

# Volunteer-In-Parks Handbook



Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore

2026

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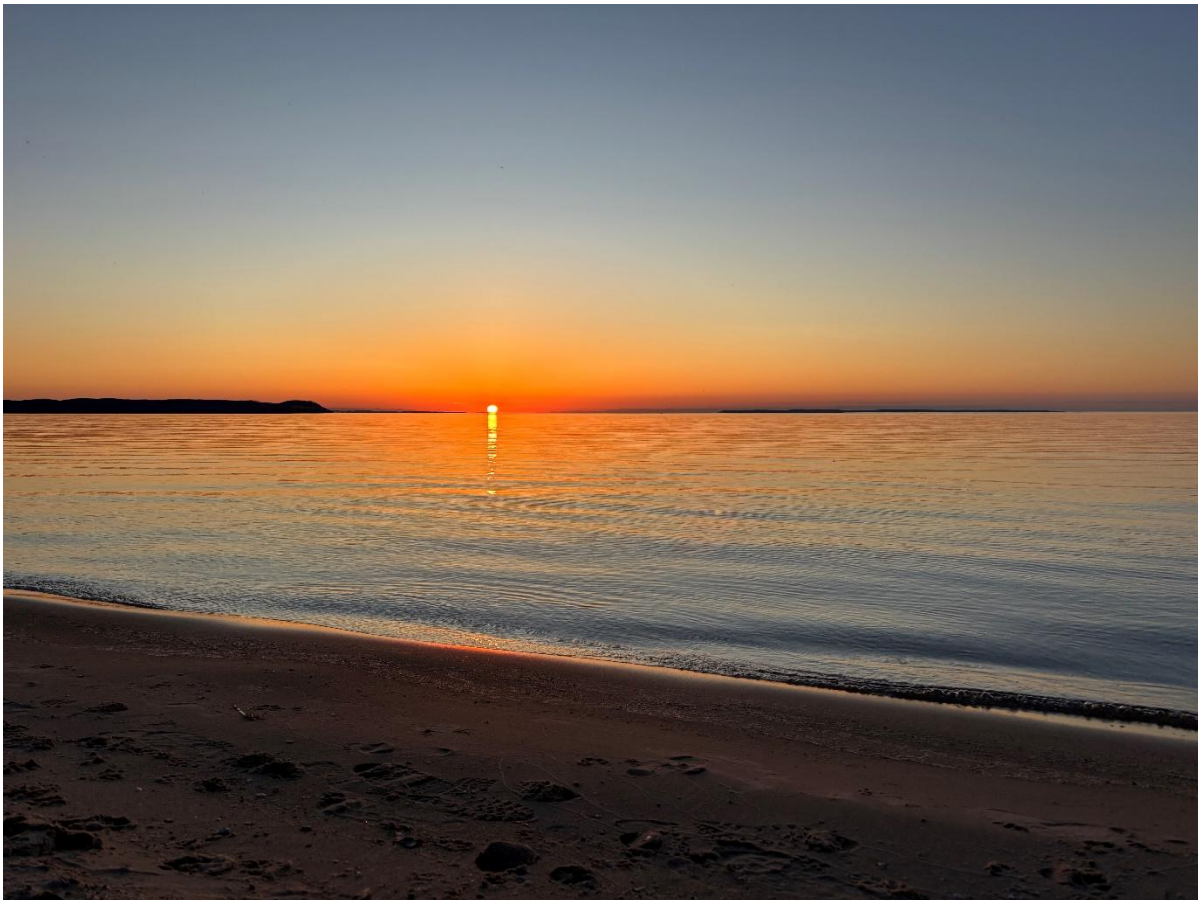
# Important Park Contact Info

Volunteer Coordinator: [SLBE\\_Volunteer@nps.gov](mailto:SLBE_Volunteer@nps.gov)

Main Park Phone Number: (231) 326-4700

## Important Park Addresses:

<b>Philip A. Hart Visitor Center &amp; Park Administration Offices</b>	9922 Front Street	Empire	49630
<b>D.H. Day Campground</b>	8010 West Harbor Hwy	Glen Arbor	49636
<b>Platte River Campground</b>	5685 Lake Michigan Rd.	Honor	49640
<b>Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive</b>	8500 Stocking Drive	Empire	49630
<b>Dune Climb</b>	6748 Dune Hwy/M-109	Glen Arbor	49636
<b>Glen Haven Historic District</b>	5289 Glen Haven Rd.	Glen Arbor	49636
<b>Maritime Museum</b>	8799 Sleeping Bear Rd.	Glen Arbor	49636
<b>Port Oneida Rural Historic District &amp; Port Oneida Heritage Center</b>	3164 W. Harbor Hwy.	Maple City	49664





## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore  
9922 Front St. (Hwy M-72)  
Empire, Michigan 49630-9797

**THANK YOU** for volunteering at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore! Your support and hard work does not go unnoticed.

Volunteers are a vital part of the success of park operations. When you agree to share your talents and skills with us, we know that you are offering a very valuable resource – your time. It is our goal to create opportunities that are mutually beneficial to volunteers and the NPS, in order to achieve our mission. As a member of the Sleeping Bear Dunes team, you are part of a group of people who strive to preserve treasured resources and provide visitors with an educational and enjoyable experience.

This Volunteer Handbook will provide you with an overview of the NPS and Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. It will also help you gain a better understanding of your rights and responsibilities as a NPS and Lakeshore Volunteer. It should also answer many questions you may have about volunteering here.

Please contact us anytime with questions or concerns. Your suggestions on how to improve the volunteer program are always welcome.

Sincerely,

Scott Tucker  
Superintendent  
231.326.4704  
Scott\_Tucker@nps.gov

Kelly Morrissey  
Volunteer Coordinator  
231.326.4729  
SLBE\_Volunteer@nps.gov

## National Park Service – A Background

On **August 25th, 1916**, President Woodrow Wilson signed an Organic Act, establishing the National Park Service (NPS), a new federal bureau in the Department of the Interior. The NPS would be responsible for managing 35 existing National Parks and Monuments, as well as those yet to be established.



The NPS Mission is stated in the Organic Act:

*“the Service thus established shall promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations...by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of the said parks, monuments and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”*

The National Park Service **preserves** unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The NPS strives to meet this original mission, while filling new roles as well: guardian of diverse cultural and recreational resources; world leader in the parks and preservation community; environmental advocate; and pioneer in the drive to protect America’s open space. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

### National Park Service Values

**Shared Stewardship**- a commitment to resource stewardship & the global preservation community.

**Excellence** – continually learn and improve so that we may achieve the highest ideals of public service.

**Integrity** – we deal honestly and fairly with the public and one another.

**Tradition** – we are proud of it; we learn from it; we are not bound by it.

**Respect** – we embrace each other’s differences so that we may enrich the well-being of everyone.

# Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Significance

Our mission is contained within the establishing legislation, signed into law on October 21, 1970.

