



## SMITH RIVER ALLIANCE JOB DESCRIPTION

**TITLE:** Rock Creek Ranch Caretaker  
**SUPERVISOR:** Co-Executive Directors  
**LOCATION:** Rock Creek Ranch  
**STATUS:** Regular Part-Time, Non-Exempt

The Smith River Alliance (SRA) is a nonprofit conservation organization founded in 1980 to protect and restore the natural resources of the Smith River watershed. Programs of the organization include: advocating science-based management of publicly owned watershed lands, conserving habitat through purchase, and promoting and implementing restoration and stewardship projects across the watershed.

Rock Creek Ranch (RCR) is a 175-acre property located on the Wild and Scenic South Fork Smith River, about 20 miles East from Crescent City. Power for the entire property is generated by a Sustainable Power System through solar and hydroelectric. RCR serves as a meeting-retreat and environmental education destination for children, youth and adults. RCR facilities support SRA program activities and is rented to groups who utilize the Ranch House and/or the Outdoor Use Area (OUA), which has a kitchen, solar showers, yurt and campsites. The Ranch House is outfitted for all-season use with two wood stoves and also a propane furnace.

RCR hosts visitors year-round including school/college groups, planning and educational retreats, guided fishing trips, kayakers and rafters, and work parties during the rainy season (October into June). Peak visitation occurs between June 15 and September 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **RCR Caretaker Role**

The RCR Caretaker plays a key role in managing and maintaining the facilities and systems, including the Sustainable Power System on the 175-acre property; as well as be the on-the-ground face of the organization for all visitors at Rock Creek Ranch. Overall, the RCR Caretaker is expected to monitor activities and facilities, greet visitors, provide hospitality support, support volunteer/service projects, provide a daily presence consistent with mission of SRA, and coordinate the work of staff and vendors as needed.

The RCR Caretaker works closely with the SRA Management Team to prioritize management, maintenance, planning and hosting functions. The RCR Caretaker may also be involved in guest management and land stewardship projects. Good communication skills and ability to collaborate in a team setting are essential.

### **Responsibilities**

*The Caretaker works closely with the Management Team to maintain and host visitors to Rock Creek Ranch. This includes participation in the planning and implementation of initiatives on the 175-acre property.*

- 1. Operate and maintain all RCR Systems.** *The Ranch has a **Sustainable Power Station**, which utilizes solar and micro-hydro power. 52% of RCR power needs are generated from on-site solar and 42% from a micro-hydro system. The Caretaker operates and maintains the system*

*components including: Inverters and storage batteries; Solar system; Micro-hydro system; Generator; and Solar Shower water heating system.*

- **Water system.** RCR is part of the Rock Creek Mutual Water Company, which serves the Rock Creek flat. The Caretaker will, from time to time, in coordination with the SRA Management Team participate in water system improvement projects. Other specific duties include: changing water filters in the Ranch House/OUA; and inspecting and maintaining all system components.
- **Wildfire preparedness and fire suppression system.** Wildfire is a serious concern in the Rock Creek area. As a result, SRA has a fuels management program and is an active partner with the Del Norte Fire Safe Council (FSC) in wildfire preparedness projects in the South Fork canyon. SRA has installed two 2,500-gallon tanks, 2-inch water lines connecting 13 fire hydrants, and an electric pump to pressurize the system. Responsibilities include: fuels management, maintenance of the fire suppression system, training volunteers on use of the system, and working with the FSC as SRA's representative in the community.
- **Compost System.** Appropriate kitchen scraps and food waste are composted from both kitchens. Oversight of this system including coaching visitors so as to avoid attracting wildlife is an important function.

