



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Sacramento NWR Complex  
Visitor Services Assistant Intern



**Position Title:** Visitor Services Assistant Intern/Volunteer  
California Waterfowl Association (CWA) Employee

**Supervisors:** Education Coordinator (CWA) and Visitor Services Manager (SNWRC)

**Objective:** The Visitor Services Assistant (VSA) is responsible for interacting with youth and adults as a representative of CWA and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), facilitating the public's enjoyment and understanding of the Complex and its natural resources. Assist in operating a visitor services program for over 165,000 visitors per year. The VSA will be a paid CWA employee and a USFWS volunteer/intern.

**Overview of Duties:**

The VSA will work primarily on-site at the Sacramento NWR, providing visitors with information about the Complex and its resources. The VSA will answer phones, assist with tours, provide interpretive services, assist with implementing environmental education programs, operate the cooperating association's bookstore and complete various other duties as needed. This position runs from September 19, 2016 through April 15, 2017 (max of 30 weeks, working 40 hours/week).

**Duty Station:** Sacramento NWR, Willows, CA

**Qualifications: VSAs...**

- Understand the purpose of the refuge, its wildlife and visitor services programs, the National Wildlife Refuge System and the location of the refuge lands
- Treat volunteer/intern service as a serious responsibility
- Are completing or possess a bachelor's degree in recreation planning, environmental education, natural resources management or a related field (preferred)
- Complete training when needed, wear the refuge volunteer/CWA uniform properly, and report to duty as scheduled
- Take initiative to complete job duties with diligence and excellence
- Be organized, motivated, flexible and able to complete multiple tasks in a timely manner
- Be comfortable working in the field with possible exposure to ticks, stinging insects, poison oak, feral pigs, mountain lions, rattle snakes and inclement weather conditions including hot or cold temperatures, walking on uneven ground and lifting and bending.
- Work on a team, assisting staff and visitors whenever needed and approach duties with a positive attitude
- Have strong interpersonal communication, public speaking and writing skills
- Are capable of leading group tours and use interpretation techniques and scientific

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- knowledge to provide instruction on local ecosystems
- Work effectively with people of various perspectives and temperaments.
  - Have patience and tact with visitors and school groups—many visitors ask repetitive questions regarding the refuge and hunting
  - Have willingness to obtain knowledge and understanding of nature, common flora and fauna and migratory birds that use the Complex
  - Are flexible with a variety of duties and daily plans
  - Possess a valid driver's license and ability to drive U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) vehicles, including a 12-passenger van and an electric tram
  - Have the ability to operate computers for word processing and spreadsheets.
  - Pass a background check which includes DMV check and fingerprinting
  - Able to understand California Waterfowl Association's goals and mission and communicate to others about hunting.

**Major Duties** (Other duties may be assigned as needed)

Assist refuge staff with a variety of work related to visitor services at the Complex. Specific duties may include:

**Training**

1. Complete orientation/training with CWA and USFWS staff
2. Job shadow staff to increase knowledge and skills in environmental education, public outreach and Refuge management

**Reporting/Internal Communications**

1. Participate in weekly meetings at the refuge and other meetings as needed
2. Record hours and activities at the end of each work day
3. Assist with staff with day-to-day office operations at the Complex
4. Operate office machines such as computer, fax, laminator, and copier and computer programs such as Microsoft Excel and Word
5. Communicate with CWA supervisor routinely via phone or e-mail, completing weekly and monthly reports and weekly checking in
6. Submit bi-monthly timesheets for work pay on time and correctly to CWA

**Visitor Center/Bookstore**

1. Open and close the visitor center and bookstore
2. Greet visitors and provide helpful, accurate information and materials
3. Answer questions via phone and in-person, using good communication and public relations techniques
4. Regularly fill and clean the brochure racks
5. Sell publications and other merchandise in the bookstore. Maintain bookstore by completing monthly deposits as directed. Restock, reorder and clean bookstore as directed.

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**Interpretation and Environmental Education**

1. Conduct environmental education programs on and off-site for school groups with students in 1-6<sup>th</sup> grade in classroom sizes up to 35 kids. Follow state standards and curriculum.
2. Facilitate interpretive programs for visitors when needed.
3. Maintain Discovery Packs, Wild About Wetlands kits and binoculars.
4. Maintain sign-out log for loan items (i.e., mounts, videos, binoculars).
3. Assist with facilitating the California Junior Duck Stamp Contest and Program (data entry, outreach programs and judging event). Assist with mailings (judges, invitations, schools); collect, sort, and enter artwork in database as it arrives; assist with selection of conservation message winners; assist with organizing and hosting the contest; organize and return artwork to participants; create certificates for all participants; and assist with preparing JDS display.
5. Drive tram and present auto tour programs
6. Rove platforms and conduct informal interpretation
7. Take photographs on refuges of wildlife, habitat, and visitors (with permission).

