



MISSION STATEMENT: Stratford Ecological Center is dedicated to the education of children and adults in understanding the relationships between living things and their environment, thereby fostering a deeper appreciation for the land and all the life that depends on it.

OVERVIEW:

Stratford Ecological Center is a 236-acre educational farm and nature preserve located in Delaware, Ohio. Dedicated to hands-on experiential education, sustainable agriculture, environmental stewardship and a whole lot of fun, Stratford welcomes nearly 16,000 children, families, volunteers, and community partners annually to connect with nature, where their food comes from, and each other. Since its founding in 1991, Stratford continues to represent quality education, healthy food, and sustainable living. Now is the time to join us and make a difference. Here at Stratford Ecological Center, you matter and so does your career. When you join our team of staff and volunteers, you feel like you are part of something bigger. You'll make a profound and lasting impact on children, our community, and our environment when they need us most.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY: From foundational experiences of unstructured play in the forest, to hands-on investigation of the natural world, to participating in the cycles of our food systems on a working sustainable farm, both children and adults learn to recognize and appreciate the diversity and interconnections inherent in nature. As these connections are made through small-group, hands-on experiential learning, concepts come alive. Context elevates participants' understanding of their role within their ecosystem, and programs are designed to transform in age-appropriate ways, nurturing exploration, and discovery for all ages. Our educational philosophy was inspired by the experiences of Stratford visionary Gale Warner, an environmentalist, a writer, a leader, and an educator. Gale showed us how to listen and learn from the earth, and the core principles and techniques that continue to be relevant and necessary today.

POSITION: Land and Agriculture Steward

The Land Steward will play a crucial role in the care, management, and conservation of our diverse landscapes, including a working farm, forest, prairie, and state nature preserve. The ideal candidate will have a strong passion for land management, ecology, agriculture, and a deep commitment to environmental education and conservation.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Land Management:

- Work alongside the Stratford team and volunteers to Implement sustainable land management practices to maintain the health and integrity of the farm, forest, prairie, and state nature preserve.
- Conduct regular assessments of the land to identify areas for improvement and develop action plans.
- Oversee and execute land maintenance tasks such as invasive species removal, reforestation efforts, prairie restoration, and erosion control.

2. Habitat Conservation:

- Monitor and protect sensitive habitats within the nature preserve to ensure the preservation of native flora and fauna.
- Collaborate with Stratford Team to develop and implement habitat restoration projects that enhance biodiversity.

3. Farm Coordination:

- Assist in the management of the working farm, including crop planting, harvesting, and animal care.
- Integrate sustainable agricultural practices that align with Stratford's educational mission.
- Engage visitors and volunteers in hands-on farming activities and educational experiences.



4. Educational Programming:

- Collaborate with the education team to develop and lead engaging educational programs, workshops, and guided tours for visitors of all ages.
- Communicate the importance of land stewardship, conservation, and sustainable agriculture to visitors, volunteers, and community groups.

5. Volunteer and Team Coordination:

- Supervise and coordinate volunteers and interns participating in land management and conservation activities.
- Foster a positive and collaborative work environment among staff, volunteers, and interns.

6. Data Collection and Reporting:

- Maintain accurate records of land management activities, ecological data, and progress toward conservation goals.
- Generate reports and presentations to communicate the impact of land stewardship efforts to stakeholders and supporters.

7. Equipment and Resource Management:

- Manage tools, equipment, and resources required for land management activities.
- Assist in budget planning and resource allocation for land stewardship initiatives

Qualifications:

- Must be at least 17 years of age by their start date on October 1, 2023
- Must have a HS Diploma or GED certificate.
- Members must be able to pass a criminal, FBI, and DMV background check (Note: having a background does not automatically exclude them from membership).
- Members must accept the position as a full-time priority and be able to complete 1700 hours of service.
- The ability to safely traverse and navigate through rough and brushy terrain with ticks and poison ivy in the summer heat while carrying GPS equipment is required.
- Able to demonstrate some knowledge of or an appreciation for natural resource conservation.
- Able to secure transportation to and from work and events.
- Ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written form.
- Familiarity with popular computer software (including, but not limited to, MS Word, Excel, and Publisher).
- Able to take direction and respond positively to feedback.

Benefits

- Living stipend of up to \$20,400 for the service year.
- An education award of \$6,895 for a completed term of service to be used to pay student loans or for future education.
- Student Loan deferment and interest forbearance while in service.
- Childcare assistance available to full-time members, based on household income eligibility.
- Basic individual health, dental and vision insurance available to full-time members

Application

- To apply, please e-mail the AmeriCorps Program Coordinator, Emily Fouts, at efouts@franklinswcd.org with:
 - A statement of interest
 - A resume or summary of qualifications.
- Selection of candidates is currently active will remain open until all positions are filled.