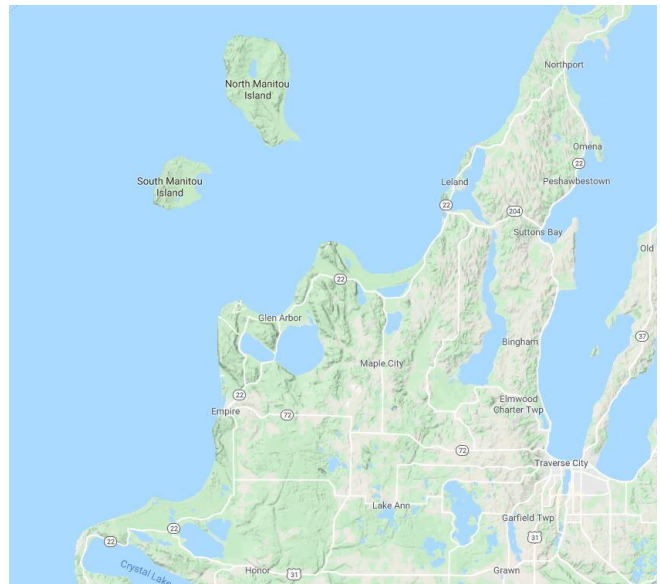
*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America; the Congress finds that certain outstanding natural features, including forests, beaches, dune formations, and ancient glacial phenomena, exist along the mainland shore of Lake Michigan and on certain nearby islands in Benzie and Leelanau" Counties, Michigan, and that such features ought to be preserved in their natural setting and protected from developments and uses which would destroy the scenic beauty and natural character of the area. In order to accomplish this purpose for the benefit, inspiration, education, recreation, and enjoyment of the public. In carrying out the provisions of this Act, the Secretary shall administer and protect the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in a manner which provides for recreational opportunities consistent with the maximum protection of the natural environment within the area.*

## Significance worthy of a Congressional Act

*The compactly grouped features of continental glaciations including post-glacial shoreline adjustment, ridge / swale complex, wind-formed dunes, perched dunes, and examples of associated plant succession. These features are of global importance due to their relatively unimpacted state, the variety of features present, and their proximity to one another.*

*The collection of historic landscapes maritime, agricultural, and recreational in the National Lakeshore is of a size and quality unsurpassed on the Great Lakes and rare elsewhere on the United States' coastline.*

*Native plant and animal communities, especially the northern hardwoods, coastal forests, dune communities, and interdunal wetlands, are of a scale and quality that is rare on the Great Lakes shoreline. These relatively intact communities afford an opportunity for continuation of the ecological processes that have shaped them.*

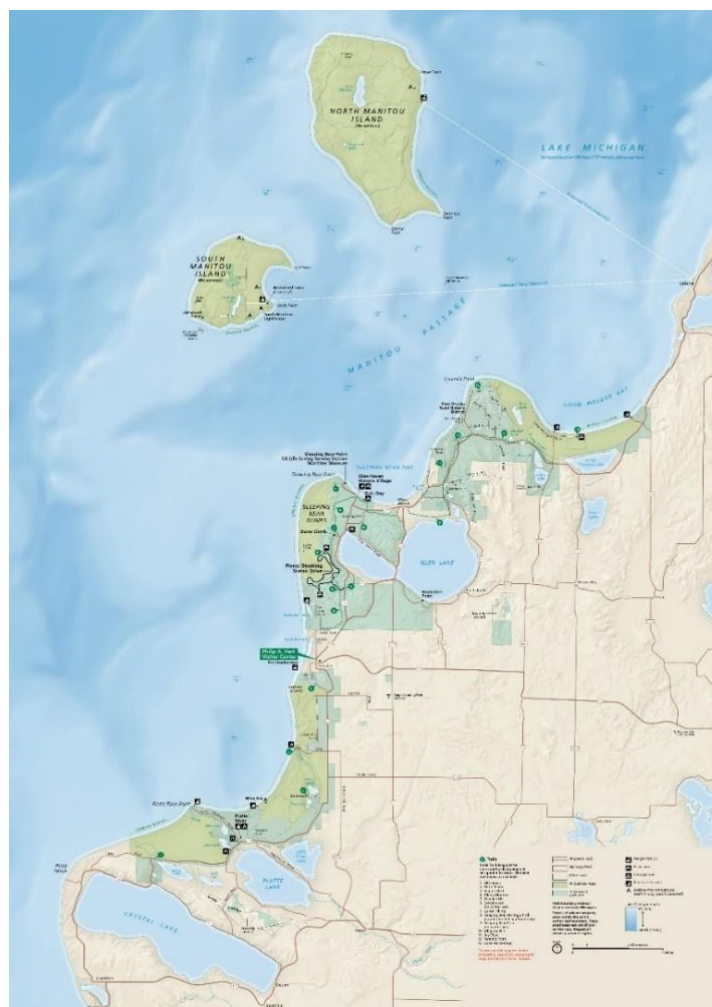


## Park Interpretive Themes:

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- The tall dunes and dramatic sweep of Lake Michigan shoreline at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, along with other more subtle glacial features, provide an outstanding illustration of glaciation and help people discover and understand the continually evolving surface of the Earth and how it influences the environment in which we live today.

- The spectacular, yet accessible, wilderness, sublime landscapes, and the beauty of Lake Michigan at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore beckon to all who seek opportunities for exploration, discovery, recreation, and solitude that fulfill the human need for inspiration and renewal through connection to the land.
- The diversity of landscapes and structures at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, including the towering sand dunes with a “cap” of trees called by the region’s Anishinabek people “Misha Mokwa” (Great Bear), illustrates the rich American Indian, maritime, agricultural, and recreational history of the area and provides an opportunity to understand and appreciate the traditions, struggles, resourcefulness, and heroism of the people who have lived here using the abundant natural resources for food, shelter, clothing, and commerce.
- The diverse post-glacial landscapes protected by Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore support relatively intact, but fragile, native plant and animal communities that continue to be shaped by natural ecological processes, affording people the opportunity to understand, cherish, and help save the rapidly vanishing natural heritage of the Great Lakes shoreline.



## By the Numbers:



### Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore

- Established: 10/21/1970
- Acres: 71,318
- Miles of Shoreline: 65 (35 on mainland)
- Visitation: 1,601,747 (2025)
- Miles of Trails: 108
- Inland Lakes: 26
- Average Summertime Temps (F): 77 / 58
- Employees: ~130
- Volunteer #/Hours: 1769 / 54,742 (2025)
- Budget: 4,693,000 (2026)

