

2012

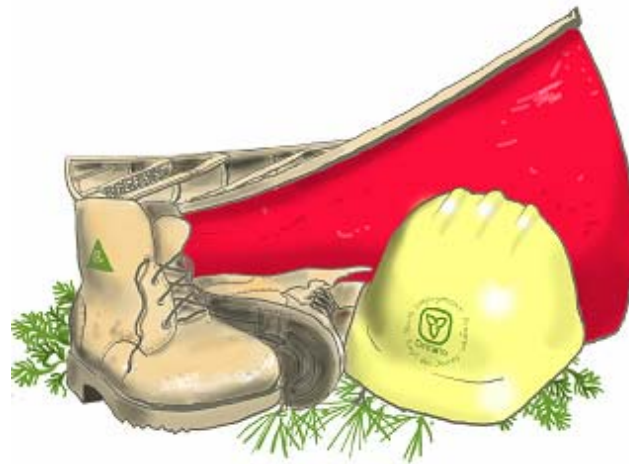
OSR JOB BACKGROUNDER

-North Bay Crew Headquarters-



ONTARIO STEWARDSHIP RANGER

Additional Job Information



A QUICK HISTORY

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) Ontario Stewardship Ranger program is an offshoot of the Ontario Ranger Program which has been operating in Ontario since the 1940's. The biggest difference between Ontario Rangers (OR's) and Ontario Stewardship Rangers (OSR's) is that OR's stay in and work out of summer camps away from home and OSR's arrive to work and go home at the end of each day more like a traditional job.

The OSR program was initiated in the 1990's via Ontario Stewardship as a way of increasing youth employment opportunities in natural resources where they did not exist in southern and central Ontario. Crews are composed of four high school students and an older, more experienced crew leader. OSR teams work on behalf of the local stewardship council on the council's work plan as well as on MNR directed and joint partner projects. The success of the program has been so resounding that teams have since been added to northern Ontario locations even where there are no stewardship councils present. They have also been funded by external partners in some regions.

Just what is Ontario Stewardship? Ontario Stewardship is a program of the MNR which includes approximately 46 community stewardship councils throughout the province. It is unique because councils are non-government organizations *influenced* rather than *controlled* by government. The MNR provides a staff person known as a Stewardship Coordinator to work on behalf of both the MNR and the Council to facilitate the arrangement, help plan and work towards mutual goals. Councils themselves are made up of volunteers. They work to partner in projects that make a practical difference to Ontario's natural and environmental resources at the local level. The Stewardship Ranger program is one of these projects.

In the North Bay District, the council acting as project lead for the OSR program is known as the Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council.

THE EMPLOYER

Depending on one's perspective, OSR teams can be seen to be working for the local stewardship council, community, partners or the government. The employer of record is however the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. If you are considering a career with the Ontario Government, Ranger positions can count towards your years of service, employee pension and of course your Canada pension (which is admittedly a long way off for 17-year olds). Ranger positions are a good start to a career in natural resources.

COMPENSATION/CONTRACTUAL/WORKPLACE INFORMATION

Age Requirement

There is a specific age requirement for OSR's. Applicants must turn 17 years old during the year of employment (not necessarily the contract period). In the event that insufficient applications are received, 16 year-olds and 18-year olds may be considered.

Citizenship Requirement

Applicants and employees, must be Canadian citizens and residents of Ontario. Applicants who have been residing in this province for less than 6 months will still be considered to meet the requirements.

Compensation Rate

As noted in the job ad, Rangers earn minimum wage. It's safe to say that you will not get rich working as an OSR, but that can also be said for most any position in natural resource management. A career in resource management is a choice of lifestyle vs a financial decision.

Additional Benefits

To complement the rate of pay, OSR's receive a variety of training, diverse work experience and some excellent life experience and educational opportunities. Rangers also often find that they've made some life-long friends by the time the summer comes to an end.

