



Work Week Volunteer Program

Thank you for your interest in volunteering in Yosemite. This program is one of the many benefits of being a current donor. A current donor is someone who donates to the Conservancy this year prior to registering online for this program. The minimum donation required to apply is \$25. Your donation helps support Yosemite Conservancy's extensive work in the park and enables you to receive other great benefits.

This program involves working with a National Park Service representative to help maintain, improve and restore Yosemite National Park. Typically, work is out of doors at elevations ranging from 4,000 to 8,000 feet. Participation for each week is limited to 15 people or less. You are required to provide your own camping equipment, including a tent and sleeping bag, as well as appropriate outdoor gear. Tools, equipment and materials are provided. You will be working as a group and camping in group campsites that do not accommodate RVs and campers of any kind.

1. How do I make a donation?

Visit [Friends of Yosemite | Yosemite Conservancy](#) to choose the amount you would like to give. To make the \$25 minimum donation, click on *Other Amount* and type \$25.00 in the box. Follow the prompts to complete your donation.

You can also call 800 4MYPARK (469-7275) or 415 434-8446 to donate with your credit card.

If you would like to send a check, mail it to Yosemite Conservancy, 101 Montgomery Street, Suite 1700, San Francisco, CA 94101.

2. How do I apply? Is there a fee?

Visit [Work Week Program Registration](#) to register online. The fee is \$160 to cover administrative/logistical costs, food, and a commemorative T-shirt. If you have already made a donation of a minimum of \$25 or more this year, the next step is to register online. If you have not yet donated, please make your donation prior to registering.

3. When may I apply?

Online registration opens when the 2012 dates and locations for the Work Week Program are posted on this website. Registration remains open until all work weeks are filled.

4. What will happen after I register online as a previous/returning volunteer?

Your early placement period ends on March 30, 2012. You will be processed according to the time stamp on your online registration form.

If we cannot place you in a work week of your choice, you will be notified via email.

If we do have a work week available for you, we will reserve the spot and notify you via email of your placement. You must respond promptly to the email and either accept or decline the placement. Once you accept the placement, you must send us the \$160 fee. When we receive your fee, you are accepted into the program. You will receive emails at a later date with all the information you need to volunteer.

5. What will happen after I register online as a new applicant/first time volunteer?

This is a very popular and rewarding program and we regularly receive more new applicants than we can accommodate. On March 31st, a lottery is conducted to place new applicants. If we do not have a placement available for you, we will notify you via email.

If a work week is available, your spot will be reserved and you will be notified via email. You must respond promptly to the email and either accept or decline the placement. Once you accept the placement, you must send in your social security number for a background check and the \$160 fee. When your fee is received, you are conditionally accepted into the program, based on the outcome of the background check. Passing the background check ensures acceptance into the Work Week Program. Once accepted, you will receive emails at later dates with all the information you need to volunteer. If you do not pass the background check your \$160 fee will be refunded.

Registration will remain open after the lottery until all work weeks are filled.

6. Are there waiting lists?

Yes. You can ask to be placed on a waiting list if your work week choices are not available. Applicants who are on waiting lists are notified when a space opens up .

7. Can a trip be cancelled?

Yes, any significant fire activity or park emergency can cancel a work week. Volunteers will be notified by the Conservancy of last-minute changes. If a work week trip is cancelled by the organizers, all fees will be refunded.

8. If I have to cancel, what happens to my fee?

If after being assigned to a work week you are unable to attend and Yosemite Conservancy is able to fill your spot, 85% of your fee will be refunded with a 15% cancellation fee retained. Unfortunately, cancellations that cannot be filled will not receive a refund.

9. Who makes great Conservancy volunteers?

Our volunteers enjoy working and camping with other people. They work as a team and are flexible. They are excited about the work they are doing, follow directions well, work diligently, and are cooperative in sharing chores in the campground. They are in good health with strong stamina.

10. Do I have to be a U.S. citizen to participate?

Yes. We require U.S. citizenship or possession of a green card.

11. Can I participate in more than one work week?

Because the program is so popular, a new volunteer is assigned to work for one month only in order to provide opportunities for others. Exceptions can occur when a work week does not fill up.

12. What kind of volunteer work will I do?

The program has unique opportunities that enable volunteers to work with team leaders from the National Park Service on projects that range from data collection to light construction, to moving soil and plant material. Each location presents a variety of projects which typically involve some or all of the following: seed collection, replanting, carrying equipment and containers of water for distances, identification of plants, removal of invasive species, trash collection, fence repair and light construction.

While many find this work very satisfying and the surroundings an inspiration, others may find the days of manual labor, especially at high elevations and in high or low temperatures, to be very challenging. In addition to project work, everyone takes turns helping out with meal preparation and cleanup in the group campsite.

