

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT – RIVER STEWARD

Ausable Freshwater Center (AFC), a non-profit environmental conservation organization based in Wilmington, New York, is seeking a qualified individual to provide face to face education and outreach to recreational users of the Ausable River from May to October 2026. The river steward's primary responsibility will be interacting with anglers and the public to educate them about aquatic and terrestrial invasive species and proper cleaning methods for their recreational equipment. Collecting survey data, identifying and removing invasive species along the river corridor, and attending public events as an ambassador of the Ausable River, the river steward will support AFC's science-based conservation mission to help communities protect Ausable streams and lakes. In addition to outreach duties, the steward will work as part of AFC's *Riparian Ecosystem Recovery Team* to assist with seed collection, planting, and site maintenance. The steward may also have opportunities to assist AFC's staff with field-based research in our biological, water quality, and stream health programs.

Position Overview

Status:	Full-time, temporary seasonal employee, 35 hours/week
Compensation:	\$19 to \$22 per hour, dependent on experience, mileage reimbursement.
Hire Timeline:	Applications due April 30. Application materials will be reviewed upon receipt; position runs May to October, with some flexibility around the start and end dates.

Position Description

Outreach

The Ausable River is nationally and internationally known for its trout fishery, spectacular scenery, and exceptional recreational opportunities. A host of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species threaten these valued resources. The river steward helps AFC and our partners protect the region from these invaders by educating river users and the community about invasive species threats and spread prevention. Supervised by AFC program staff, primary duties of the river steward include:

- riverside education of anglers and river users about invasives and how to clean their gear
- collecting and managing river user survey data
- maintaining equipment cleaning stations (wader and boot wash)
- tabling at regional events to educate the general public
- identifying and removing invasive species along the river corridor and watershed lakes
- extensive written and social media reporting of activities and results
- data analysis and report on river stewarding efforts

Riparian Ecosystem Recovery

In addition to outreach, the river steward will work with AFC's Riparian Ecosystem Recovery Team. Riparian areas support biologically distinct, diverse, and productive communities that provide essential ecosystem services—storm resilience (absorbing floodwater and ice, reducing bank erosion), temperature regulation, water filtering, dense food webs, and more. This team works to restore and enhance these areas through native plantings. Supervised by AFC program staff, primary duties of the river steward include:

- Tree and plant seed collection
- Planting tubestock, bareroot, and container stock trees and plants at restoration sites
- Working with volunteers at planting and invasive species removal events
- Providing follow up care at planting sites which may include running irrigation systems, weed whacking, invasive species removal

The river steward will work with AFC staff to develop a work plan that meets the needs of the program and complements the steward's skill set and learning objectives.

Qualifications

Qualified candidates are well-organized self-starters enthusiastic about working directly with the public; able to communicate effectively in person and in writing; capable of performing duties independently and as directed by a supervisor; eager to work outdoors in all normal weather conditions; and attentive to detail. Proficiency with Excel and Word programs is essential, as is comfort and enthusiasm with public interaction, data collection, and reporting. Experience working with and educating the public is a plus. A successful candidate will, minimally, have completed, or be near completion of a degree in natural resources, biology, environmental science, or a related field. They will have demonstrated a commitment to conservation. The ideal candidate will meet the above qualifications and have a knowledge of fisheries, aquatic ecosystems, and invasive and native species. The steward must have a reliable cell phone (Verizon is best in this area), hold a valid driver's license, and have regular access to a reliable vehicle.

Lodging is NOT provided. Candidate must be available to work holidays and weekends on a regular basis throughout employment. Evening, morning, and weekend work is required. The ideal candidate would be available to work from May thru October. Some flexibility around that timeline is available. Position will be 35 hours per week.

About AFC

Since 1998, AFC has been working with landowners, local, state, and federal government, NGOs, researchers, and other stakeholders to conserve the valued resources of the Ausable watershed. AFC's conservation programs provide transferable solutions to issues that challenge many watersheds. We undertake rigorous monitoring to mitigate the effects of pollutants on aquatic life and drinking water; provide early detection, education, and outreach to reduce invasive species threats; assess the abundance of aquatic native species, such as brook trout, and work to protect their habitat; and we restore the health and balance of our streams, sustaining ecological diversity and providing flood resilience for our communities. See our website: <http://www.ausablecenter.org/> for more details.

How to Apply

Submit a cover letter explaining your interest and specific qualifications (specifically detailing your experience with public outreach and education), a resume, and contact information for three professional references as one PDF document to hiring@ausablecenter.org. Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until the position is filled. Please type the position title "River Steward" and your last name in the subject line.