

## JOB DESCRIPTION



**Job Title:** Natural Areas Internship

**Position Type:** Seasonal Internship (May – August) – Flexible hours alternating weekends and holidays required.

**Reports to:** Natural Areas Staff

**Compensation:** Starting pay \$15.00/hour (based on experience)

**About Us:** As a nonprofit conservation land trust since 1984, Grand Prairie Friends has served a mission to preserve, protect, and promote land conservation across East-Central Illinois.

GPF owns and manages more than 1,500 acres, including some of the highest quality remnant prairies remaining in the state. More than 80% of GPF properties are part of the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission system. GPF landholdings include 14 river-miles of the Embarras River. This biologically-significant stretch of the River meanders through Warbler Ridge Conservation Area, home to a decade-long land restoration for the resident maternity colony of endangered Indiana bats.

**Job Summary:** The Natural Areas Internship is a hands-on, immersive opportunity for individuals who are passionate about conservation, ecological management, and land stewardship. Designed for students or early-career professionals exploring a future in natural resources, this role provides real-world experience within a private, non-profit land trust environment.

### Roles & Responsibilities:

#### 1. Land Stewardship & Restoration:

- Identify, monitor, and manage invasive plant species using mechanical and chemical control methods
- Assist with prescribed burns and vegetation management (training and certification provided)
- Safely operate hand tools and equipment such as bladed trimmers, loppers, and backpack sprayers
- Support habitat restoration efforts across prairies, woodlands, and wetlands

#### 2. Project & Field Support:

- Assist Natural Areas staff with ongoing land management and conservation projects
- Support trail maintenance, grounds upkeep, and site improvements
- Participate in ecological monitoring and data collection projects
- Learn best practices in conservation fieldwork through hands-on experience

#### 3. Visitor Engagement & Outreach:

- Greet, assist, and engage visitors at conservation sites
- Support outreach and educational efforts when needed
- Represent the organization with professionalism and enthusiasm

#### 4. Professional Development & Collaboration:

- Attend professional development seminars and learning sessions
- Interact with the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission system
- Shadow professional stewards, biologists, and restoration specialists
- Gain exposure to both private and public conservation partnerships

**Qualifications and Skills:**

- High School Diploma or GED required
- Valid Driver's License and reliable transportation
- Strong interest in conservation, ecological management, and/or natural resources; intent to pursue a career in natural resources strongly preferred
- Knowledge of Illinois plants and wildlife and/or coursework in Natural Resources preferred, but not required
- Self-motivated, organized, detail-oriented, and able to work independently
- Ability and willingness to work flexible hours, including evenings, weekends, holidays, and special events
- Willingness to work outdoors in varying weather conditions and on uneven terrain for extended periods
- Ability to learn and safely operate hand tools, power tools, vehicles, and equipment, including chainsaws and brush chippers
- Willingness to obtain a Pesticide Applicator License (coursework and testing provided)
- Comfortable adapting to software and technology used for field and administrative work
- Ability to successfully pass a drug test and background check
- Ability to perform strenuous physical activity, including frequent standing, walking, bending, twisting, stooping, and climbing
- Ability to lift, push, or pull objects weighing 50 pounds or more

*The Company will consider requests or exceptions based on legally protected religious observances, as reasonable accommodations to an employee's disability, or as otherwise required by law.*

Forward Cover Letter and resumé:

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**Applications Reviewed as Received, Apply Today!**