

Ridge (Wynn & IRP) Monitoring Naturalist

Located on the ridge overlooking Kachemak Bay, [Inspiration Ridge Preserve \(IRP\)](#) and the [Wynn Nature Center \(WNC\)](#) are mosaics of forest, bogs, meadows, and streams. The **Ridge Monitoring Naturalist** will participate in ongoing environmental monitoring at IRP and the WNC, including bird nest box surveys, phenology studies, wildlife camera trapping, and more. They will plan and lead interpretive natural history hikes, educational programs, and workshops for small but varied groups of visitors, as well as perform routine trail maintenance. This person will work alongside the WNC and IRP Coordinators, CACS Program Director, and other naturalist educators to learn about best practices



in experiential, place-based interpretation and education and gain knowledge of Alaskan ecology. Applicants can split their time fairly evenly between outdoor work (data collection, trail maintenance, leading hikes/workshops) and indoor computer work (database management and program preparation).

The position runs from May 28 – August 20, 2025. It may include some weekend work.

Training & Mentorship

- Participate in paid naturalist training at [Peterson Bay Field Station](#) and in Homer at the start of the summer, which will include training on natural sciences, Alaska Native cultures, and nature interpretation.
- Gain hands-on experience in scientific monitoring and environmental education with support and mentorship from the WNC and IRP Coordinators.
- Opportunities throughout the summer for paid professional development, such as Nature-Based Art, Ethnobotany, Invasive Species Monitoring, Protective Factors for Youth, or Youth Mental Health First aid.

Core duties:

- Conduct monitoring of wildlife and invasive species, which includes hiking, operating motion-triggered wildlife cameras, properly identifying plants/wildlife/scat/tracks (training provided), and recording observations in a computer database.
 - Plan and lead guided hikes, ranging from 1.5 to 3 hours, for a range of group sizes and ages.
 - Assist with developing and implementing educational workshops and activities for adults and youth with the support of the Wynn and IRP Coordinators and Naturalists.
 - Serve as a mentor and leader for Teen interns performing monitoring tasks weekly at IRP and potentially other CACS locations, depending on need and interest.
 - Maintain trails and remove invasive species. This can involve hiking for up to 5 miles carrying weed whips and other equipment.
 - Create and update interpretive and educational materials.
 - Provide photos for social media and advertising, conduct participant evaluations of programs, and complete basic office tasks such as program data entry.
- We are a staff that works as a team and adapts to our communities' needs; therefore, this position may work on additional programs and duties as mutually agreed upon.

Qualifications

- Creativity, curiosity, compassion, and enthusiasm.
- Self-motivation and ability to work independently at times.
- Ability to work in a highly collaborative environment, including providing and receiving feedback.
- Experience or interest in contributing to environmental monitoring and developing community-based monitoring activities.
- Experience or demonstrated desire to work outdoors with youth and adults.
- Comfort working, hiking, and living in a semi-remote location. Physical ability to hike up to 5 miles carrying up to 30 pounds of equipment.
- Knowledge of or strong interest in learning about forest ecology, botany, watersheds, and wildlife habitat.
- Knowledge of or strong interest in learning about Alaska Native cultures, particularly Dena'ina and Sugpiaq/Alutiiq ethnobotany and land stewardship.
- Willingness to learn on the job and adapt to changing circumstances (such as weather, group needs, etc.)
- Strong communication skills, with the ability to provide clear, concise directions, communicate complex science concepts, and make people feel welcome.
- Commitment to CACS's work towards justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in our programs. Dedication to our vision of healthy ecosystems, engaged and connected communities, and inspired environmental stewards.
- Demonstrated good judgment and risk management experience in challenging backcountry settings, including first aid and CPR certification (with preference for Wilderness First Aid/Responder certification).

We've left our list of desired qualifications flexible in recognition of the many forms of knowledge and experience that can exist both within and outside of typical employment or academic pathways. Please apply if you are passionate about the work and think you could do it well!

A Little More About Our Organization (and our Equal Opportunity Employer Statement)

We are a small but mighty non-profit made up of 10-30 staff. We are enthusiastic about the natural world and care for each other with attention, creativity, and compassion. CACS recruits, employs, trains, compensates, and promotes regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, class, veteran status, and other protected status as required by law. We also recognize that the field of environmental education has long excluded Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, as well as people from working-class backgrounds, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups. We know that the land on which we now teach has long been and continues to be stewarded by Alaska Native peoples, particularly the Sugpiaq and Dena'ina. We believe that these communities must be central to our work and that environmental education will be stronger and richer with more diverse perspectives. We welcome your unique skills, cultural perspectives, and strengths and recognize how they benefit our community.

We strongly encourage people with these identities or who are members of other historically excluded communities to apply for positions with CACS. If you feel comfortable doing so, you are welcome to self-identify in your cover letter. Please contact Katie Gavenus (katieg@akcoastalstudies.org, 907-235-1974) with any questions or concerns.