**Vehicle and Facility Maintenance**

1. Wash and clean interior and exterior of visitor service's vehicles weekly
2. Fill vehicles with fuel when needed
3. Maintain electric tram when needed (check batteries, refill with water, wash, plug in for charging)
4. Clean and maintain public restrooms and trash on auto tour 1-2 times weekly.
5. Maintain trails and update kiosks.
6. Check for maintenance needed on viewing platform deck, scopes, rails, etc.
7. Drive to various refuges/units to check brochures, auto counter, etc.

**Habitat Work**

1. Work on the native plant garden (gardening, watering, weeding, planting plants, etc.)
2. Monitor plants and monarchs
3. Collect native plant seeds
4. Monitor wildlife for diseased/dead individuals. Will contact staff for pick up.
5. Trash pickup. Will be aware of any unsafe objects and hazards and will use gloves.

**Other Duties**

1. Some interns will have opportunities to create and work on individually designed projects as needed or approved by staff. Possibilities include: interpretive or educational displays, design signs, create new programs and write press releases.
2. Facilitate the photo-blind program.
3. Facilitate the phone log lists.
4. Participate in fairs and events.

**Obligations:**

- Assist the visitor services manager in conducting a successful visitor services program for

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~165,000 visitors annually. Teach school programs on and off-site with 2,000 students.

- Complete the training needed to perform the assigned duties safely and efficiently. Follow all safety and health requirements including the use of personal protective equipment and instructions. Report unsafe conditions, concerns, or close calls to your supervisor immediately.
- Provide own transportation to and from the primary duty station. May drive government vehicle while working as a volunteer but must possess a valid state driver's license and follow all vehicle safety protocols including wearing a seat belt, not using a cell phone while driving and adhere to the 15 mph speed limit on refuge lands. Vehicle travel on the refuge is restricted to roads and levees unless other arrangements have been coordinated with refuge staff.
- Report for work on dates and times as agreed with your supervisor.
  - Work will be coordinated with the supervisor.
  - Tour of duty will be set with supervisor from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for 5 days per week (no federal holidays). Possibility of weekends or weekdays to meet volunteer and supervisor's schedule.
  - The refuge reserves the right to change the volunteer's work schedule in order to meet supervision needs and housing availability.
- Required to have a personal cell phone for emergencies and communication with supervisors.
- Use of the refuge is permitted only for authorized purposes and times.
- Willingness and flexibility to assist staff and visitors when needed.
- Work cooperatively as a member of the refuge team.
- Will conduct personal affairs in a manner that does not adversely affect CWA and USFWS or their own integrity, reputation or credibility.
- Will follow CWA employee handbook policies and regulations, provided upon hire
- On-site housing is a possibility. Occupants are expected to abide by the bunkhouse rules which include no pets.
  - Willing to contribute a minimum of 30 hours per week for 3-4 months to receive government housing (RV space or bunkhouse).
- If using a government computer, volunteers will follow the Rules of Behavior for Network Resources and agree to the responsibilities, security measures, and expected behavior outlined in that document. A failure to follow them can result in disciplinary action.
- Interns also help protect refuge resources and visitor safety by informing visitors of potential safety hazards, conducting programs in a safe and orderly manner and reporting safety hazards and law-breaking to their supervisor or to law enforcement. Interns will not engage in law enforcement.
- Commitment to adhere to the FWS and California Department of Fish and Wildlife conservation regulations.
- USFWS interns are not considered to be Federal employees for any purposes other than tort claims and injury compensation. Volunteer intern service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other benefits. However, volunteer intern service is creditable work experience. In this

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case, since interns are CWA employees, work experience credit is allowable only if the individual's work experience program allows both credit and pay at the same time.

**Criteria for Dismissal:**

The following can result in immediate dismissal:

- Missing a work period without prior notification or constant absenteeism.
- Not completing or following the qualifications or obligations above.
- Disrupting the effectiveness, quality, or success of the refuge operations.
- Not following USFWS and/or refuge specific regulations (such as closed areas) without prior permission from a supervisor.
- Misuse of government property including vehicles, keys or use of closed areas.

**Salary/Term:** \$11.00 per hour, 8-hour workday, including possible weekends, work 40 hours per week. Occasional events may provide opportunity for overtime. Housing is an option provided on-site at Sacramento NWR.

**Send Resume with Cover Letter to:**

Lora Haller • Visitor Services Manager • [lora\\_haller@fws.gov](mailto:lora_haller@fws.gov) • (530) 934-2801  
Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
752 County Road 99W  
Willows, CA 95988

Applications accepted May 1 – August 20 until position is filled. Qualified applicants will be contacted for an interview.