

Naturalist Guide

Department	Program
Supervisor(s)	Program Manager
Position Term	Late May through mid-September

Position Description The position of naturalist guide is a professional role, charged with implementing the educational mission of Camp Denali and North Face Lodge. A naturalist guide is a teacher of experiential learning, a backcountry hiking guide and a competent driver. The position will be 2-5 days per week guiding, with the balance of responsibilities in the 5-day workweek in other departments, depending on company needs. The most common schedule is 3 days/week as a Guide, 2 days/week in other departments.

Compensation Pay begins at \$13.62/hour (\$149.82/day, for a ten-hour day). The actual rate is commensurate with training, experience and other positions included in the five-day schedule. Lodging and professionally prepared meals are provided free for the summer. A travel stipend is paid upon completion of a full season. Gratuities are pooled and divided equally among all staff, amounting to approximately \$500/person/month.

Major Functions A naturalist guide is responsible for safely transporting guests over the park road, leading people safely in the trail-less backcountry of Denali National Park and using creative teaching techniques to expand the guests' knowledge of the area and encourage land stewardship. Responsibilities also include eating meals with guests, assisting serving staff, and acting as a resource to guests with questions. This position requires close communication with hosts and operations crew. Other duties may include, but are not limited to, cleaning vehicles, presenting an evening program, washing dinner dishes and chopping kindling.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities This position requires a multi-disciplinary background. A depth and breadth of Alaska-specific knowledge is necessary. However, individuals with initiative, competency and a strong scientific background will be considered if they are willing and able to rapidly learn information specific to the sub-arctic and Denali. By early season, knowledge base should include bird and bird song identification; plant identification (including familiarity with botanical nomenclature and relationships); wildlife ecology; geologic processes; phenomena of northern skies; understanding of nutrient/energy cycling in northern climes; and Alaska's history, including early humans, today's native peoples, statehood, and relevant pivotal legislation (i.e. ANCSA and ANILCA). History and operational features of Camp Denali and North Face Lodge and *Leave No Trace* principles appropriate to the sub-arctic will be taught upon arrival.

Necessary skills include current Wilderness First Responder and CPR, and the abilities to route-find in Denali's trail-less terrain, lead people confidently and safely in the backcountry, and use the natural world as a classroom to enhance guests' understanding of ecology. As guest interaction is a major component, naturalist guides must possess the ability to communicate articulately and with an easy conversational style, and have a sincere interest in people. Naturalist guides may train into a commercial driver's license to drive up to 32-passenger buses over the unpaved, mountainous Denali Park Road while providing interpretation.

Other Requirements Previous professional guiding experience. Previous interpretive or teaching experience. A solid academic background in the natural sciences (MS preferred). Experience in arctic/sub-arctic or alpine regions. Familiarity with the history and culture of the far north is preferred. An individual commitment to learning and resourcefulness both on and off the job to establish proficiency in details specific to Denali National Park and Camp Denali. Continual integration of new information about the natural world, cultural milieu, and guest service is expected. Flexibility, positive attitude, professionalism at every turn, willingness to pitch in, ability to live in remote Alaska, and desire to be a supportive member of a thoughtful community in a spectacular location.

Working Conditions & Physical Demands Hiking in the backcountry requires stamina and the ability to negotiate rough, uneven, and often steep terrain while carrying a heavy daypack. Hikes may also include glacial or clear water river crossings and assisting others in the crossing. Other physical demands include loading/unloading gear and sitting for extended periods while driving.