13. Do I need to bring my own tools?

No, all tools will be provided by the National Park Service. You may bring your own heavy-duty work gloves and should bring one or two water bottles, a hat, and sturdy hiking boots.

14. What is the routine for work weeks in Yosemite Valley, White Wolf, and Tuolumne Meadows?

Typically, volunteers arrive at the assigned campground on Sunday afternoon and set up their tents in a group campsite. Work with National Park Service team leaders occurs Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. You will work six to eight-hour days with appropriate rest and meal breaks. Wednesday is a day off and many volunteers use this opportunity to hike together in the park.

Three hearty meals a day are provided on site, starting with Sunday dinner and concluding with breakfast Saturday. Everyone take turns helping with meal preparation and cleanup. Volunteers make their own lunches with provided food.

Evenings are typically spent around a campfire.

15. What is the routine for a Back Country work week?

Volunteers arrive at their group campsite in Tuolumne Meadows on Saturday afternoon and provide their own meals Saturday as well as Sunday morning. They hike into the back country on Sunday. They work on Monday and Tuesday, hike to another location on Wednesday, and work Thursday and Friday. Meals are provided by DNC and volunteers camp together using their own camping equipment. Participants hike out

on Saturday and provide their own meals upon returning to Tuolumne Meadows campground. Check out is by noon on Sunday.

16. What typically happens on a day off?

Volunteers often use a day off to explore other areas of the park, go hiking together, or simply relax.

17. What is the lodging arrangement?

Volunteers enjoy the camaraderie of pitching their tents in a group campsite. They provide their own camping equipment, including a tent and sleeping bag. RVs or campers of any kind are not allowed. All campgrounds are equipped with bear lockers to store volunteer toiletries. A packing list will be included in your information packet.

18. Can my children participate with me? Can my spouse/partner stay with me while I volunteer?

In order to provide a safe and productive environment, children under the age of 18 are not admitted into the Work Week Program. Spouses/partners are able to camp together if both are volunteering for the work week.

19. May I send my child on his/her own?

Children under the age of 18 may not participate in this program.

20. Can I arrive early or extend my stay in the park?

Yes, but you must make your own camping or lodging arrangements. Conservancy campsites are provided from Sunday afternoon through the following Saturday morning.

21. Will I have access to showers, toilets, and running water?

There are no showers in Yosemite campgrounds, however, there are showers nearby for volunteers to use free of charge. Campgrounds have either vault or flush toilets and potable running water; in the case of Yellow Pine, the volunteer camp in Yosemite Valley, a potable water tank is provided.

In the backcountry, composting toilets are available for volunteers. Volunteers should consider bringing their own solar showers or be prepared to wash themselves in the nearby creek, downstream from water intake.

22. What sort of meal menu can I expect?

The meals have a reputation for being hearty and delicious. Menus are planned in advance. Breakfast usually includes the choice of a hot dish or cold cereal, along with fruit. Participants make their own lunches from the supplies provided and pack them out to the work site. Typical dinners include pasta, meat, vegetables, salad, and dessert. Nonalcoholic drinks such as milk, coffee, and hot teas are available.

The Conservancy needs to know in advance if a vegetarian menu is required or if a volunteer has other dietary restrictions due to lactose intolerance, wheat or gluten allergies. Participants with these restrictions should be sure to communicate this and may have to provide for some of their own needs.

Alcoholic beverages are not provided, yet some adults bring their own beer or wine to enjoy in the evenings. The Conservancy expects those who drink alcohol to act responsibly, not drink and drive, and be able to work as required each day.

23. How does the crew get to the work site?

The crew either hikes or is driven to the work site, depending on the work location.

24. Who are the park partners for this program?

This program is a cooperative venture of Yosemite Conservancy, Delaware North Parks & Resorts at Yosemite (DNC), and the National Park Service (NPS). Yosemite Conservancy is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the support of Yosemite National Park through programs, projects, visitor services, and publications in partnership with the National Park Service. DNC is the concessioner in charge of managing the park's lodging, food, and retail operations. The NPS, an agency of the United States Department of the Interior, is charged with preserving Yosemite's natural and cultural resources while providing for the enjoyment of park visitors.

Each of the three partners plays a vital role in the Work Week Program. The Conservancy arranges for donors to serve as volunteers, organizes the pre-trip information, manages campground logistics, and handles food provisions. DNC underwrites some of the cost and provides showers. NPS plans the projects, provides group campsites and tools as well as leads the actual work in the field.

25. How can I reach Yosemite Conservancy's volunteer program?

Mail: P.O. Box 230, El Portal, CA 95318; Attn: Volunteer Program
FedEx or UPS: 5020 El Portal Road, El Portal, CA 95318; Attn: Volunteer Program
Phone: 209-379-2317, extension 14
Fax: 209-379-2486;
Email: shasty@yosemiteconservancy.org