Length of Contract

The contract is for the months of July and August (approximately 8 weeks). Start date usually is dependent on placement of the calendar placement of the holiday and in some years may even be in June.

Work Week

The work week is generally Monday to Friday, a 5-day work week with Saturdays and Sunday's off. This is subject to change dependent upon the work schedule and Rangers may be required to or may choose to work the occasional weekend.

Hours of Work

Hours of work are 7.25 hours per day, generally 8:30-4:30. Some Crew Leads and crews will adjust the start and stop times depending upon such things as temperature, travel times etc. There is no compensation for overtime and the work week may be adjusted for additional hours worked (time off in lieu).

Payment Method

Wages are received bi-weekly through direct deposit ONLY. Rangers must have an active bank account, providing account information and either a void cheque or bank deposit form to MNR payroll staff upon hire.

Documentation to be Provided

Rangers must have a Social Insurance Number (SIN) upon hire and be able to provide/show the original to MNR payroll staff. Employees new to the workforce may obtain a SIN card by contacting a Service Canada Information Centre.

Rangers must provide/show other proof of identity including their birth certificate and valid photo ID (such as a driver's license, health card or passport) prior to signing contract papers.

Work Location

The headquarter office for the MNR/Nipissing Council's program is the Ministry of Natural Resources District Office at 3301 Trout Lake Road in North Bay.

Crew Composition

The Ontario Government is an equal opportunity employer and for teams/experience positions such as these, crews are usually made up of 2 boys and 2 girls + an older Crew Leader (usually college/university aged student or recent graduate). Final composition is however dependent upon the applications received and the results of the interviews.

REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT A RANGER WILL NEED

Due to the short-term/introductory nature of the contract, work gear of a personal nature is not supplied by the MNR or the Stewardship Council.

The following identifies personal equipment which will both be needed and considered optional for students hired as Rangers.

Required Equipment

- Sleeping bag
- 55-85 litre capacity backpack (65 litres is ideal)
- Sunglasses

- CSA approved steel-toed leather or composite work boots which are atleast 8" high at the heel and the leather must completely cover the ankle. Boots should have an aggressive/outdoor tread. Steel toed shoes are not acceptable.
- A GOOD quality rain suit; including jacket *and* pants
- Appropriate work clothing
- Rubber boots
- One water bottle with a 1-litre capacity

Optional/Recommended Equipment

- Pocket or belt knife
- Fitted leather work gloves
- Tilley style hat
- A self-inflating camp mattress or pad

Approximate cost of all this equipment can range between \$300 and \$500 depending on the quality of the equipment purchased.

Other than clothing or personally fitted equipment, students may wish to consider borrowing some of the above items from family or friends to reduce their costs.

Possessing the above equipment is not a pre-requisite to applying or being hired, but students are expected to have the required equipment shortly after the first day on the job.

Students are encouraged to wait until they have been hired before buying *any* of the required or optional equipment. If students are unfamiliar with these types of outdoor equipment they are very strongly encouraged to wait until the first week of their contract (which is all training/no field work) so that they may discuss their needs in relation to the equipment (and costs) with the Crew Leader.

All other gear/equipment/safety articles deemed necessary than that noted above will be supplied by the employer, stewardship council and/or partner.

GUIDELINES AND RULES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STEWARDSHIP RANGERS

Because Rangers are employees of the Ontario Government and in the interest of promoting teamwork and a strong work ethic, the following list of general rules and guidelines apply to staff hired:

- Firearms shall not be brought to work
- Personal cell phones should not be brought to work, but if are brought will be powered-off during the work day. The OSR Crew Leader & team members have access to communications for work and emergency purposes
- Rangers are to ensure Parents/Guardians are aware of start/stop times/work locations and overnight trips

