



**SMITH RIVER ALLIANCE**  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**  
January 19, 2023

**TITLE:** Rock Creek Ranch Manager/Caretaker

**TYPE OF POSITION:** Part-Time (average 80-120 hours per month, year-round)

**REPORTS TO:** Co-Executive Directors

**TIMELINE:** Review of applications will begin on February 20, 2023, but the position will remain open until filled.

**COMPENSATION:** Based upon experience

**About Smith River Alliance**

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>.

**Role**

The RCR Manager (also considered the 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 Manager is expected to monitor activities and facilities, greet visitors, provide hospitality support, recruit and support volunteer/service projects, provide a daily presence consistent with mission of SRA, and coordinate the work of staff and vendors as needed.

RCR has a part-time staff of up to four: a manager, operations support staff, and systems advisors. The Manager works closely with the SRA Management Team to prioritize management, maintenance, planning and hosting functions. Depending on skills and experience, the RCR Manager may be involved in reservations and land stewardship projects.

**Essential Functions**

*The Caretaker/Manager works closely with the Management Team to manage, maintain, and host at 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 Manager 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.
  - **Reservation System.** Serve as part of team operating all facets of reservation system; including scheduling reservations and special events, confirming reservations and providing technical support.
  - **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.
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. Operate the sale of Rock Creek Ranch merchandise, including hats and mugs.
  - **Recruit and Manage Volunteers.** Recruit and manage volunteers for work parties; operate the work party calendar; organize and maintain tool storage for easy access by volunteers; maintain tools and recommend replacement as needed.
  - **Manage Guest Caretaker Program.** Recruit and train relief caretakers; update training manual; maintain list of qualified, trained caretakers; and host an annual training, acknowledgment gatherings and maintain, as well as track hours by Guest Caretakers.
  - **Manage and Operate Volunteer Program.** Recruit volunteers, manage database, create calendar offerings, host service projects, as well as track and report hours on database. There are a number of Volunteer leaders who can be recruited for larger projects.
  - **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 Manager/Caretaker will be involved in a range of projects in various capacities.

## **Qualifications**

- Personal commitment to conservation, recycling and teamwork;
- Must be comfortable with some solitude in the winter and frequent visitors in the summer;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Familiarity with alternative power and sustainable living systems a plus;
- Basic carpentry and light repair;
- Computer literacy including proficient with Google Suite (Google Mail, Docs, Sheets) and/or Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint);
- Ability to operate and maintain gas powered equipment; including lawnmowers, hydraulic wood splitters, weed wackers and chainsaws;
- Self-starter, quick learner; effective at setting priorities, organizing workload, and meeting deadlines; flexible, detail oriented, independent worker, and also able to work well with a team; and
- Possession of a valid driver's license and current auto insurance is required.
- Familiarity with various online software and databases is of interest including: WordPress, Little Green Light, PayPal Zettle, and different social media platforms or willing to learn.

**Physical & Mental Requirements of Job:** All job functions listed above involve to a greater or lesser degree the following physical and mental demands: close vision, hearing/listening, clear complete speech, touching, finger & hand dexterity, walking, lifting, carrying, sitting; must be able to lift 25 lbs., perception/comprehension, exceptional judgment and decision-making skills.

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

The Manager will reside in the caretaker quarters. As described above, the Manager'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 Manager will need time-off and time away from the Ranch. To this end, the SRA Management Team will work with the Manager to establish a work schedule.

As noted above, we also have a "Guest Caretaker" program whereby experienced individuals are recruited to stay at the Ranch as Guest Caretakers thereby enabling the Manager to take scheduled time away. During any given year, there are more than a dozen guest caretakers in the program that can assist the manager with coverage of the ranch. It is expected that the RCR Manager will find adequate coverage by Guest Caretakers.

## **Automobile Safety Policy**

This position requires a valid driver's license and compliance with the SRA's Auto Safety Program. Employees may not drive SRA-owned/leased vehicles, rental cars, or personal vehicles on behalf of the SRA if considered "high risk drivers". Employment in this position will be contingent upon completion of a Vehicle Use Agreement, which will include a review of the prospective employee's motor vehicle record.

**Application Procedure:** Please email the following documents to [jobs@smithriveralliance.org](mailto:jobs@smithriveralliance.org)

1. An electronic **resume** (preferably in PDF format) including salary history
2. A **cover letter** (describing your qualifications for this position and interest for working at Rock Creek Ranch)
3. Three professional references