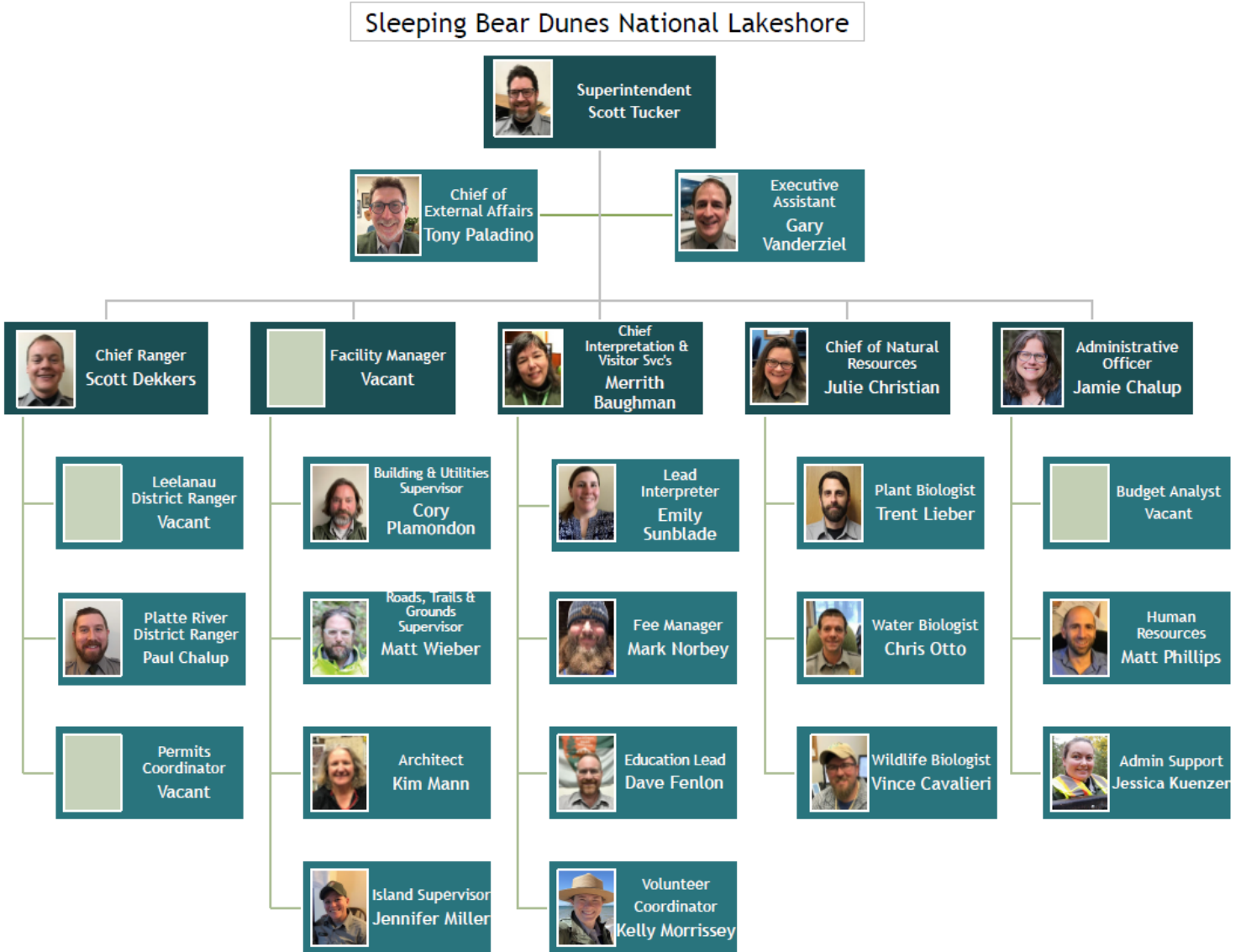
How do I volunteer?

**--Contact the VIP inbox, [slbe\\_volunteer@nps.gov](mailto:slbe_volunteer@nps.gov)**

### National Park Service

- Established: 8/25/1916
- Units: 430+
- Acres: over 85 Million
- Visitation: 331M (2024)
- Employees: ~20,000
- Budget: \$3.57B (2025)
- Volunteers: 131,000+ (2025)
- How to get a job? [usajobs.gov](https://www.usajobs.gov)

# Organization Chart



# About the Volunteers-In-Parks Program



Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore welcomes you to the Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP) program! Volunteers perform services in all areas of the park and are a valuable addition to staff. This handbook is meant to serve as an overview and guide to the program. It includes information about the park, the National Park Service, and VIP policies and procedures. Used in conjunction with an orientation to the park and specific on-the-job training, it will provide you with all the information needed to get started.

## Mission Statement

The mission of all volunteer programs with the National Park Service is to accomplish Park goals through mutually beneficial volunteer experiences. Expanding on this, the mission of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Volunteer Program is to inspire people of all ages and backgrounds to participate in the enjoyment and preservation of the park and build a sustainable community of Park stewards.

## What is the Volunteers-In-Parks Program?

The Volunteers-in-Parks Program was authorized by Congress to provide ways for people to assist in National Parks. Hundreds of thousands of individuals have worn the official VIP Patch! 138,000 in 2024 alone!

As a volunteer, you are not paid by the Federal Government. You do, however, have the benefit of connecting with people from all around the world, developing skills, increasing knowledge, and sharing in a one-of-a-kind service experience that we hope will enrich your life and support you in present and future endeavors.

To accomplish its goals of preservation and education, the National Park Service relies on the efforts of many volunteers. The program was authorized by Public Law 91-357, enacted in 1970. Its purpose is to provide a venue through which the NPS can accept and utilize voluntary services from the public. A main objective of the program is to utilize the support in ways that are beneficial to both the National Park Service and the volunteer.

## Who Can Volunteer?

Anyone can volunteer, although some positions require special skills and training. When youth younger than 18 years old volunteer, they need written consent from a parent or legal guardian. Certain limitations and restrictions are imposed on people who have criminal records, and some sensitive positions require security background checks. NPS employees may also volunteer as long as it is outside the scope of their regular duties. Volunteers are accepted without regard to race, creed, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

Volunteering is a tradition that has made an immeasurable contribution to communities, organizations, and individuals throughout the country. Today's volunteers are active, dynamic, creative individuals of all ages who possess the skills, desire, patience, and time to accomplish a wide variety of tasks. National Park VIPs are, without a doubt, Very Important People! They help to preserve and protect America's cultural and natural heritage for the enjoyment of this and future generations. Young and old alike give of their time and expertise to assist paid staff in achieving a national mission.

## NPS Roles:

### *Volunteer Coordinator*

Kelly Morrissey is the Park's Volunteer Coordinator and is responsible for overall management and administration of the Sleeping Bear Dunes' VIP program.

### *Volunteer Supervisors*

Each volunteer activity is supervised by a park employee from the appropriate division or a partner representative. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring their VIPs understand the job descriptions, safety precautions, providing park/job-specific training and orientation, setting schedules, and reporting volunteer hours to the coordinator.

## Our Significant Park Volunteer Program Partners:



### **Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes (FOSBD)**

**Mission:** Protecting resources and heightening visitor experiences in partnership with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

In 2024, FOSBD dedicated over 13,000 volunteer hours and more than \$300,000 in funds to help complete park projects, maintain trails, provide accessible spaces and mobility tools for visitors with all abilities, and connect with visitors to enhance safe visitation.

FOSBD has a number of volunteer opportunities available so anyone can help! Volunteers help to maintain the nearly 53 miles of trails, 35 miles of beach, two rivers and the lakes within the park. They provide safety and trail information, lead accessibility efforts in the park, and manage many other supportive programs. FOSBD also has many roles facilitating educational programs or administrative duties for the organization that aren't physical in nature such as grant writing, finance committee members, fundraising and communications.

For more information about FOSB: <https://www.friendsofsleepingbear.org/>

### **Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear (PHSB)**

**Mission:** To preserve and interpret the historic buildings, landscapes and stories, and provide heritage experiences for visitor and community enrichment.

Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear raises funds as a philanthropic partner of the national lakeshore. With those funds PHSB restores farmhouses, log cabins, barns, inns, windows, orchards and more. PHSB also directly funds needs that the Park requests. There are 366 historic structures and landscapes representing the late 1800s and early 1900s. As a nonprofit 501c 3 organization, PHSB relies on donations, grants, corporate sponsors and earned income and in their 25th year celebrated \$2,000,000 of value in cash, cash-in-kind, in-kind services and volunteer hours.

For more information about PHSB: <https://phsb.org/>



# Ways to Get Involved



## Adopt-a-Beach:

The Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes in cooperation with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore manage this program. Volunteers make five clean-up visits per year. These visits will usually occur once a month during spring through early autumn.

## Adopt-a-Building/Farm:

Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear, in cooperation with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, manages this program. Volunteers monitor their adopted historic buildings or farmstead once or twice each month in spring, summer, fall, and if possible, winter, to report animal entry, evidence of intrusions, and features needing immediate repair.

## Adopt-a-Landscape:

Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear, in cooperation with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, manages this program.

Garden - Volunteers help with flower and/or vegetable gardens at

historic sites.

Orchard – Volunteers help prune historic orchards– especially in the Port Oneida Rural Historic District. Must have attended at least one Pruning Workshop at Sleeping Bear Dunes to obtain the required training or provide other certification.

