of footbridges, boardwalks, and timber stairs, and installation of drainage and erosion control structures. Crew members will be trained to use a variety of hand and power tools including chain saws, to complete routine trail maintenance (clearing brush, trimming branches, removing downfall, etc.) and to construct new trails. Trail Crew positions begin on May 12th and may last until September 26th. Pay is \$16.25 per hour.

Perhaps the most challenging, yet exciting aspect, of the trail crew job is the opportunity to participate in extended overnight stays in the field to complete projects in remote areas of the refuge. What these "spike camps" lack in creature comforts is offset by the unique and memorable wilderness experiences they offer. The work is physically demanding and the working conditions are not always ideal, but the crew members will enjoy some of the most beautiful scenery the Kenai Refuge has to offer.

Application packages for the trail crew must be turned into Scott Slavik, Backcountry Park Ranger, at Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center on Ski Hill Road in Soldotna by March 13, 2009.

Eligible applicants will be interviewed by March 16th. After interviewing, final selections will be made by

March 18th and selected applicants will be notified. Scott Slavik can be contacted at 907-260-6163.

Jetta Minerva is a Park Ranger for the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Previous Refuge Previous Refuge Notebook columns can be viewed on the Web at <http://www.fws.gov/refuge/kenai/>.