



PLEASE NOTE: Applicants will need to apply here: <https://form.jotform.com/StewardsIPP/cva-member-application-2025-fall-co> Application form requires a resume, cover letter, professional references.

Position Title: Community Volunteer Ambassador, Big Cypress National Preserve - AmeriCorps

Conservation Legacy Program: Stewards Individual Placements

Site Location: 33100 Tamiami Trail East, Ochopee, FL 34141

Application Timeline: Preference given to applicants that submit application by **June 13, 2025**

Terms of Service:

- Start Date: September 8, 2025
- End Date: August 7, 2026
- AmeriCorps Slot Classification: **1700 Hour**

Purpose:

Stewards Individual Placements, a program of Conservation Legacy, provides individuals with service and career opportunities to strengthen communities and preserve our natural resources. The Community Volunteer Ambassador (CVA) Program combines the strength of a national leader in conservation service with the National Park Service to train emerging leaders to assist park units in building lasting connections to communities.

Big Cypress National Preserve, located in southern Florida, is a vital ecological and cultural resource that plays a crucial role in the health of the greater Everglades ecosystem. Spanning over 729,000 acres, the preserve is a mosaic of swamps, prairies, pinelands, and cypress forests that support a wide diversity of plant and animal species, including endangered species like the Florida panther and the West Indian manatee.

One of its most important functions is its role in water flow and filtration. Big Cypress acts as a natural sponge, absorbing and slowly releasing water into the Everglades, helping to maintain water quality and prevent flooding. The preserve also protects the headwaters of the Big Cypress Swamp, which is essential for the hydrology of the region.

Beyond its environmental significance, Big Cypress holds cultural and historical importance. It is home to Native American tribes such as the Miccosukee and Seminole, who have lived in and stewarded the land for generations. Additionally, it offers recreational opportunities like hiking, birding, and paddling, making it a valuable resource for public education and connection to nature.

People who volunteer at Big Cypress complete numerous duties, including, campground hosts, maintenance crew, visitor center docents, education assistants, and more! The Big Cypress National Preserve Volunteer Program hosts roughly 65 RV/snowbird volunteers during the busy season and has a small crew of dedicated local volunteers that are able to assist all year long! The staff at Big Cypress are proud of the volunteer program that has been built, but knows that new ideas, and perspectives can help to ensure volunteers have the best possible experience while at Big Cypress.

The CVA will have the opportunity to assist with the 2025-2026 season from start to finish. Help the volunteer coordinator at Big Cypress National Preserve to recruit, train, and manage volunteers, host special events, and contribute to success of Big Cypress. The CVA will attend multiple trainings, assist with the health and wellness committee, and develop relationships with a diverse group of volunteers by hosting events, coordinating volunteer groups and getting to know our 'resident' volunteers! The CVA will provide assistance that will be critical if we hope to make this the best volunteer season yet!

Description of Duties:

- Checking volunteers in and out
- Prepare volunteer orientation and pancake breakfast
- Recognition gifts/recognition planning
- Trail Patrol training
- Tabling events at FGCU and others
- Single Day events (MLK day, and Earth Day AND October Campground Prep Day)
- Help in planning, prep, and completion of the Swamp Heritage Festival
- SWAMP Celebration Tabling
- Local university outreach
- Assist with social media
- Finding and engaging Scout Groups
- Uniform inventory at the start/end of the season.
- Attend Education/Interpretation Training
- Planning a low-cost celebration for International Volunteers Day (Dec. 5th)
- Determine if virtual volunteering makes sense for BICY
- Write and Submit Excellence in Volunteerism Awards
- Be a part of the Health and Wellness Committee

Qualifications:

- Enthusiastic
- Open to try new things
- Experience working with volunteers or in a management position
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Excellent organizational and team-building skills
- United States citizen, United States national, or a lawful permanent resident alien
- Applicants must be between ages of 18-30 years old, or up to 35 for veteran, based on Public Land Corps Act of 1993 authorizing this AmeriCorps opportunity.
- Has received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate; or has not dropped out of secondary school to enroll as an AmeriCorps participant and agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent prior to using the education award.