Field Restoration – Volunteers monitor and remove invasive and non-native vegetation by various means, including mowing, to maintain the boundaries and fields of historic farms, once a month in the spring, summer and fall.

## Adopt-a-River:

The Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes in cooperation with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore manage this program. This group provides regular monitoring and clean-up of the two rivers within the park (Platte and Crystal). Volunteers must commit to patrolling a river segment about once each month during the spring, summer and fall.

## Adopt-a-Trail:

The Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes in cooperation with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore manage this program. This group provides regular monitoring and clean-up of the 105 miles of trails within the park. Volunteers must commit to hiking individual trails about once each month during the spring, summer and fall.

## Bark Ranger:

This volunteer opportunity is managed by the Natural Resources - Wildlife Division, and volunteers work throughout the park. The purpose of the program is to expand our education and outreach opportunities to the public with Bark Rangers (dogs) and their owners as Sleeping Bear Dunes Ambassadors. Specialized training is required prior to performing this volunteer duty.

## Blacksmith:

This position is assigned to the Interpretive & Visitor Services Division, and the work is performed in Glen Haven. Duties include demonstrating the work of blacksmith by forging and repairing variety of metal articles. Specialized training is required prior to performing this duty.

#### Bot Squad:

This volunteer opportunity is managed by the Natural Resources - Wildlife Division, and volunteers work throughout shorelines within the park. The purpose of the program is to conduct data gathering, monitor for deceased birds and remove carcasses as needed. Specialized training is required prior to performing this volunteer duty.

#### Campground Host at DH Day:

This position is assigned to the Fees Division (Leelanau district), and the work is performed at DH Day Campground, near Glen Arbor. Duties include assisting rangers in the office, patrolling the campground and cleaning sites upon visitor check-out.

#### Campground Host at Platte River:

This position is assigned to the Fees Division (Platte district), and the work is performed at Platte River Campground, near Honor. Duties include assisting rangers in the office, patrolling the campground and cleaning sites upon visitor check-out.

#### Historic Preservation:

Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear, in cooperation with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, manages this program. Volunteers help repair or restore some of the 366 historic structures in the park, from log cabins and farmhouses to barns and outbuildings on the mainland and North Manitou Island. Group projects are offered each spring/summer/fall, typically over a long weekend. Opportunities exist for small projects on an individual/flexible basis.

#### Interpreter—Glen Haven Museums:

This position is assigned to the Interpretive & Visitor Services Division, and the work is performed at the Maritime Museum and Cannery and Boat Museum. Duties include assisting with all operations including opening/closing buildings, light maintenance, talks, demonstrations and informal contacts.

#### Interpreter—Philip A. Hart Visitor Center:

This position is assigned to the Interpretive & Visitor Services Division, and the work is performed at the Philip A. Hart Visitor Center in Empire. Duties include assisting with visitor orientation, trip planning, and informal interpretation.

#### Interpreters and Docents – Port Oneida Farms Heritage Center:

Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear, in cooperation with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, manages this program. Docent duties include greeting visitors, providing visitors with information, sharing the history of Port Oneida, and sales. Interpreters give various tours of historic sites or demonstrate a traditional craft/skill.

#### Natural Resources:

This position is assigned to the Natural Resources Division, and the work is performed throughout the park including the Manitou Islands. Duties may include working with wildlife, plants and water quality in such a way as to preserve and protect the resources of the park, consistent with enabling legislation.

#### Photographer:

This position is assigned to the Interpretive & Visitor Services Division, and the work is performed throughout the park. Duties include documenting resources, visitors, Park facilities, construction, and special projects. These photographs can then be used for publicity, interpretive programs, documentation, and historical record.

### Preventative Search and Rescue (PSAR):

This position is assigned to the Protective-Ranger Division, and the work is performed in high-use and high-response areas of the park. The purpose of this program is to reduce rescue calls to these areas through educational contacts with visitors. Specialized training is required prior to performing this duty.

### Sleeping Bear Dunes Heritage Trail - Ambassador:

The Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes in cooperation with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore manage this program. The purpose of this program is to make educational and outreach contacts with visitors using the trail.

### Sleeping Bear Dunes Heritage Trail - Trail Crew:

The Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes in cooperation with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore manage this program. This group of volunteers perform maintenance and grooming on the SBHT. Specialized training is required prior to performing this duty.

### Track Chair/Wheelchair Bike Ambassador:

The Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes in cooperation with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore manage this program. The purpose of this program is to enhance the experience for mobility challenged visitors through the use of the Track Chair and/or Wheelchair Bike. Specialized training is required prior to performing this duty.

### North Manitou Island:

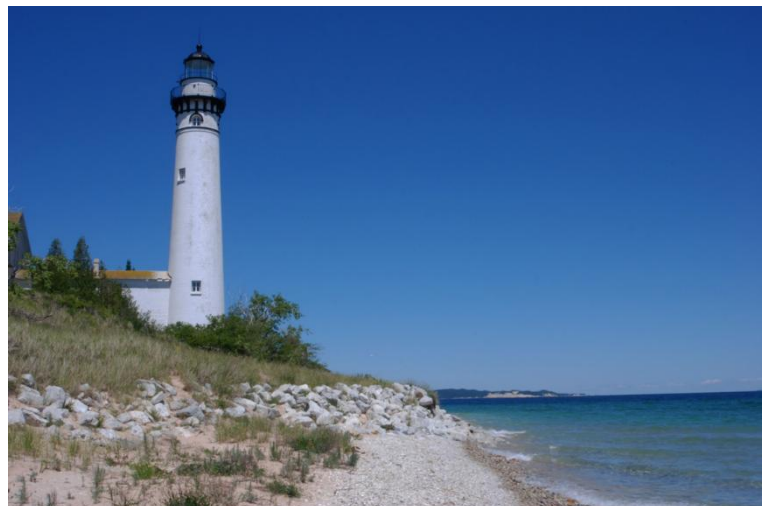
Opportunities available include: window restoration, back country trail maintenance and cleanup, visitor contacts and opening/closing the island for the season. Some of these opportunities may require specialized training.

### South Manitou Island:

Opportunities available include: mowing, village maintenance, trail maintenance and cleanup, visitor contacts and opening/closing the island for the season, and SMI Lighthouse Keeper. Some of these opportunities may require specialized training.

### Note:

The SLBE Volunteer Program will be transitioning to using Volunteer.gov. In the future, many of these opportunities will be available to apply for on Volunteer.gov. Volunteers will also sign their Volunteer Service Agreement and complete most required paperwork for Onboarding through the Volunteer.gov portal once the Park's Volunteer Program has made the transition.





## Getting Started – How to Become a Volunteer

Explore our opportunities above or contact us to learn more. Most of our positions do not require formal application. Simply contact us and we will find your place in the park.

**Email us at [slbe\\_volunteer@nps.gov](mailto:slbe_volunteer@nps.gov).**

Prospective volunteers are processed through the Volunteer Coordinator and forwarded to Park Supervisors or Park Partners who coordinate our initiatives. A volunteer must be capable of following all supervisory directives and performing his or her job successfully.

Each volunteer must have:

- A basic orientation
- An identified Volunteer Supervisor
- An identified Service Description (that includes Safety Messaging)
- A **Current** Volunteer Service Agreement (Form 301A) **updated and re-signed annually.**

The Volunteer Service Agreement (Appendix 1) is for your protection and is the single most important document that you will complete as a volunteer. It must list your job duties and safety considerations. You should also have a detailed Service Description (Appendix 2) attached to your Volunteer Service Agreement that explains your job duties and any required training. Your Volunteer Supervisor will brief you, and give you copies of the position's full description. You and your supervisor must agree on these details. Your duties should not go beyond those agreed upon and documented. If your duties change, you should sign a new Service Description listing those duties and any additional training more specifically and attach it to your Volunteer Service Agreement. Without a complete Volunteer Service Agreement, you will not be covered for workers' compensation or tort claims. Volunteer supervisors are required to provide each VIP with a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) that holds specific safety information applicable to the Service Description.

