

POSITION DESCRIPTION: POTOMAC GORGE RIVER SAFETY VOLUNTEER CORPS

Position: River Safety Volunteer

Time Commitment: 40 hours per year is requested

River Safety Volunteer Corps members will assist park operations by:

- Alerting park staff to potential problems and hazards on the river.
- Providing safety patrols of an identified location/zone, including areas (or hotspots) where known illegal activity occurs.
- Informing park visitors of park regulations (e.g., no jumping off cliffs, swimming is illegal and deadly) Volunteers *do not* enforce park regulations. Delivering safety contact messages when appropriate and safe to do so.
- Assisting Law Enforcement and Rescue personnel *only* at the request of said personnel.
- Responding to first-aid requests for assistance and first-aid emergencies. Requires training and certification.
- Relaying visitor comments and concerns to park staff.
- Providing information and informal interpretation to visitors about the Potomac Gorge's history and its natural resources.
- Providing efficient and courteous service to park visitors.

Benefits to River Safety Volunteer Corps members:

- Knowledge that volunteer work is contributing to visitor safety and awareness.
- Personal enrichment and experience working in a national park setting.
- Experience in communicating with people of diverse cultures.
- Continual training to improve knowledge of the resource, sharpen skills, and increase effectiveness in serving park visitors.
- Building relationships with staff members, visitors, and other volunteers.

Knowledge and skills desired in River Safety Volunteer Corps members:

- A minimum of intermediate boating experience. Beginners will not be accepted. Volunteer applicants may be interviewed by volunteer corps member to determine desired skill level.
- Adherence to park rules and regulations in order to set a good and safe example.
- Ability to work outdoors for up to 4 hours, occasionally in inclement weather.
- Ability to accurately and clearly report unsafe behavior, especially if safety contact was not made.
- Excellent communication and inter-personal skills.
- Ability to successfully complete first-aid and CPR training courses and willingness to provide aid to visitors.
- Willingness to learn and provide knowledge of the local area, the park, and other resources of interest to visitors.

Mandatory training for River Safety Volunteer Corps members (provided by NPS):

- Park Orientation/ Making informal contacts with park visitors; how to deliver safety messages
- Communication protocols

Recommended training: (provided by NPS as available)

- Adult CPR and First-Aid
- Swift Water Rescue Awareness

National Park Service will provide River Safety Volunteer Corps members for use on duty:

- Identifying logos for clothing/equipment
- Watertight container for cell phone.
- Detailed maps of Potomac Gorge features to help in reporting incidents and exact locations
- Safety Cards for use in making visitor contacts

River Safety Volunteer Corps members will be expected to own and use on duty:

- Their own boat (kayak or canoe) in safe operating condition and equipped with all locally-required safety equipment.
- Their own phone (may also be borrowed from the C&O Canal's NHP Volunteer Trailer located at Great Falls in Potomac, MD; or Great Falls Park, VA entrance station; or as otherwise directed.)

River Safety Volunteer Corps members will also be expected to:

- Keep track of volunteer hours on the river and report hours monthly to the park VIP coordinator.
- Use an online calendar to schedule river patrol hours.
- Notify on-site staff at beginning and end of each river patrol.
- Provide up-to-date emergency phone contact information to the park VIP coordinator whenever needed. This information is provided to the National Capital Region Communication Center (NCRCC), located in Hagerstown, MD to be used in the event a member is injured, or missing.
- Provide open communication with NPS staff and other volunteers.