

NATURALIST GUIDE

Department Program

Supervisor Program Manager

Position Term Late May through mid-September



About Camp Denali Camp Denali is a small, family-run wilderness lodge located in the heart of Denali National Park. The Park Road is temporarily closed at its midway point, meaning that our only access is by air. We are currently operating as a fly-in lodge and we will continue to do so until the Park Road reopens, likely Summer 2027.

About Camp Denali's Program Department Camp Denali is more than a wilderness lodge; we are stewards of the land and a premier center of learning and connection in this place that we cherish and honor. Our program department operates as the faces of Camp Denali. We are the hosts ensuring that guests have everything they need, the guides facilitating safe and meaningful learning experiences in the National Park, and the liaisons to the National Park Service and other entities while travelling along the road and in the backcountry.

Camp Denali's mission grows out of a deep legacy of conservation values and action. The program department strives to uphold that legacy and we treasure and reflect on our 74 year history while uplifting and learning from the millennia-long stewardship of Interior Alaska's Indigenous Peoples. Our goal is to connect deeply with each guest that we may help deepen connection with the natural world.

We value the diversity of our programs team and each member brings unique strengths, training, and focusses to their guiding and interpretation. Our naturalist guides are self motivated and creative, confident in their leadership and comfortable working on their own in the field, while also being strong community members ready to jump in and support the rest of the team.

Position Description The position of naturalist guide is a professional role, charged with implementing the educational mission of Camp Denali. 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 guiding, 2 days/week in other departments.

Compensation Pay begins at **\$20.00 per hour / \$30.00 per OT hour / \$220.00 per 10-hour day**. Camp Denali may pay higher wages based on seniority with Camp Denali and

level of skill. Gratuities are pooled and divided equally among all staff, amounting to approximately \$800/person/month.

- Room and professionally prepared meals are provided free for the summer.
- This position is eligible for a travel stipend, which is dependent upon a person's location at the start of each season. Travel stipend specifics are outlined in the employment policy handbook of DNPWCL.
- A retirement savings option is available beginning in the third year of employment via a SIMPLE IRA; the employer provides an annually revised contribution of up to 3%, which may be dependent on employee participation.

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 the 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). The history and operational features of Camp Denali and *Leave No Trace* principles appropriate to the sub-arctic will be taught upon arrival.

When the Park Road is restored, we will resume road-based transportation by bus. Looking ahead, naturalist guides may train into a commercial driver license (CDL) to drive 32-passenger buses over the unpaved and mountainous Denali Park Road while providing interpretation. Already possessing a class-B CDL with passenger endorsement is a plus.

Other Requirements

- A solid academic background in the natural sciences (MS preferred).
- Previous professional guiding experience.
- Current Wilderness First Responder and CPR certifications.
- Route-finding skills for navigating Denali's trail-less backcountry terrain.
- Aptitude for using the natural world as a classroom to enhance guests' understanding of ecology.

- Engaging verbal communication skills, and a true desire to lead and connect with guests of all ages and backgrounds.
- Flexibility, positive attitude, and professionalism at every turn.
- Personal 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.
- A genuine desire to live and work in a remote, self-sufficient, small community setting.
- All staff are required to have a current Alaska Food Worker card (online, on-demand, valid for three years).

Strongly Preferred Qualifications

- Experience in arctic/sub-arctic or alpine regions.
- Familiarity with the history and culture of the far north.

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 include glacial or clear water river crossings and assisting others in the crossing. Weather and working conditions in our remote location are highly variable, from downright unpleasant to unbelievably sublime. Guided hikes occur rain, shine, or snow. A positive mindset, tolerance, and sense of humor toward swarms of mosquitos and biting flies are essential in this role. Other physical demands include loading/unloading gear and sitting for extended periods while driving.