It is imperative that each VIP has a current Volunteer Service Agreement and is operating under the written job description that contains specific information on the type of work he or she is assigned to do. This is necessary in case questions arise about whether a VIP was acting within his or her assigned responsibilities, especially if an injury occurs. Volunteers should have access to their Service Description and may ask their Volunteer Supervisor for a copy at any time. Your Service Description should be reviewed and updated annually to reflect all aspects of the work you are assigned to do. By signing a VIP Agreement, you acknowledge that the park may need to perform a background check to authorize you to perform duties depending upon the type of work you will perform.

### Orientation & Training

All new volunteers will receive a basic park and/or job orientation from their Volunteer Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator prior to beginning work. Volunteer Supervisors will also work with the volunteer to obtain any required training.

# Volunteer Uniform Requirements

The uniform designates you as an official volunteer for the National Park Service and all volunteers should be readily identifiable while working. This can be accomplished by wearing any part of a volunteer uniform (hat, shirt, vest, nametag.) Wearing the uniform only while traveling to/from and while actively volunteering helps maintain the integrity and purpose of the volunteer role.

If you are volunteering in a long-term position, you will need a volunteer uniform.

## Distribution:

- Volunteer uniforms are distributed according to the season and by position. Uniforms for specific positions will be decided by supervisors working with the Volunteer Coordinator on specific needs.
- VIPs in long-term, regularly scheduled public facing positions will receive a VIP ball cap, volunteer uniform shirts (2), a fleece jacket, and a name tag with a lanyard.
- VIPs in short-term or irregularly scheduled positions will receive a volunteer vest.
- VIPs need to provide their own pants, skirts, or shorts, with the following guidelines: solid colored, blue jean or earth-toned (not green to avoid staff appearance), clean, no rips and conservative. Shoes need to be close-toed and appropriate for the environment.
- Additional NPS Volunteer Items may be purchased with your own money from [The Arrowhead Store](#). Items **must have** the NPS Volunteer Logo. Items branded with the NPS Arrowhead that NPS staff wear are **not allowed to be worn**.

## Uniform Appearance:

Uniformed volunteers are in the public eye and, therefore, have a responsibility to present a professional image for the National Park Service and Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

- Uniforms should be free of wrinkles, stains and rips, with a clean, crisp appearance with no offensive odors at the start of your shift.
- Any non-Park provided clothing items should also be clean, free of wrinkles, rips and stains, and free of any inappropriate or political slogans or images.
- Volunteers may not wear any part of the NPS staff uniform.



Be sure to wear your uniform items while volunteering so you will be recognized by Park staff and visitors.

## Uniform Responsibility

- While in uniform, volunteers are specifically prohibited from purchasing or consuming alcoholic beverages or tobacco, gambling, sleeping, and participating in or attending any demonstration or public event wherein the wearing of the uniform could be constructed as agency support for a particular issue, position, or political party.
- No volunteer shall be in possession of a firearm while volunteering or while in uniform.

## Uniform Issue/Check-out:

Uniforms will be issued by the Volunteer Coordinator and tracked.

If you resign or your volunteer service is terminated by the park for any reason, you must return your uniform items to your Volunteer Supervisor or to the Volunteer Coordinator. Additionally, you can exchange a worn out or damaged uniform item any time.

## Tracking and Reporting Your Volunteer Hours

### Why is this important?

Each year, the federal government allocates an annual budget that is used to pay for items needed to maintain the Park's justification for the VIP Program. These include uniforms, field equipment, office supplies, recognition awards, special events, essential training, and volunteer enrichment.

To maintain our VIP Program justification, we must account for all volunteers and all service hours. Maintaining accurate, up-to-date records of VIP hours helps Park managers evaluate how to effectively support and meet the needs of our volunteers and their supervisors. In addition, reporting hours makes you part of the Park's Awards Recognition Program.

Each VIP is required to report service hours worked to his or her Volunteer Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator. At the end of each government fiscal year (10/1/year – 9/30/year), the Volunteer Coordinator submits an Annual Activity and Expense Report to offices in Washington, DC. This report includes the number of VIPs, and their hours served.

The Volunteer Coordinator manages a database that accurately shows VIP hours earned. This allows the park to say 'thank you' by hosting an annual Volunteer Appreciation Night.

### Volunteer Timesheets

A timesheet (hours log) is available through your Volunteer Supervisor or from the Park's Volunteer Coordinator. If your position also requires a work order number, you will obtain that from your Volunteer Supervisor. A sample hours tracking sheet is also provided in Appendix C. Once completed, your time sheet may be emailed, mailed, or interoffice mailed to the Volunteer Coordinator and/or your supervisor.

**\* Submit your time sheet or hours log to the Volunteer Coordinator and/or your direct supervisor monthly.**

## Awards and Recognition

SLBE could not do what it does without Volunteers like you! Recognition is an important part of the volunteer program, and we look forward to showing our appreciation to our volunteers. A Volunteer Appreciation Night is hosted annually during July or August to recognize Park volunteers.

In addition, each VIP reaching the following milestones is awarded the following:

- All active volunteers are eligible for a free Sleeping Bear Dunes annual pass sticker, picked up at the visitor center desk (value \$45).
- Volunteers with 250 hours (cumulative) or subsequent multiples of 250 (i.e. 500/750/etc.) may submit a request to the Volunteer Coordinator and are sent the America the Beautiful volunteer pass. This is an annual pass good on almost all federal lands (value \$80). One per year.
- VIPs with 500 hours may request and get a brass name tag.
- VIP's that accumulate 1,000 hours, and subsequent 1,000-hour intervals get a tab that goes under the name tag, that denotes (x)000 hours.



## Procedure for Requesting 250 Hour America the Beautiful Pass:

- Please submit a request via email to **SLBE\_Volunteer@NPS.gov** that documents your achievement of 250 hours, or cumulative multiples of 250 hours (500,750 etc.). This request should also include a current mailing address.
- It is recommended that volunteers make copies of and keep a file of their time sheets.
- Upon verification of the 250 hours or multiples, the Volunteer Coordinator will mail the pass to you. If you are local and would like to pick up the pass, arrangement can be made with the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Passes will have the volunteer's name written and hole punched for the month the pass was requested prior to being sent or picked up.
- Volunteers are eligible for one pass per Volunteer annually. A new pass will not be issued until the previous pass has expired.
- If a Volunteer has an existing Lifetime America the Beautiful Pass (Senior, Access, Veteran) they are not eligible for the Annual Volunteer Pass.

## Volunteer Evaluations

All volunteers should receive ongoing support and resources from their Volunteer Supervisor. This support should include training, coaching (on-the-job), supplies, and information that supports their service effort. Volunteers are encouraged to provide feedback about their experience in the volunteer program to their Volunteer Supervisor.

## Keeping in Touch

**Monthly e-newsletter** -A monthly e-newsletter sent out during the summer months highlights the volunteer program and Park wide news. Those who list their email address on their volunteer service agreement form are automatically added to our list. Update your email address by contacting the Volunteer Coordinator at **slbe\_volunteer@nps.gov**.





## Park Policies and Procedures

You represent the Park and, as such, your conversations with visitors should reflect park policy, not your own opinions. If you are unsure of park policy or feel that your personal opinion may conflict with park policy, please work with your supervisor to prepare for conversations related to the topic.