- Overnight trips require parental consent and Rangers must show up to work with forms signed by a Parent or Guardian
- Rangers will dress in a professional manner while at work -meaning hats are on straight, clothing fits/ is appropriate and no gang colours/articles of gang affiliation or support are to be displayed
- Rangers will treat each other, members of the public and partners professionally and with respect. Discrimination and inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated
- Rangers will work in a safe manner looking out for their own well-being as well as the well-being of the people they are working alongside of

WORKING CONDITIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF STEWARDSHIP RANGERS TO BE AWARE OF

Applicants and Hired Rangers should:

- Ensure they have reliable transportation to and from work
- Be able to and arrive at work on time at the designated headquarters
- Be ready to work at the designated start time
- Be prepared to work unusual or long hours as required
- Know that compensation for overtime is not available and as such, Rangers may be compensated by other means for extra time worked, ie time off in lieu
- Understand that work is primarily field work (outside)
- Understand that much of the work is of a physical nature
- Be prepared to work in inclement (bad) weather
- Be able to work effectively amongst bugs, i.e. mosquito's and black flies
- Understand the requirement of and be available for overnight trips (as directed by the schedule) which are spent away from home and generally in tents. Overnight trips can be frequent throughout the summer
- Know that they are expected to sign a release form allowing the MNR to use photographs taken throughout the summer in promotional materials/reports.
- Understand that they will have to fill out medical and emergency contact forms and that the Crew Leader, Stewardship Coordinator and Supervisors will have access to this information to ensure the safety of the employee.
- Be able to work in a team environment. Teams are made up of 4 Crew Members and a Crew Lead

TRAINING RECEIVED BY STEWARDSHIP RANGERS

Training provided typically includes:

- An Orientation to the Ministry of Natural Resources
- Health and Safety Training
- Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Training (WDHP)
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)
- Standard First Aid and CPR Training Courses

- Pleasure Craft Operators Card Training
- Driving on Gravel Roads Training
- Bear Awareness Training
- Basic Bushcraft
- Practical Boat Operations Training
- Chemical Handling
- Young Workers Safety
- TRAUMA Crash Course
- Canoe Safety
- Orienteering & GPS/GIS system Training
- Transportation of Dangerous Goods
- Radio Operations & Protocols

Some of the above noted training is certificate training and some is workplace/work environment training.

Where opportunities may exist to provide specific training for a student who has a career interest in natural resources or environmental management, the OSR Crew Leader will make an effort to incorporate that training into the work plan if at all possible.

WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS CAN YOU EXPECT TO BE WORKING ON AS AN ONTARIO STEWARDSHIP RANGER?

Projects vary from year to year dependent upon the stewardship council's work plan and project opportunities with the MNR and other partners.

Stewardship Ranger Teams work on meaningful projects with a direct or indirect benefit to Ontario's Natural Resources. Because the program works with young/generally inexperienced workers, an emphasis is placed upon safety as well as the educational/experience building aspects of the job.

A typical summer program for an Ontario Stewardship Ranger Team can include the following:

Waterfowl Banding



Radio Telemetry of Species at Risk



Assisting at the Local Fish Culture Station (Fish Hatchery)



Backcountry Canoe Route Cleanups



Electrofishing



Clean Ups of Beaches, Parks & Public Land



Plantation Management



Collecting/Updating Computer Mapping Information



Trail Construction & Maintenance



Tree Planting



Helping Out At Wildlife Rehabilitation Centres



Provincial Park Maintenance Work



Building & Installing Duck/Bat Boxes



Fisheries Assessments



Community Outreach Efforts



Restoring Rare Ecosystems



ADDITIONALLY, A SUMMER JOB AS A STEWARDSHIP RANGER CAN EXPOSE YOU TO PEOPLE, PLACES, FISH & WILDLIFE, LANDSCAPES, EXPERIENCES AND EVENTS YOU MAY OTHERWISE NEVER GET A CHANCE TO SEE.





Are you interested in getting paid to do this?

Take a position as an Ontario Stewardship Ranger
It just might be the best summer job you'll ever have!