



# Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves

## Job Description

**Position Title:** Northeastern Illinois Regional Field Representative (Full-Time)

**Reports To:** The Director

**Summary:** The Field Rep will help develop the Friends' rapidly growing and evolving biodiversity conservation mission in Northeastern Illinois. They will protect and restore Nature Preserves, in part by fostering the growth of dynamic, vibrant stewardship volunteer communities for key preserves.

The Field Rep will seek out opportunities to connect with residents of the region who may be interested in Nature Preserves, making personal connections with existing and potential leaders and other everyday people, with the goal of fostering a culture of learning and commitment. With the Field Rep's help, such groups will attract other friendly, nice, smart persons who are inspired by learning and doing.

The Field Rep reports to the Director and will be a part of a community of Friends leaders, most of whom are volunteers and doing similar work, along with the staffs of partner organizations, Nature Preserve landowners, and regional conservation leaders.

This is a flexible 40-hour/week full-time position including weekends and evenings as needed so that the Field Rep's working hours match with those when volunteers tend to be available.

### **Essential Job Functions:**

#### *Leadership and Training:*

- Train, empower, and mentor leadership volunteers following the Friends' "quick study" work-learn-lead approach to stewardship. (In this approach, staff and volunteers work together, sharing insights, skills, and information – thanks to which we grow and find this mission compelling.)
- Support new and existing volunteer leaders and community members in biodiversity conservation activities. Work with community groups and individuals (especially potential leader and catalyst volunteers) may involve control of invasive trees and herbs, controlled burns, and seed collection and dispersal.
- Recruit volunteers for restoration and stewardship by focusing on having strategic, effective, educational, and rewarding work events. Communicate with and connect with the people who attend the workdays. Stay in touch between workdays by text, email, phone, or in-person meetings as needed.
- Coordinate with INPC staff, landowner staff, Friends staff and leadership volunteers in supervision of contractor work as requested.
- Attend and support public meetings, speaking on behalf of Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves and the Nature Preserves system. Collaborate with volunteers and other advocates to do the same.

#### *Organizational and Physical:*

- Lead and train volunteer stewardship at Nature Preserves according to the approved management plans for each site.
- With the Director, volunteers, and others, find additional resources for ecological restoration and land management tasks at Illinois Nature Preserves and Land and Water Resources.
- This position requires the ability to work in wilderness situations, hike long distances at times, and perform physical labor. This position requires the ability to carry 40 pounds independently and occasionally carry up to 100 pounds with assistance, hike up to 5 miles, and perform physical labor for up to 8 hours in a day.

*Other Goals:*

- Assist the Director with the development of grant funding applications and work plans for grant-funded projects.
- Work with the Director and volunteer leaders to strengthen partnerships with conservation organizations. Identify potential partnership organizations in the region.
- As appropriate, facilitate and attend partnership-building meetings and/or events.
- Any other duties and responsibilities as commensurate with the position and/or as may be assigned or approved by the Director.

**Job Qualifications**

*Desired Mindset, Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:*

- Passionate desire to make a difference in the world. Possessing a drive to facilitate a process by which large numbers of Illinois residents increasingly rally around and care for the Illinois Nature Preserves, for biodiversity, and the planet.
- Strong social and interpersonal skills. Ability to bring together people of diverse backgrounds, thoughts, and inclinations to foster accomplishment and community.
- Verbal and written communication skills - ability to present information in an organized and accurate manner.
- Highly effective in a team environment; thriving when collaborating with others; possessing insight into human motivations, Empathetically relates to the hopes and dreams of other human beings.
- Positive attitude, a self-starter, and patient when needed.
- Computer literacy, including use of the internet and working knowledge of Microsoft Office.

*Desired Education and Experience:*

- A general knowledge of the Illinois Nature Preserve system.
- Working knowledge of Illinois ecology, ecosystem management, and stewardship.
- Familiarity with plant and animal communities typical of Illinois.

*Licenses and Certifications:*

- Valid Driver's License.
- Illinois Pesticide Applicator License (within 3 months of hire) or equivalent certification.
- Willingness to take prescribed burn training as needed.