### Volunteer Safety

Employee and volunteer safety is our highest priority at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. We believe that mishaps are preventable if we work together to address them as a team. Safety is everyone's job.

Before you begin any task, please ask your supervisor for a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) that has been completed for all tasks. Read the JHA and think about what and how you are doing that particular task. Be aware of hazards and wear all protective equipment designed and prescribed for the task. Use the right tool for the job at hand and be aware of the hazards of that job, thinking about how you will respond if an unsafe situation arises.

Supervisors are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace for all employees and volunteers, as well as safe working equipment, procedures, and conditions. You will also receive training for any activity you are asked to complete. You, as a VIP, are responsible for following safe practices.

If an accident occurs while you are volunteering, immediately report the incident to your supervisor. First aid kits are located throughout the park and in all government vehicles. If you encounter an injured visitor, your responsibility while actively volunteering is to stop and at a minimum report the incident. You may render assistance to the level you are trained at and comfortable.

Safety comes first at the park. Employees and volunteers should feel empowered to stop a job if they believe an uncontrolled hazard exists. While performing duties, if you encounter what you believe to be an unsafe situation, you have the responsibility to stop work and speak with your supervisor to correct the situation.

### Volunteer Protection

**Use of Personal Equipment:** Volunteers should use government equipment rather than their own personal gear. If a volunteer does use his or her personal property or equipment for official purposes, and that property is lost, damaged, or destroyed in the process, the NPS bears no responsibility for the loss.

**Vehicles:** To operate a government vehicle a volunteer must possess a valid driver's license, pass GSA Defensive Driving, and have been briefed on current SOPs. You may find further information and training links in Appendix D.

**Radios:** Some VIPs may be required to complete training on how to use the Park radios in case of emergencies.



**Computers:** Supervisors will initiate the Background Investigation and access process with admin if a VIP needs to work on an NPS computer.

**Ticks:** Be aware there are an increasing number of ticks in the park and Lyme disease is present. Take preventative measures (repellent, tick checks, etc.) SLBE policy S-16 covers all matters pertaining to ticks.

**Worker’s Compensation and Tort Claims:** When you sign your Volunteer Service Agreement you are covered by Federal Worker’s Compensation if you are hurt while actively volunteering. Volunteers receive the same protection as NPS employees under the Federal Employees Compensation Act (5 USC, Chapter 81) and the Federal Tort Claims Act (28 USC, 2671-2680) and are considered to be federal employees for those purposes only. In order to ensure benefits under these Acts, it is imperative that you have a signed Volunteer Service Agreement on file and that you operate under a written job description(s) that contains specific information on the type of work you are assigned.

## **Visitor Firearm Carry Policy**

Federal law allows possession of loaded firearms in National Parks. This law allows visitors who can legally possess firearms under federal and Michigan State laws to possess firearms in the park. However, no volunteer shall be in possession of a firearm while volunteering in Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore or while in uniform.

## **Zero Tolerance Policy for Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a violation of the sex discrimination provision of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

The National Park Service has a “zero tolerance” policy on sexual harassment. This means that sexual harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances and is cause for immediate termination from the Volunteer Program.

## **Zero Tolerance Policy for Discrimination**

In order to protect and provide access to our nation’s natural and cultural heritage, we are committed to creating a work environment in which a diverse workforce is valued, motivated, developed, and rewarded for excellent performance. Equal access to volunteer opportunities is assured for all volunteers without regard to their race, ethnicity, sex, age, national origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, and without retaliation for engaging in protected activities. Volunteers are not to make comments or jokes based on race, ethnicity, sex, age, national origin, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.

The National Park Service has a “zero tolerance” policy on discrimination. This means that discrimination will not be tolerated under any circumstances and is cause for immediate termination from the Volunteer Program.

## **Respect and Responsibility**

You are an important and valued member of our NPS Team. You have the right to be treated with respect, as a co-worker and not free help.

## **Volunteer Rights**

### **Volunteers have the right to:**

1. Receive the same fair personnel practices as paid staff.
2. Have your time used effectively.
3. Receive clear and non-conflicting guidance and direction.
4. Be kept informed of activities pertaining to your volunteer assignments.
5. Not undertake assignments you do not wish to do.
6. Receive appropriate orientation, training, and supervision.
7. Be assigned jobs that are worthwhile and challenging.
8. Receive regular, clear feedback on the quality and effectiveness of your work.
9. Be recognized for your contributions.
10. Have an opportunity to provide input into the volunteer program.
11. Be trusted with the information needed to carry out your jobs effectively.
12. Be assigned a direct supervisor.

## **Volunteer Responsibilities**

### **Volunteers have the responsibility to:**

1. Represent the National Park Service in a professional manner.
2. Follow the park's policies and guidelines and work within its organizational structure.
3. Seek and accept all guidance and support needed to complete assignments.
4. Work as a team with paid staff and respect mutual roles.
5. Be reliable in fulfilling assignments.
6. Do a quality, professional job.
7. Respect access to all information, facilities, and equipment.
8. Learn from and participate in training sessions and meetings.
9. Provide notice of absence.
10. Make a good-faith effort to resolve differences or problems.
11. Care for park resources.
12. Work safely and smartly.

## Ethical Behavior

When working as a volunteer, or representing the National Park Service as a volunteer, I will:

- **Exercise Good Ethics.** I will place ethical principles above private gain as public service is a public trust.
- **Make a Good Effort.** I will put forth an honest effort in the performance of my duties.
- **Show Fairness and Act Impartially.** I will not give preferential treatment or recommendation to any private organization or individual. This includes recommending specific restaurants or services.
- **Take Care of Equipment.** I will protect and conserve federal property and not use it for other than authorized activities.
- **Be Non-Partisan.** I will not engage in political activity, political conversations, or solicit or receive political contributions while on duty or in the Federal workplace.
- **Respect Other People.** I will work respectfully with others regardless of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, or disability. The National Park Service has zero tolerance for harassment.
- **Professional Behavior.** I will exercise professional and courteous behavior with other volunteers, visitors to the park, park partners, and National Park Service staff at all times. While on duty, our words and actions should always present a positive image to the public that we serve.
- **Non-Public Access.** I will not use non-public access to NPS staff or resources for private gain. This includes taking “behind the scenes” or “after hours” photos and posting them to social media.
- **Refrain from Advocacy** (while representing myself as an NPS volunteer). I will not use my position as a volunteer to leverage any type of influence or gain. This includes posting on social media and representing yourself as a National Park Service Volunteer.

Violation of this code of conduct may result in corrective action or termination of your volunteer agreement with the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

Volunteers may have limited access to government property (computers, copy machines, equipment, etc.) for personal use. All personal usage of government property must be cleared through your supervisor beforehand. For more information regarding this issue, please refer to the memorandum Use of Government Information, Property, and Time available at [www.doi.gov/ethics/use-of-government-property](http://www.doi.gov/ethics/use-of-government-property).

Remember: As an NPS volunteer, you are always in the public eye while on duty (**as well as off duty**). Act accordingly. For more information about ethics, visit the Department of the Interior Ethics Office website at [www.doi.gov/ethics](http://www.doi.gov/ethics).

## Offboarding – Ending Your Volunteer Agreement

A Volunteer or Volunteer Supervisor can terminate a VIP Agreement if the Volunteer is no longer able, or chooses not to, perform duties as assigned. A Supervisor may dismiss a VIP if he or she is not performing duties satisfactorily (Director’s Order-7, 17).

