



Kids' Farm Volunteer Naturalist

Part-time, unpaid volunteer position

Program seasons: April-June, June-August, September-November*

*Seeking longer term volunteers if possible!

Oxbow's Mission

Our mission is to inspire people to eat healthy, sustainably grown food and to steward our natural resources for future generations.

What We Offer

The Center is located on 230 acres of forest and grassland bordered by Western Washington's Snoqualmie River. We use this mixed landscape to:

Produce food. We cultivate 30 acres of mixed vegetable crops using agro-ecological principles and engage in research to inform conservation farming practice.

Grow native plants. We operate a native plant nursery that produces plants for habitat restoration projects, educational gardens, and urban landscapes, and conducts research on native plant propagation using sustainable growing methods.

Connect children to nature. We offer environmental education programs for children pre-K thru high school to build their comfort in the outdoors and provide them with opportunities to learn about the links between agriculture, conservation, and the environment.

Position Overview

Oxbow hosts thousands of kids in the spring, summer and fall for our seasonal *Farm Adventures*. Primarily pre-school and elementary-aged students visit the farm for 75 or 90-minute hands-on farm tours facilitated by farmer and volunteer instructors. Kids learn about the six plant parts, soil, compost, worms, and ways to connect to nature.

Volunteer naturalists will be responsible for leading tours with up to 14 kids (and their chaperones) around our two-acre Kids' Farm. When no tours are scheduled, volunteers will assist the OxEd team with a variety of farming tasks around the Kids' Farm. Only a moderate understanding of food and farms is necessary. There will be a lot of opportunity for learning from our staff.

Additional Opportunity for Volunteer Naturalists

Participate in professional development opportunities, community partnership building, and monthly EE program delivery for our EPA grant-funded *Partnering for the Future Project* during the 2017-2018 school year (more details below).

Qualifications

- Weekly commitment during the current season of programming (and beyond if desired)
- Exceptionally positive attitude
- Must enjoy working with young children as well as adults
- Comfortable speaking in front of large groups
- Ability to take direction, ask for help when necessary, and accept constructive feedback

- Ability to: work while standing, sitting, bending over, or kneeling; lift heavy & awkward objects, preferably up to 50 lbs; perform physical work such as digging or planting, all in inclement weather.
- Prior experience in the area of agriculture, sustainability, food systems, education, or environmental studies; **or** a strong interest in pursuing these areas
- Ability to pass a background check

Responsibilities

- Lead field trip programs for students from pre-school through 5th grade (typically pre K – 3rd)
- Facilitate garden and farm projects with children
- Participate in farming tasks on the Kids' Farm
- Interact with participants and volunteers in a friendly and enthusiastic manner
- Maintain open communication with Oxbow staff and other volunteers

Hours

- Seasonal commitment for a minimum of one season of programming
- Minimum of 2 farm tours per week
- Spring and Summer Tours are at 9:00am, 10:45am, and 12:30pm Monday – Friday. Fall Tours are 9:30am, 11am, and 12:30pm. Volunteers can stay for one, two, or three tours, but must be present at our 8:30 morning meeting to be outlined on the day's activities
- Weekly time commitment and schedule can be flexible based on your schedule
- Ability to attend the Volunteer Orientation (Spring volunteer orientation: Apr. 2017, Summer and Fall Orientation dates TBD).

Benefits

- 35 + hours of community service
- Develop skills and experience teaching and facilitating outdoor environmental education
- Add to your resume and explore new careers, receive a letter of reference from staff
- Learn basic organic farming techniques
- Connect to other community members with shared interests
- Inspire the next generation to eat healthy foods, enjoy gardening, and value conservation
- Access to fresh, organic produce
- Work as a team with Oxbow staff in a fun and collaborative environment
- Spend time at a beautiful organic farm just outside of the city of Seattle
- This is an unpaid volunteer position

Opportunity to Contribute to our *Partnering for the Future Project*:

We are also seeking naturalists for our EPA grant-funded partnership with a local high-needs elementary school (Frank Wagner Elementary), implementing a year-long EE program for their kindergarten classes by providing monthly EE lessons both on the farm and in the classroom. Volunteer Naturalists have the opportunity to be educators for this program in addition to our on-farm field trip naturalist opportunities. Volunteers interested in this opportunity will start in spring 2017 and continue through the 2017-2018 school year. These volunteers will receive additional benefits of professional development workshops on topics such as: Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), EE, and working with multicultural students/families. Over half the elementary school students are from Spanish speaking homes and two of the K classes are taught half in Spanish, so we're especially looking for folks who can help "transcreate" (translate content, beyond language translation) lessons and lead some Spanish language programs.

If you are interested in volunteering for the EPA grant project, please indicate it on your application.

Application Deadline:

Ongoing

How to Apply:

Applications are located at www.oxbow.org/volunteer

Please send or email your application to:

Attn: OxEd/Volunteer Naturalist

10819 Carnation-Duvall Rd NE

Carnation, WA 98014

If you have any questions, please call 425-788-1134 ext. 3 or send an email to education@oxbow.org.