- Agrees to provide information to establish eligibility and to complete a National Service Criminal History Check.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Public speaking skill
- Commitment to responsibilities
- Time-management skills
- Experience with tabling/engaging the public is a plus

Physical Requirements:

Conservation Legacy is committed to the full inclusion of all qualified individuals and will ensure that persons with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations to perform essential functions. Some positions may require periodic overnight travel, non-traditional hours, ability to move across varied terrain, use program-specific tools and a range of technology on an infrequent or frequent basis. Exerting up to 25 pounds of force occasionally to lift, carry, push, pull, or otherwise move objects. Ability to safely drive an organizational vehicle may also be required for some positions. If you need assistance and/or a reasonable accommodation due to a disability during application or recruiting process, please send a request to the hiring manager.

Time Requirements:

- This position is expected to serve 40 hours each week, but exact service schedules may vary.
- Lunch breaks will not be counted towards AmeriCorps service.
- Member may be required to participate in national, state, or local service projects or events as part of their service term.

Orientation and Training:

- Member will receive an orientation that includes training on AmeriCorps prohibited and unallowable activities.
- Week-long, in-person training on NPS volunteer program management and leadership skills.
- Year-long continuum of learning supporting professional development
- \$1,200 in Professional Development Funds

Additional Position and Community Information

Big Cypress can provide free housing to the CVA. BICY's housing policy does not discriminate and accepts all individual not matter of their sexual orientation or accessibility needs. Housing accommodations are located within the preserve with a great yard and view of a canal behind the house.

Accommodations are shared with another preserve employee or intern. The furnished house is a two bedroom home with central air. Utilities (electric, water, and sewer) are paid by the preserve. The CVA will likely have their own bedroom space furnished with a twin bed, nightstand, dresser, and closet. The CVA and roommate will share a furnished common living room, bathroom, and kitchen/dining area. Stove, microwave, refrigerator, washer and dryer, central AC are available in the residence. Some cookware left by previous tenants can be found in the space and the preserve may be able to provide additional cookware upon request. The house does not have wi-fi, but there is wi-fi at our HQ building less than a mile away. Those who have lived there in the past, have also had great success using a hotspot.

The CVA will be able to walk or drive to their duty station less than a mile away but will need to drive ~26 miles to get into Naples for groceries, restaurants, libraries, several gas stations, and other businesses. Everglades City which is only a 15-minute drive away provides smaller stores for more immediate needs.

Within a 30 to 60-minute drive from the CVA's residence, the CVA will find many hiking trails and canoe/kayaking opportunities both in the preserve and outside the preserve. The area is surrounded by city, county, state, and other federal public lands that provide great opportunities to recreate and enjoy the outdoors.

Benefits:

- Segal AmeriCorps Education Award of \$7,395.00
- Living Allowance of \$600 per week.
- Additional Benefit of \$150 per week, if housing is not provided
- Healthcare Coverage if Eligible
- Childcare Coverage if Eligible
- Student Loan forbearance if Eligible (administered by MyAmeriCorps, directly)
- Interest Payments if Eligible (administered through MyAmeriCorps, directly)
- \$1,200 in Professional Development Funds for training, networking, conferences, and/or travel
- Networking opportunities within the National Park Service and partnering organizations
- Public Land Corps Hiring Authority
- Week-long in-person training at NPS site with travel/meal expenses covered.

Evaluation and Reporting:

- As an AmeriCorps member, performance will be evaluated on whether the member has completed the required number of hours, the member has satisfactorily completed assignments, and if the member has met other performance criteria that were clearly communicated at the beginning of the term of service.
- Reporting requirements include, but are not limited to, bi-weekly timesheets and accomplishment tracking.

How to Apply

Please visit [Community Volunteer Ambassador \(cvainternships.org\)](https://cva.ambassadors.org) to review "Member Positions" by region and find instructions on how to apply.

The CVA position will start on **Monday, September 8, 2025** and run for 48 weeks until Friday, August 7, 2026.

PLEASE NOTE: Applicants will need to apply here: <https://form.jotform.com/StewardsIPP/cva-member-application-2025-fall-co>. Application form requires a resume, cover letter, professional references.

Please ensure your cover letter addresses how your experience aligns with the CVA program, your experience working with different populations, and position details for this park/position. You may submit one application for multiple positions by selecting all sites you are interested in.

Application Timeline: Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. First review will occur in early June. Final deadline is **Friday, July 4, 2025**.

For Application Questions:

Please contact James Gasaway, Program Director at jgasaway@conservationlegacy.org

Conservation Legacy is an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, national origin, disability status, genetic information, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

We also consider qualified applicants regardless of criminal histories, consistent with legal requirements. If you need assistance and/or reasonable accommodations due to a disability during the application or recruiting process, please send a request to the hiring manager.