VIP Supervisors should invite dialogue and provide performance evaluations as a problem-solving measure. If the situation does not improve and a Volunteer cannot be re-assigned to a different project or task without repeat of the problem, he or she may be given notice that services are no longer needed (unless circumstances warrant immediate termination). Justification for dismissal of a volunteer includes: misconduct, unsatisfactory performance, breach of confidentiality, inappropriate behavior, disregard of park policies/procedures, or when a suitable volunteer assignment is not available.

## Housing

There may be limited housing available for volunteers depending on the role and length of stay required. This can range from RV pad space at D.H. Day Campground, to shared housing on the Manitou Islands. Volunteers are each required to work 32 hours per week for a minimum of 4 weeks (SLBE Policy A-09) to receive housing.

### Campground Sites:

- Volunteers must provide his/her own lodging (camper, trailer, or motor home).
- Sewer/water/electric provided by the campground.
- Hosts are not permitted to alter the site by planting gardens, animal/bird feeders, or place any other objects on the site within view of the public that would detract from the natural state of the area.

## Reimbursements

Funding for the Volunteer Program is limited and is intended to support the overall volunteer program therefore situations that make reimbursement of volunteers necessary will be rare. All requests for reimbursement must be approved by the Volunteer Coordinator prior to an expense being accrued.

## Manitou Islands – Basics

### Transportation to the Islands

Volunteers may travel to the Manitou Islands via Park boat or concessionaire ferry service.

- The park boat travels to the islands on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. It is the boat operator's decision to allow someone to be on the vessel. No minors without a legal guardian are allowed on the park boat.
- Volunteers will need to ride the concessionaire ferry on other days of the week.
- Your supervisor will brief you on how to arrange your transportation to the islands.

### Transportation on the Islands

Transportation on the islands is limited to foot travel, or in limited cases UTV travel or bicycle travel. If you are asked to drive a UTV, you will need to complete the ROHVA E-Course at: <https://rohva.org/learn-to-drive/> prior to operation. <https://cbt.rohva.org/>

## Housing

Housing on the island is limited. Volunteers must work a minimum of 32 hours a week with a 3-night minimum stay in exchange for transportation and housing.

- No minors without a legal guardian present may stay in Park housing.

# **Appendices**

Appendix A: Volunteer Service Agreement

Appendix B: General Service Description

Appendix C: Volunteer Timesheet

Appendix D: General Driving Policy

Appendix E: Park Comment Card

Appendix F: Tips for Volunteering Success

# Appendix A – Volunteer Service Agreement

OMB Control Number 1093-0006  
Expiration Date 10/31/2024

<b>VOLUNTEER SERVICE AGREEMENT—NATURAL &amp; CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>			
1. VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT TYPE (Choose 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Individual OR <input type="checkbox"/> Group		2. NAME OF GROUP (if applicable)	
3. NAME OF VOLUNTEER OR GROUP LEADER COMPLETING FORM (Last, First)		4. U.S. CITIZEN OR PERMANENT RESIDENT <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I am a U.S. citizen or Permanent Resident <input type="checkbox"/> No, I am not a US Citizen or Permanent Resident (if applicable, list visa type _____)	
5. STREET ADDRESS, APT #	6. CITY	7. STATE	8. ZIP CODE
9. DATE OF BIRTH	10. PHONE	11. EMAIL ADDRESS	
<b>12. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION (Optional):</b> Please indicate both ethnicity and race and tell us if you are a veteran or have a disability. Multiracial respondents may select two or more races. This information will inform our understanding of diversity and inclusion among the volunteer force in the natural and cultural resource areas.			
12a. <b>Ethnicity</b> (Select one): <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin	12b. <b>Race</b> (Select one or more, regardless of ethnicity): <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	12c. Are you a Military Veteran or Active Duty Military? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No 12d. Do you have a disability? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION</b>			
13. NAME (Last, First)	14. PHONE	15. EMAIL ADDRESS	
16. STREET ADDRESS, APT #	17. CITY	18. STATE	19. ZIP CODE
<b>GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL COMPLETES THIS SECTION</b>			
20. NAME OF AGENCY/ BUREAU		21. AGREEMENT #	
22. AGENCY CONTACT NAME (Last, First)		23. AGENCY CONTACT EMAIL & PHONE	
24. REIMBURSEMENTS APPROVED: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Type and Rate of Reimbursement:		25. VOLUNTEER POSITION/GROUP PROJECT TITLE:	
26. <b>Description of service to be performed.</b> Provide a brief abstract of volunteer or service activity and the location of the volunteer activity, and attach description of service to be performed. Service description should include details such as time and schedule commitment, use of government vehicle, use of personal equipment and/or vehicle, skills required (note certifications if necessary), level of physical activity required, etc.			
VOLUNTEER/SERVICE ACTIVITY ABSTRACT			
27. <b>Check all that apply:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Description of service attached <input type="checkbox"/> OF-301b Volunteer Sign-up Form for Groups attached <input type="checkbox"/> Risk Assessment attached <input type="checkbox"/> Valid Driver's License required <input type="checkbox"/> Background Investigation required <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Clearance Required <input type="checkbox"/> Other:			

Volunteer Service Agreement

OPTIONAL FORM 301A (REV. 10/2021)

USDOI - USDA - USDOC -USDOD

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR VOLUNTEER UNDER AGE 18			
28. NAME	29. PHONE	30. EMAIL ADDRESS	
31. STREET ADDRESS, APT #	32. CITY	33. STATE	34. ZIP CODE
35. I affirm that I am the parent/guardian of the abovenamed volunteer. I understand that the agency volunteer program does not provide compensation, except as otherwise provided by law; and that the service will not confer on the volunteer the status of a Federal employee. I have read the attached description of the service that the volunteer will perform. I give my permission for _____ to participate in the specified volunteer activity.			
36. (NAME OF YOUTH)			
37. Parent/Guardian Signature		38. Date	
VOLUNTEER & GROUP LEADER AFFIRMATION			
39. <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that I will not receive any compensation for the above service and that volunteers are NOT considered Federal employees except as otherwise provided by law. I understand that volunteer service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other employee benefits. I also understand that either the government or I may cancel this agreement at any time by notifying the other party. I understand that my volunteer position may require a reference check, background investigation, and/or a criminal history inquiry in order for me to perform my duties.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I understand that all publications, films, slides, videos, artistic or similar endeavors, resulting from my volunteer services as specifically stated in the attached job description, will become the property of the United States, and as such, will be in the public domain and not subject to copyright laws.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I understand the health and physical condition requirements for doing the work as described in the job description and at the project location.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I know of no medical condition or physical limitation that may adversely affect my (or members of the group's) ability to provide this service. (If a group, see attached OF-301b)			
<input type="checkbox"/> I consent to being photographed and to the release of my photographic image. (If a group, see attached OF-301b)			
I do hereby volunteer my services as described above, to assist in authorized activities at _____ and I agree to follow all applicable safety guidelines. See attached OF301b attached if a member of a group. (NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY)			
40. Signature of Volunteer or Group Leader		41. Date	
The abovenamed agency agrees, while this arrangement is in effect, to provide such materials, equipment, and facilities that are available and needed to perform the service described above, and to consider you as a Federal employee only for the purposes of tort claims, liability and injury compensation to the extent not covered by your volunteer group, if any.			
42. Signature of Government Representative		43. Date	
TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT			
44. Agreement Terminated Date:		45. Total Hours Completed:	
46. Signature of Government Representative:			
PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT			
Completing this form is voluntary, but failure to provide the information will prevent program participation. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1093-0006. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The U.S. Department of the Interior (USDOI), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Department of Defense (USDOD), and U.S. Department of Commerce (USDOC) are equal opportunity providers and employers and prohibit discrimination in all programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication of program information should contact the volunteer program to which they are applying. If you would like to file a Section 508-related complaint, please contact the DOI Section 508 Program via email at section508@ios.doi.gov or phone (202) 208-1530.			
PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT			
Collection and use is covered by Privacy Act System of Records INTERIOR/DOI-05 Interior Volunteer Services File System (which may be viewed at <a href="https://www.doi.gov/privacy/doi-notice">https://www.doi.gov/privacy/doi-notice</a> ) and OPM/GOVT-1 General Personnel Records (which may be viewed at <a href="https://www.opm.gov/information-management/privacy-policy/#url-SORNs">https://www.opm.gov/information-management/privacy-policy/#url-SORNs</a> ) and is consistent with the provisions of 5 USC 552a (Privacy Act of 1974), which authorizes acceptance of the information requested on this form. The information is used to identify persons interested in participating in a government volunteer program, managing the volunteer program, including tort claims and injury compensation. Records or information contained in this system may be disclosed outside the agencies participating in this program as a routine use pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(3). Completing this form is voluntary, but failure to provide the information will prevent program participation.			