2. **Operate and Maintain Structures and Grounds. Elements include:**

- **Ranch House.** The house has four bedrooms and two bathrooms; is primarily heated by two wood stoves (although a propane furnace is also available); is served by a propane cooking stove and hot water heater, and two Sun Frost refrigerators. All house systems need to be maintained in good working order and coordination is often needed with housekeepers, guests, and volunteers.
- **Outdoor Use Area (OUA)/Long House.** This area has an outdoor kitchen, a solar-thermal shower and dining area. These facilities require periodic inspection, maintenance and cleaning.
- **Yurts.** RCR has 12' and 14' yurts which require periodic maintenance and cleaning.
- **Orchard and Garden Management.** The orchard includes over twenty fruit trees, raspberries, kiwi, and grapes. The garden has irrigation and several raised beds. Duties include pruning, fertilizing, watering and improvements for the orchard (and/or supervising volunteers to complete these tasks). The food garden is available for staff use.
- **Roads, lawn, and other areas.** Specific duties include overseeing maintenance and improvement projects.
- **Ensure safety standards** are met at Rock Creek Ranch: report and follow up on safety hazards and security threats immediately.

3. **Support RCR Programs.** This is varied and seasonal. High visitation is generally June 1 through Labor Day.

- **Host Visitors.** Greet and orient/introduce visitors to the property and to the SRA. Perform hospitality tasks and consult reservations system as needed. Operate the sale of Rock Creek Ranch merchandise, including hats and mugs. Advise senior management of guest conflicts or problems requiring attention.
- **Volunteers.** Work with management to support the volunteer program, participate in volunteer work parties; organize and maintain tool storage for easy access by volunteers; maintain tools and recommend replacement as needed.
- **Guest Caretaker Program.** Work with management to support the Guest Caretaker program. Provide training to relief caretakers and provide additional support as needed.
- **Contribute to Social Media Content.** Assist communications staff by providing periodic images and stories regarding the ranch.

#### 4. **Support Special Projects**

In consultation with SRA leadership, plan and implement special improvement projects at RCR that may involve various construction/building skills and volunteers or laborers. The Caretaker may be involved in a range of projects in various capacities.

#### **Residency Requirement and Guest Caretaker Program**

The Caretaker resides in the caretaker quarters at RCR. The Caretaker's presence at the Ranch is essential for security purposes, to host visitors and support programs, and to ensure proper operation and maintenance of facilities and systems. SRA recognizes the Caretaker will need time off and time away from the Ranch. To this end, the SRA Management Team will work with the Caretaker to establish a work schedule.

We have a "Guest Caretaker" program whereby experienced individuals are recruited to stay at the Ranch as Guest Caretakers thereby enabling the Caretaker to take scheduled time away. It is expected that the RCR Caretaker will find adequate coverage by Guest Caretakers.

#### **Vehicle Safety Agreement**

This position requires completion of a Vehicle Use Agreement and review of the employee's motor vehicle record. Employees may not drive SRA-owned/leased vehicles, rental cars, or personal vehicles on behalf of the SRA if considered "high risk drivers".

#### **Qualifications**

- Basic repair and maintenance skills.
- Ability to safely operate and maintain gas powered equipment; including lawnmowers, hydraulic wood splitters, weed trimmers and chainsaws.
- Familiarity with alternative power and sustainable living systems a plus.
- Self-starter, quick learner; effective at setting priorities, organizing workload, and meeting deadlines; flexible, detail oriented, able to work well independently and with a team.
- Personal commitment to conservation and recycling.
- Excellent communication skills; ability to interact with guests, co-workers and SRA partners in a respectful, positive manner.
- Work history that includes successful collaboration in a team setting.
- Computer literacy including proficient with Google Suite (Google Mail, Docs, Sheets) and/or Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint).
- Familiarity with or ability to learn various online software and databases including: WordPress, Little Green Light, PayPal Zettle, and various social media platforms.
- Must be comfortable with some solitude in the winter and frequent visitors in the summer.
- Possession of a valid driver's license and current auto insurance is required.

## **ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Ability to use hands, arms, and fingers.
- Ability to bend, reach, stoop and kneel.
- Specific vision ability: close vision, color vision, depth perception.
- Hearing: ability to hear and understand speech and other sounds.
- Ability to speak and impart oral information.
- Ability to walk and stand for periods of up to two hours.
- Ability to lift, carry, push, pull or otherwise move objects up to 25 pounds.
- Ability to climb ladders.

**Physical Work Environment:** Requires working outdoors, possibly in excessive heat, moisture, or cold.