

**Environment for Americas Internship**  
**Visitor Services Specialist - Latino Engagement Program Coordinator**  
**Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex**  
**Corvallis, Oregon**  
**Position Description**

**Position Title:** Latino Engagement Program Coordinator at the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex

**Details:**

- Timeframe: Mid-October – June 1, 2021 but can easily be flexed
- Work schedule to be worked out with the intern but will be a flexible 40 hours/week, likely from Tuesday – Saturday. The intern follows the same holiday and office closure calendar as staff.
- Free housing is available at William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge (and Baskett Slough Refuge, if needed)
- Intern would be a member of the Visitor Services staff and supervised by Visitor Services Manager, Samantha Bartling

**Latino Engagement Program - Background Information and Details:**

**Purpose:** Implement a Latino Engagement Program to build stronger relationships with the communities surrounding the Willamette Valley Refuges - weaving the Refuges into the local Latino culture as a resource, destination and asset.

**Background:** Twelve percent of Oregon's population is now Latino, representing a 72% growth since 2000 (Latinos in Oregon: Trends and Opportunities in a Changing State, 2016). According to the US Census projections, the Latino population is expected to double by 2016. Corvallis, Eugene, Salem, Albany and Dallas are just a few of the larger towns in the State of Oregon that have large Latino communities and also happen to have one of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges right out their backdoor.

At the heart of the mission of the Visitor Services Program at the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex (WVNWRC) is to connect people with nature through high quality wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities. We realize the importance of making our Refuges – and all they have to offer – accessible to all members of our community. For this reason, we have been working on a Latino Engagement Program. This is not a stand-alone program or plan because reaching out to and involving our Latino neighbors should be a natural and inherent part of all that we do. Having an intern that is a native Spanish speaker is a key component of implementing and supporting a successful program at the WVNWRC.

With the help of the EFTA intern we identified partners and contacts to work with throughout the mid-Valley; implemented regular bilingual programs, including a bilingual preschool program; created Spanish trail brochures for all three Refuges; created and utilized a Latino outreach list; hosted family

friendly events promoted in Spanish; and helped us develop our Latino Engagement Plan. With the Ankeny Hill Nature Center coming online in the Spring of 2019 and new visitor opportunities such as a youth waterfowl hunt and fishing at Snag Boat Bend, we have even more opportunities to engage our Latino neighbors and connect them to the Refuges.

**Duties:**

- Increase the number of bilingual publications, signage and programming at the Refuge Complex. Specifically: EE elements in Spanish and English; Ankeny Hill Nature Center interpretation, curriculum kits, resource library and Discovery Backpacks. Website options in Spanish.
- Be a part of the development and implementation of Ankeny Hill Nature Center interpretation elements, website, operations, programming and curriculum. This new center needs to meet the needs of Latino families.
- Coordinate with the identified Latino Organizations in Benton, Linn, Polk and Marion counties to implement programming that benefits both parties. Foster these relationships.
- Use the Latino outreach list to promote bilingual efforts at the Complex.
- Help coordinate Winter Wildlife Field Day as a member of the steering committee. In 2021 we want to create the most accessible event ever. Instead of bringing a diverse audience to our Refuge(s) we'll be bringing these special places to them. All elements of the event will be bilingual. Experience with online platforms and experiences a plus!
- Continue the monthly Ankeny Refuge Bilingual Preschool Program (January – May 2021). If in-person events are not possible due to COVID-19, the programs will be created via video and shared online.
- Host additional bilingual interpretation and/or environmental education events at the three Refuges in the Complex. This could be a continuation of the bilingual nature hikes and programs already developed or create your own passion projects!
- Create bilingual curriculum for the Woodpecker Loop Discovery Trail.
- As the Latino Engagement Program champion, serve on the Visitor Services team. This includes helping with environmental education events, outreach, and participation in other visitor services duties (e.g. rounds, brochure making, and volunteer coordination). Always be thinking of your audience. How can we reach more Latinos in the everyday visitor services activities we do?
- Together with the Visitor Services Manager, keep the Latino Engagement Plan updated.

**Qualifications:** We are seeking applicants that possess strong communication skills, a flexible and positive nature, willingness to learn and a passion for conservation and education. In addition:

- Latinx individual that is bilingual (Spanish/English both verbally and written). A native Spanish-speaker a plus;
- Must possess a valid driver's license;
- Takes initiative, is hardworking and self-motivated;
- General computing skills. Experience with video editing and design software a plus;
- Desire to conduct education and outreach.

**Area Information:** The Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex of Oregon is comprised of three incredible Refuges: Ankeny, just south of Salem; Baskett Slough north of Dallas, and William L. Finley south of Corvallis. The Refuges' seasonal wetlands and farmed fields provide important resting

and feeding areas for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds within the Pacific Flyway, and support the core population of wintering geese in the Valley. In particular, the Refuges hold the largest number of wintering dusky Canada geese within their range. At peak numbers, the Refuges also hold more wintering ducks than any location in western Oregon south of the Columbia River. The Refuges support some of the largest and most ecologically significant blocks of native habitat in the Willamette Valley. Visitors to the Refuges frequently view herds of Roosevelt elk, bobcats, a variety of bird species, and they enjoy a diverse number of habitats in which to hike and observe wildlife: oak savanna, wet prairie, upland prairie, riparian corridors, emergent and deep water marshes, and Douglas fir forests.

**Amenities:** Housing is free. The volunteer will stay in a modest but comfortable 3 bedroom/1 bath fully furnished trailer with washer and dryer and free WiFi. The volunteer will have use of a government vehicle while on official duty. There is cell service and mail service. The trailer is in a private location just west of the headquarters building. When working up near Baskett Slough Refuge (Dallas, OR) there is a small one-bedroom pod that is also fully equipped for the interns' use, when/if job duties require it. Having your own vehicle is helpful, as the Refuge is located 10 miles south of Corvallis.

The city of Corvallis is home to Oregon State University and is an easy 10 miles north of William L. Finley Refuge, with all of the major amenities. Eugene, Oregon is an hour drive to the south and Salem, Oregon is an hour drive to the north. The Oregon Coast is an hour drive to the west and the Cascade Mountains are an hour drive to the east. You couldn't pick a better place to recreate!

### **Why is this internship so important?**

This is a long-term endeavor to reach and communicate with more of our community; specifically, the Latino community. Quality visitor experiences delivered to everyone making up our community is a goal that needs no clarification. We are creating a sea change; changing how we do our work, who we reach, and how people experience the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex.