POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Field Organizer, Calumet Region

Reports to: Community-based Conservation Manager

Start date: August 5th, 2024

Pay rate: $50,000

Schedule: 4-day work week, 32 hours per week (full-time)

Organization:

Mission: We unite people to protect, promote, and care for the forest preserves in Cook County.

Our community advocates for the responsible management of the nearly 70,000 acres of forest preserves in Cook County through advocacy, engagement, and stewardship of the land. Some of the best natural areas in Illinois are right here in Cook County, right outside your urban backdoor. Join our team and help us ensure they are here for the next 100 years.

Friends is an organization that gets things done with our members, volunteers, staff, board, and partners. We believe in work-life balance and are here for the marathon, not the sprint (not that we don’t sprint on a regular basis).

Operating Budget: $3,750,000

Summary:

Friends of the Forest Preserves seeks a Field Organizer to help grow, support, and nurture volunteer stewardship communities at specific sites in the Calumet region of Cook County. The Field organizer will help ensure that a self-sufficient grassroots group of volunteers who collectively have the skills, passion, and leadership to restore their adopted forest preserves to good ecological health. Successful candidates will possess a high level of emotional intelligence and excel in communication and interpersonal skills. Field organizers primarily work remotely, with one day a week at Friends’ downtown office.

Responsibilities:

- Recruit, train, and retain volunteers in hands-on ecological stewardship activities (brush cutting, seed collecting, weed control, etc.) by building strong relationships with individuals and groups in targeted communities
- Develop strategies to overcome barriers which prevent participation in the volunteer program
• Conduct in-person outreach and create engaging digital and printed communications
• Initiate new and cultivate existing relationships with partner organizations, including the Forest Preserves of Cook County and other community-based organizations
• Serve as a connector for various stakeholders conducting restoration projects at each site
• Organize volunteer enrichment and recruitment activities (e.g. trainings, flower identification, bird walks, nature hikes, paddling events, plant or animal population monitoring, public presentations, and social gatherings)
• Mentor individuals up the “path to stewardship,” by which volunteers gain knowledge and skills and assume greater levels of responsibility and leadership
• Assist with the mentorship of engagement crew members in ecological stewardship, communicating with volunteers, and leading volunteer workdays
• Track volunteer stewardship activities and acreage at different Calumet Region forest preserves
• Contribute to the growth and development of Friends’ volunteer engagement team
• Lead volunteer workdays

**Required qualifications:**
• 21 years or older with clean driving record
• At least 1 year experience conducting basic habitat restoration activities professionally or as a volunteer
• Knowledge of the practice of restoration ecology for prairies, savannas, and woodlands
• Inclusive and respectful approach to working with diversity of people and partners across race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and other identities
• Experience working and/or living in the Calumet region of Cook County, such as Riverdale, East Side, South Holland, Calumet City, Dolton, Blue Island, and/or others
• Current Illinois Herbicide Operator license or ability to secure one (training provided)
• Current Basic First Aid and Adult CPR certifications or ability to secure (training provided)
• Flexible schedule, including availability on weekends and evenings
• Excellent time management skills and ability to prioritize projects based on grant deliverables
• Positive, encouraging approach to identifying and lifting up the strengths of others
- Proficiency with Acrobat, Microsoft Excel, Google Office Suite, and social media formats
- Excellent communication, organizational, and interpersonal skills
- Ability to lift and move heavy objects (50 lbs.) and work outside in inclement weather
- Ability to pass a comprehensive background check

**Benefits:**
- Health and dental insurance, short- and long-term disability insurance, and $100,000 of life insurance
- 403b retirement account with 3% match starting at 1 year of employment
- 4 weeks of vacation
- 2 weeks of sick time
- 11 paid holidays

**To apply:** Submit cover letter, resume, and two references via the Friends’ website at [https://fotfp.org/who-we-are/jobs/](https://fotfp.org/who-we-are/jobs/). Incomplete applications may not be considered. Please NO calls, faxes, office visits, or emails.

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**Friends of the Forest Preserves strongly encourages people of all identities to apply. We strive to include people of every race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital or veteran status, and/or sexual orientation. Friends is an equal opportunity employer, in addition to observing all legal protections of special status, promoting diversity in the conservation community.**