# Appendix B – General Service Description

## General Work Description for Parkwide Volunteer Programs

Assist Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore employees in volunteer program opportunities across the park. Volunteers will engage in general park-wide assistance, including but not limited to: Maintenance, Interpretation, Administration, Fire Management, and Resource Management. Work is to be accomplished over a maximum of 8 hours on any given day, not to exceed 32 hours a week, depending on the volunteer position.

Photos of volunteer activities may be taken during the program and used for park publications. If you require restricted use of your photo, please alert the Park Volunteer Coordinator.

## Field Safety

Park staff will provide you with a safe work environment and will identify any potential hazards in the working area. While we strive to create the safest environment possible, it is impossible to eliminate all potential hazards when working outside in nature. Feel free to ask your supervisor for more information on these or other topics.

- **Be Prepared!** Dress Appropriately! Wear clothes that can get dirty, long pants, closed-toe shoes (no flip flops or sandals), layers for changing weather, and rain gear if necessary. Bring a personal water bottle and sunscreen.
- **Ticks:** Lyme disease and several other tick-borne diseases continue to pose a significant health threat to our employees and volunteers. Ticks are common carriers of Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases. Avoidance techniques include the use of protective clothing, repellents, and education.
- **Bees:** If you know you are allergic, please take precautions for your safety and let your supervisor know. Bee nests are commonly found in trees and on the ground in natural areas. If you see multiple bees/wasps/yellow jackets flying around an area, warn others about them. They are very protective of their homes and sting repeatedly if aggravated.
- **Poison Ivy:** The oil in poison ivy can cause a severe rash, especially if you are highly allergic to it. Everyone should learn to recognize poison ivy and avoid it. To identify poison ivy, look for three lobed leaflets, which come in a variety of colors (from green to red) and are sometimes shiny or glossy in appearance.
- **Heat Exhaustion:** Drink plenty of water and electrolytes while working! If you feel tired or lightheaded, sit down and rest in the shade.
- **Sun Exposure:** You can get sunburn on a cloudy day. Wear sunscreen and a hat for protection.
- **Tool/Back Safety:** Be aware of the tools you are using. Make sure you know the correct way to use and transport them. Keep space between you and other volunteers. To avoid repetitive motion stress, take regular stretch breaks. Use your legs when lifting or pulling heavy objects and always try to avoid twisting when carrying or loading.
- **Things You Might Find:** Be observant and avoid things like broken glass, rusty metal, and hypodermic syringes. Glass, metal, and other trash can be picked up (wear gloves!). Alert the Volunteer Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator if you find a needle or something you do not recognize—do not pick it up!



## Appendix D – General Driving Policy

The Defensive Driving Course is required for staff and volunteers that operate Government Vehicles (GV's) at Sleeping Bear Dunes.

**GSA Instructions:** for accessing the 4-hour National Safety Council Defensive Driving Course through GSA rather than DOI Learn. This is appropriate for those who are not yet set-up to use DOI Learn. The courses are identical, and one is required to be completed prior to GV operation.

- 1) Go to this website <https://drivethru.gsa.gov/fmdtsys/dthome>
- 2) Then click <https://www.improvlearning.com/gsa/> to start registering.
- 3) Your "tag number" is G620255S (no dashes or spaces)
- 4) The email address can be an NPS or personal email
- 5) Create your unique login ID and password.

**Volunteer Supervisors** must cover the following items regarding GV Operations:

- 1) Visually verify volunteer's valid driver's license.
- 2) Motor pool operations.
- 3) Fuel card; what can and can't be purchased with this card.
- 4) Receipt procedures.
- 5) What to do after a wreck or any damage to GV.
- 6) No cell phone use, at all, while driving.
- 7) No smoking in a GV.
- 8) Remember, you are representing the NPS and SLBE in a GV.
- 9) Be professional – Be Safe



# Appendix F – Tips for Volunteering Success

## 11 Basic Guidelines



1. **Be Professional**, courteous, and helpful, remain patient with visitors. Stay neutral with your opinions.
  2. **Be Safe** and proactive. Look for and report hazards, pre-plan how to respond in an emergency.
  3. **Take the time to listen** and answer visitors' questions no matter how busy you may be.
  4. **Contact** visitors and ask questions. Do not poll or survey.
  5. **Give special attention to children** who could be visiting with their family or school group. A lifelong interest in our National Parks can start when a person is very young. Children having a great experience, along with positive interaction with staff and volunteers, may create the next generation of park stewards!
6. **VIPs should never be alone with a child.** Ensure there is a parent, guardian, staff, or other adult present.
  7. **Photographs of visitors**, especially of children, require permission and a signed photo release form.
  8. The **Visitor Comment Form** is a great way for visitors to voice concerns. Access it online through the contact us button and a hard copy is located here in Appendix E.
  9. **Avoid arguing.** It is unlikely that people will be receptive to your argument, no matter how great an orator you may be. People will be more open to listening after they calm down and feel like they have been heard.
  10. **Refer** difficult comments and complaints to a staff member. Whenever a visitor makes you uncomfortable, immediately extricate yourself from the situation and/or find a staff member to take over.
  11. **VIPs cannot enforce laws/regulations.** Only our Protection Rangers can do that, everyone else is making educational contact with visitors. Remind and educate visitors about the rules. However, if they do not seem receptive, disengage and back away. Use good judgment and do not provoke conflict.

## Tips on Contacting Visitors

While it's easier to wait for a visitor to ask you a question, they may not know enough about the Park or think you're too busy to assist them. Try to anticipate their needs and offer information. Some icebreakers or potential greetings are:

- “Have you been here before? I would be happy to direct you to the Park mobile app and suggestions about what to do.”
- “Are you planning a hike today? I’d be happy to suggest some trails.”
- “Are you aware this is a National Lakeshore? If you’re interested in knowing more, I can answer questions or direct you to our museums, visitor center or trails.”
- “Some of my favorite places in the park are ...”
- “Ever wonder why the water is so clear in lake MI?.....” mussels/algae/botulism message

### **What is a formal visitor contact?**

A scheduled program that facilitates a connection between the interests of the visitors and the significance of the Park.

### **What is an informal visitor contact?**

An unscheduled conversation or program with a visitor that may include the following types of content:

- Orientation: for the visitor about the visit. “What hikes should we do?” “Where am I?”
- Information: for the visitor about the resource. “Sleeping Bear Dunes has 65 miles of shoreline, 35 are on the mainland.”
- Interpretation: for the benefit of the visitor and the resource. “Let’s talk about the significance of this place.”

