Manager of Environmental Education Center in Lord Stirling Park
Somerset County Park Commission was established in 1956. The park system is home to almost 15,000 acres of open space, and well on its way to achieving its goal of creating a 20,500 acre network of park and open space facilities. County population is approximately 350,000 and the annual budget for the semi-autonomous agency is $19 million. There are approximately 200 fulltime employees, 300 seasonal/continuous part time employees, and 250 active volunteers. Volunteer efforts are crucial to the success of Park Commission programs and events. During 2015, individual and corporate volunteers contributed almost 10,000 hours of service throughout the park system.

The park system has an aggressive program of land acquisition, a mission to provide a wide variety of recreation activities, and a responsibility to protect the County’s critical environmental resources and wildlife. Facilities include a wide range of opportunities for leisure pursuits. Golf is a large component with five golf courses, three driving ranges, a pitch and putt course, and a recreational putting course. Specialized facilities include a riding stable, an environmental education center, two tennis facilities, a swimming pool, and paddle boating. Horticulture activities include a rock formation and rare plant garden, an award winning rose garden, arboretum, and a sensory and fragrance garden. Five general use parks offer picnic facilities, bike paths, athletic fields, and fishing opportunities. The park system also encompasses several natural areas offering more passive pursuits such as bird watching and hiking. Therapeutic Recreation provides year-round activities and events for children and adults with disabilities.

The Environmental Education Center is located within Lord Stirling Park, in Bernards Township, and is nestled within 425 acres of the western portion of the Great Swamp Basin of the Passaic River. The variety of habitats of floodplains, swamps, rivers, intermittent streams, marshes, meadows, and natural and man-made ponds, fields, and forests provide homes for diverse plant and animal populations in this environmentally sensitive park. The area was once home to Paleo-Indian groups, and even a Major General of the Continental Army, Lord Stirling. 2,600 acres of land were presented to the US Department of the Interior to create the core of the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge; the property adjacent to the Environmental Education Center.

The Environmental Science Department designs and delivers a wide range of environmentally themed programs to an audience that ranges from toddlers to senior citizens. School programs are written to meet academic standards including Next Generation Science Standards, national and state standards, and environmental education guidelines for excellence. The summer camp experience for youth and teens provides the opportunity to explore, enjoy, and experience the out-of-doors through two well-respected summer programs – Eco-Explorers and AWESIM Kids. From discovering the complexities of our ecosystem through formal programs to paddling down the Passaic River, children develop a love of their environment. Adults enjoy the learning experiences provided through lectures, field trips as close as the mid-Atlantic region and as far as Costa Rica and Africa, and the canoeing and kayaking on various rivers while throughout the tri-state area.

The community can also experience the environment through the variety of special events and exhibits such as the 1770s Festival; the Nature of Halloween event; the Eco Rally; and the County Caper. Hiking the 8.5 miles of trails through the swamp provides unique nature experiences. The Book and Gift shop complements the programs and trail experiences with a multitude of natural history and environmental materials and gifts, and the resource library is filled with a wide variety of natural history topics. A multitude of awards have been presented to the Environmental Science department through the years.
Job Description

Under direction of the Deputy Director/Leisure Services Division, primary duties are to plan, promote, implement, and evaluate environmental, historical, and cultural programming at the Environmental Education Center, in the general use parks, and in undeveloped natural areas. Responsible for overall development and execution of land management plans for the Environmental Education Center portion of Lord Stirling Park.

The Environmental Science Department is responsible for the operation of the Environmental Education Center; the management of the 450 acres of land including the 8.5 mile trail system. Six naturalists and an events/land management specialist provide an extensive range of programs at the EEC and in the developed and undeveloped natural parks, focusing on environmental education, natural history, and outdoor recreation. Three summer science/technology programs for various age groups are also conducted. The EEC attracts 25,000 visitors annually and generates income of $200,000.

This position is accountable for the leadership of the Environmental Science Department and the Environmental Education Center. There are 11 full time employees and seven seasonal employees. The operating budget is $650,000.

Qualifications

Masters degree preferred in environmental science or related field, such as parks and recreation or forestry, with a minimum of five years managerial experience in a non-formal educational environment. Experience in natural resource management; budget planning; overseeing capital improvement plans; public speaking; and be familiar with 21st Century tools for environmental learning, the NAAEE environmental literacy framework, eSTEM, early childhood EE, and guidelines for excellence in EE. Experience in interacting with formal K-12 school and community groups to foster relationships and shared services. Ability to supervise staff and departmental programs. Ability to adjust work schedule as required for the efficient operation of programs and facilities. Must have a valid driver’s license.

Duties

1. Establish, promote, and evaluate annual goals and objectives for environmental education programs for the public and school groups, outdoor recreation, community outreach, facility rentals, exhibits, special events, and historical and cultural resource management.

2. Supervise and manage development and implementation of environmental education programs, outdoor recreation, interpretation, and special events, through leadership in understanding and/or experience in providing youth and adult environmental programs.

