POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title Prescribed Fire Apprentice

Classification & Employment Status Apprentice, full-time, hourly, non-exempt, 10-month term (Feb-Nov)

Starting Salary $24.58/hour

Location Based out of Petaluma, CA; field work in Sonoma and Marin counties and beyond, with occasional out of state assignments; overnight travel required.

Supervisor Prescribed Fire Squad Lead

Description

All Hands Ecology's Prescribed Fire Apprentice is an integral part of a team of highly motivated and committed employees who work closely together and with private landowners, government agencies, other organizations, and the community to bring “good fire” to the landscape in service of ecological health and community safety. The Prescribed Fire Apprentice will operate as a member of a five-person Apprentice Prescribed Fire Squad, one of two squads forming a Prescribed Fire Crew, working under the supervision and leadership of a Prescribed Fire Squad Lead. The term position runs from February through November.

Prescribed Fire Apprentices will prepare and implement fuels management, unit preparation, and prescribed burn projects throughout the greater North San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. The crew will conduct ecological monitoring to inform adaptive management and participate in professional development courses and workshops, with occasional assignments outside the area to support growth as a student and practitioner of prescribed fire.

Responsibilities

- Participate in prescribed fire operations, including the preparation, implementation, holding, and monitoring of prescribed burns. This includes pre-burn monitoring, understory thinning and fireline preparation work, ignitions and holding of prescribed fire, extinguishment and patrol of prescribed burns, and burn reporting.
- Operate and care for power tools safely and competently. Training is provided.
- Prioritize and maintain positive, inclusive, and respectful interpersonal dynamics, even in challenging working conditions.
- Successfully complete a series of National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) courses including, Intro to Chainsaw Operations (S-112), Firing Operations (S-219), Followership to Leadership (L-280), Intermediate Wildland Fire Behavior (S-290), and others.
- Attend and actively participate in training on topics including fire ecology, monitoring, prescribed burn planning, smoke management and permitting, CAL FIRE permit processes, burn unit map making, meteorology and fire, etc.
- Participate in pre- and post-burn ecological and fire effects monitoring.
- Implement various native plant stewardship activities such as mechanical and manual removal of invasive species, native plant seed collection, and other techniques as appropriate.
- Actively participate in After Action Reviews and sand table exercises.
- Train and build ability to draft burn plans, produce burn unit maps, and obtain necessary permits and approvals related to prescribed burning.
- Maintain gear, equipment, shop/office, and vehicles in a clean, functional, and orderly fashion.
- Participate in organization and team meetings, retreats, initiatives, committees, and events as requested.

- Participate in occasional travel assignments with partner organizations and agencies, requiring some overnight and/or out of state travel.
- Maintain minimum physical fitness requirements (below) and actively participate in regularly scheduled crew physical training activities.
- Other duties as assigned.

Required Qualifications

- Clear written and verbal communication skills in English.
- Prior experience working outdoors required.
- Ability to perform physical work outdoors in all weather conditions.
- Ability to work well with a team and independently.
- Ability to maintain a positive and respectful attitude and inclusive disposition with diverse colleagues and partners even in challenging working conditions.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment, employ proper safety measures, and show appropriate levels of problem-solving.
- Superior and consistent attention to detail with commitment to continuous improvement.
- Ability to learn new skills as directed.
- Demonstrated commitment to values and mission of All Hands Ecology.
- Valid California driver's license and good driving record.
- Proof of completion of the following courses required prior to start date, if selected. All courses are free and available online through the Wildland Fire Learning Portal.
    - *IS-100.C Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS 100*
    - *IS-700.b Introduction to National Incident Management System*
    - *S-130, Firefighter Training*
    - *S-190, Intro to Wildland Fire Behavior*
    - *L-180, Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service*
- Arduous Pack Test (walk 3 miles on flat ground with 45 lbs. in under 45 minutes) must be successfully completed within 30 days of start date. Pack test may NOT be completed on a treadmill.

Physical Requirements & Working Conditions

- Maintain a high level of physical fitness throughout the 10-month term, including initially and consistently passing the Arduous Pack Test.
- Ability to work on uneven terrain and perform sustained outdoor physical activity in varied weather conditions.
- Capacity to sit, stand, walk, bend, kneel, lift, and carry up to 45 pounds as part of daily duties.
- Frequent use of hands, arms, vision, hearing, and speech for both field and office tasks.
- Work schedule: Regular weekly work schedule is four 9.5-hour days, 7 am – 5 pm, Tuesday through Friday. Hours will vary by season and assignment, including required wildfire and prescribed fire assignments.
- High-intensity work on/around wildland fire with potential for direct exposure to heat, smoke, high temperatures, rain, poison oak, and other hazards.

Disclaimer

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by individuals assigned to this classification. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required. All employees may be required to perform duties outside of their normal responsibilities as needed.

updated 11/03/2026