

SUMMIT STEWARD

The Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) works to protect New York State wild lands and waters by promoting responsible outdoor recreation and building a statewide constituency of land stewardship advocates. Since 1922, the organization has worked to increase access to the backcountry by building trails, conserving natural areas, and developing a stewardship community that supports the ethical and safe use of New York's outdoor spaces. A member, donor, and volunteer-supported organization, ADK reaches across New York through its 25 chapters to inspire people to enjoy the outdoors ethically.

POSITION SUMMARY

Summit Stewards are responsible for educating the hiking public about the rare and fragile alpine ecosystem of the high peaks. A Summit Steward's foremost goal is to encourage hikers to walk on the solid bedrock above tree line, thereby protecting the threatened and endangered flora of the alpine zone. As educators and interpretive naturalists, Summit Stewards teach hikers about:

1. Minimizing impact on alpine summits
2. The significance of alpine vegetation in the context of the state's natural heritage
3. Alpine ecology

Summit Stewards are Adirondack Mountain Club employees. The Adirondack High Peaks Summit Stewardship Program is a cooperative effort of the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and ADK.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Education – 80%

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere to the public.
- Through “low-key,” person-to-person educational contacts on the summits, protect the endangered alpine flora by encouraging hikers to walk on the solid bedrock.
- Provide hikers with interpretive education to promote a greater understanding and appreciation of the alpine ecosystem. Have information available about the natural history, ecology, Leave No Trace outdoor skills and ethics, and botany of the summits.
- Provide accurate trail information.
- Encourage hikers to follow DEC regulations and inform DEC of trail misuse and emergencies, provide first aid when necessary. Summit Stewards **are not law enforcement**.
- The Summit Stewardship Program **shall not be responsible for** initiating or conducting backcountry search and rescue operations.

Trail Maintenance – 10%

- Complete alpine trail definition projects which include:
 - building scree walls
 - rock packing exposed soil
 - brushing in social trails
 - (re)building rock cairns
 - (re)painting trail blazes

Research – 10%

- Work to collect population data of state listed alpine plants, which is used to update the database of the New York Natural Heritage Program.
- Collect data on current research projects including AMC's Mountain Watch and photopoint monitoring.
- Complete data sheets.

This is a field-based position. Summit stewards are expected to be in the backcountry for the 5-day work week, utilizing backcountry sites and sleeping in a backpacking tent.

Further details about backcountry accommodations will be discussed in the interview process.

QUALIFICATIONS

Basic:

- A passion for outdoor education and a commitment to the mission, values, and vision of the Adirondack Mountain Club.
- Commitment to stewardship and environmental education.
- Self-driven and comfortable working mainly independently with minimal supervision.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to work effectively with a diversity of people.
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail to manage projects.
- Must be willing to live and work outdoors in inclement weather.
- Ability to tolerate long hours, insects, and solitude.
- Ability to navigate 5–10 miles by foot over rough terrain with heavy pack loads daily.
- Gather and report use figures from the summits to be incorporated into the High Peaks Unit Management Plan.
- Complete weekly reports.
- Participate in the evaluation of the program by preparing a final report that details the season and makes suggestions for the future.
- Supplemental duties/responsibilities to support other club operations, as requested.

Preferred:

- Backcountry camping experience.
- Current enrollment in or completion of an undergraduate degree in the natural sciences.

- A strong knowledge of natural history (especially alpine botany), ecology, and the landscape of the Adirondacks.
- Speaking knowledge of French.

BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION

Reports to: Summit Steward Coordinator

Classification: Full-time, Seasonal, non-exempt

Dates: Friday of Memorial Day weekend (May 22)–October 18, option to leave early in August to return to college, if applicable.

Salary/Wage: \$17.50/hour

Benefits: Paid sick time

Perks: Free ADK membership; Leave No Trace Level 1 Instructor training; Wilderness First Aid training, free ADK workshops; discounts on store merchandise and rental equipment.

Housing: Tent accommodations at backcountry sites during work week, meals not provided; Additional shared housing in yurt or canvas tent available at Heart Lake Program Center for off days with three meals a day available for free.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

The following questions appear in our online job application form:

- Why would you like to work at the Adirondack Mountain Club? Specifically, what attracted you to this position and what skills are you hoping to gain?
- Provide your previous experience as an educator and/or interacting with the public.
- Describe your familiarity with the Adirondack Park ecology and/or trail networks, particularly around the High Peaks region.
- Tell a story about a challenging experience that you had in the outdoors.
- Summit Stewards are expected to live in the woods and camp alone for five days at a time. Do you have any solo overnight camping experience? Do you have any reservations about camping alone?
- The Adirondack Mountain Club is a collaborative organization that relies on teamwork. Many of our staff also live in communal housing. What positive qualities would you bring to our team?
- What are we missing? This is an opportunity for you to add your personal story or perspective. Take a moment to explain any additional experiences, attributes, or abilities you feel add to your qualifications.

ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENT

As an organization, we appreciate a diverse set of skills and candidates eager and willing to grow and learn with our organization. As such, our job descriptions are general overviews, not a mandatory

comprehensive list. If you feel passionate about our efforts and believe that you have the skills and aptitude to succeed in this role, we want to hear from you.

ADK affirms its commitment to equal employment opportunity for all individuals. Decisions about recruiting, hiring, training, promotions, compensation, benefits, and all similar employment matters are made in compliance with all federal, state and local laws and without regard to race, color, religion, gender, ethnic or national origin, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, familial status, military status or any other classification protected by federal or state law. Any discrimination in the workplace against persons protected by equal employment opportunity laws is illegal and against policy.