



Paid Internships Restoration Ecology (Summer 2026)



Do you seek field experience in natural area restoration and management? Several paid internships in **ecological restoration** are available through The Prairie Enthusiasts (Empire-Sauk Chapter). Work will be carried out at a few prairie and savanna preserves in southern Wisconsin. This is an opportunity to learn plant and animal identification, ecosystem ecology, habitat needs of rare and declining species, and the tools, methods, and philosophies of restoration ecology from professional ecologists and experienced practitioners. You will also learn about the conservation significance and goals of various preserves.

These are full-time positions for 12 weeks from Tuesday, May 26 through Friday, August 14, 2026. Applicants should be in college, at the sophomore level or higher, and have a demonstrated interest in restoration ecology or the conservation/management of rare species and ecosystems. Also desirable is a major in ecology, biology, botany, conservation, forestry, environmental studies, environmental engineering, zoology, wildlife, or soils. Applicants must be able to perform sustained physical work outdoors under a variety of conditions. A valid driver's license is required.

Compensation: \$17.50/hr (40 hr per week). Academic credit may be available for participation in this program; each intern is responsible for making academic credit arrangements with their institution.

Locations: The work will primarily take place at two high-quality nature preserves in western Dane County and eastern Iowa County near the villages of Blue Mounds and Mazomanie. Other sites near Barneveld, Arena, and Mt Horeb may require occasional visits during the internship. These sites are owned or protected via conservation easements held by The Prairie Enthusiasts. They include remnant and restored prairies, oak savannas, oak woodlands, streams, and wetlands.

Work: The interns will be working together as a team led by an experienced restoration ecologist. As an intern, you will spend the summer outdoors where you will learn by doing several tasks in broad-scale landscape restoration and management. The primary focus of activities is the control of invasive species, but time will also be spent on seed collecting and planting, plant ecology and identification, seed orchard maintenance, fencing and boundary posting, endangered species monitoring, and in-field "lectures." Some use of power tools and herbicides will be involved.

Other Considerations: Interns are responsible for their travel, housing, and other living expenses, and are encouraged to carpool to worksites. Sturdy work boots, gloves and clothing, as well as sun, rain, and insect protection are required. All tools will be provided. TPE runs payroll at the end of the month, so employees are paid monthly as opposed to bi-weekly.

How to Apply: Application deadline to ensure consideration is Monday, February 16th, 2026. Apply by email to Andrew Sleger (asleger@theprairieenthusiasts.org). Attach a **single pdf or word file** that includes a cover letter describing your background and interest in this position and a detailed resume. **Begin the file name with your last name followed by first name.**

Tips: Typical applications are 2-4 pages in length. Interviews will be scheduled beginning the week of 2/23/26. Three professional references will be required if your application is selected for an interview.