



Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

Volunteer Position Description

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends.

Position Title: Whetstone Savanna Preserve Steward

Location: Whetstone Savanna Preserve, Central Point, Oregon

Report to: Molly Morison, Southwest Oregon Preserves Manager

Position Summary: Whetstone Savanna Preserve is characterized by valley floor vernal pool, oak savanna, chaparral, and prairie habitats, and is home to the federally listed Threatened vernal pool fairy shrimp, and federally listed Endangered Cook's desert parsley, and large flowered meadowfoam. Whetstone Savanna Preserve is in need of a dedicated steward, or stewards, to help protect this rare ecosystem by controlling weeds such as curly dock, Italian thistle, wild oats, rush skeletonweed, yellow starthistle, blackberries, and teasel. Stewards will also perform other duties such as monitoring preserve conditions, basic maintenance of preserve infrastructure, and trash removal, among others. Whetstone Savanna Preserve is managed by Molly Morison, Southwest Oregon Preserves Manager, and Emma Rose Parker, AmeriCorps Southwest Oregon Volunteer, Education, and Outreach Coordinator. Stewards will work closely with both the preserve manager and the volunteer coordinator.

Duties:

1. Survey and/or remove priority invasive species including curly dock, Italian thistle, wild oats, rush skeletonweed, yellow starthistle, blackberries, and teasel.
2. Survey for and report new invader weeds.
3. Monitor condition of conservation targets including vernal pool fairy shrimp, Cook's desert parsley and large-flowered meadowfoam.
4. Observe condition and diversity of native vegetation and wildlife.
5. Monitor condition and maintain preserve infrastructure as able including signs, fences and gates.
6. Assist with preserve restoration projects including native seed collection and planting.
7. Monitor visitor use and pick up trash.
8. Track and report hours monthly, and report any observed trespass or other problems in a timely manner

Requirements:

- 1) Ability to work outdoors and in varying weather conditions.

- 2) Ability to work independently with little supervision.
- 3) Knowledge of or ability to learn to identify plant and animal species.
- 4) When working alone, willingness to inform another individual of your work schedule and to let that person know when you return home.
- 5) Willingness to follow all of The Nature Conservancy's safety protocols including guidelines related to Covid-19.
- 6) Commitment to the mission of The Nature Conservancy.

Length of service: A minimum of one year is preferred.

Time commitment: Work on the assigned work area 4 to 8 hours per month. If your schedule changes and you can no longer meet this time commitment, notify us of the change so that we can find another volunteer to take over.

Support Provided: Southwest Oregon Preserve Steward orientation. Orientation will be conducted in two parts: an initial virtual training over Zoom, and then an in-person preserve tour and training session, to learn about the ecology, history, and functions of the preserve. Stewards will also be provided with a hard-copy packet of detailed information about the preserve history and ecology, preserve emergency plans, and a list of relevant phone numbers and contact information. Additionally, volunteer stewards will have access to a virtual continuing education series for volunteers in Oregon.

Benefits: Learn and experience the ecology of a unique natural area. Learn about threatened Rogue Valley habitats. Work outside and help protect the unique ecosystem at Whetstone Savanna Preserve.

Contact: Emma Rose Parker, AmeriCorps Southwest Oregon Volunteer, Education, and Outreach Coordinator: emma.parker@tnc.org or Molly Morison, Southwest Oregon Preserves Manager: mmorison@tnc.org