3. Administrate summer camp programs, including development of budget guidelines and planning and implementation of programs.

4. Directly supervise five full time staff: Supervisor; Special Events Specialist; Maintenance Foreman; Bookshop Assistant; Administrative Assistant; recruit and hire new personnel when necessary.

5. Assume overall responsibility for department’s operating budget and develop, justify, and defend proposed budget submissions.

6. Prepare recommendations to annual fee schedule; prepare program and special events cost analyses.

7. Oversee maintenance of building and general improvement of building, and work with other Somerset County Park Commission personnel on preparation of specifications and execution of capital projects. Develop comprehensive maintenance plans in conjunction with other special use facilities within the Leisure Services Division, and in keeping with the Park Commission’s Area Management Plans.

8. Cultivate and maintain strategic relationships with schools, environmental organizations, and other community stakeholders. Provide presentations to local community groups, schools, and corporations on various environmental issues.

9. Set standards, review, and edit printed material produced for public use or marketing.


12. Monitor the newly installed solar energy panels on the roof of the Environmental Education Center to provide data on the energy efficiency levels, interpretive displays, and oversee the development of programming relating to the solar panels.

13. In conjunction with Federal and State regulatory agencies and other Somerset County Park Commission personnel, develop, update, and execute land and wildlife management programs.

14. Serve on internal and external committees, working groups and/or ad hoc task forces, as requested, providing program expertise and contributing to the attainment of successful results.

15. Research, submit applications, and administer grants for enhancement and/or development of programs, land management projects, and facility improvements.

16. Oversee applications for required federal, state, and local wildlife permits and any others required for operation of facility.

17. Solicit annual sponsorship of special events at the Environmental Education Center.

18. Organize corporate volunteer groups with assistance from Special Events Specialist and Volunteer Coordinator.

19. Advise and approve selection, ordering, and inventory of appropriate bookshop merchandise.

20. Administrative duties include conducting regular staff meetings, annual staff performance appraisals, budget tracking, monthly reports, and attending conferences and outside agency meetings to stay current with the environmental education profession.

21. Explore and evaluate continuing education opportunities for staff to attend so that they remain current with environmental education trends and topics.

22. In cooperation with the Park Ranger Department, develop trail maps and brochures for park areas.

23. Review surveys; make recommendations for future programs based upon results.

24. Resolve intra-department issues and coordinate with other Park Commission deputy directors and managers on broader environmental, programmatic, marketing, sustainability, and financial issues.

25. Respond to emergency situations at the Environmental Education Center 24/7.

**Compensation and Benefits**

The Somerset County Park Commission has a knowledgeable, motivated, and dedicated staff. Our goal is to create a working environment that will motivate all employees to provide unique, personalized, and unparalleled service. The salary range for this position is $68,200 - $95,992. The Park Commission offers an attractive benefits package with the following components.

- **Pension Plan** – NJ Public Employees Retirement System (PERS); Voluntary 457 Deferred Compensation Plan
- **Life Insurance** – Through PERS, non-contributory at 1.5 x salary; contributory at an additional 1.5 x salary
- **Health Insurance** – The Commission participates in Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of NJ POS Direct Access and Delta Dental Premier Plan of NJ. A portion of employee/dependent coverage is paid for by Park Commission
- **Holidays** – 15 paid holidays per year
- **Vacation** – 10 days per year minimum increasing depending on years of service
- **Personal Leave** – 3 days per year
- **Sick Leave** – 15 sick days per year
- **Flexible Spending Account** – maximum amount $2,000 annually
- **Employee Assistance Program** – Free counseling services for employees and their dependents including family, parenting and dependent care, education, daily living and stress management, and work and career growth
- **Jury Duty Compensation**
- **Tuition Reimbursement** for approved courses.
- **Blood Donor Program** through the County where donors can be recipients if needed.

**Application and Interview Procedures**

Cover letter, resume, and answers to the three supplemental essay questions must be received by email or via regular mail by Wednesday, March 9, 2016. Please forward to:

Donna Umgelter, Human Resources Manager
Somerset County Park Commission
PO Box 5327
North Branch NJ 08876
dmumgelter@scparks.org
908 722-1200 ext. 239
www.somersetcountyparks.org

Overnight mail address is:
Somerset County Park Commission
355 Milltown Road
Bridgewater NJ 08807

Applications will be reviewed and the candidates with the most relevant qualifications will be considered for interviews to occur on Friday, April 8, 2016.

**Supplemental Essay Questions**

1. Please describe your approach to building relationships, effective communication, and accomplishing the mission of the Somerset County Park Commission and the Environmental Education Center.

2. Discuss your philosophy and techniques relating to providing environmental and outdoor recreation programming with limited resources.

3. Please describe three specific accomplishments in your local government career that you consider to be the most significant. What challenges did you face on the path to these accomplishments?