
ORIN & CHAR GELDERLOOS ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP INTERNSHIP

Department: All (organization-wide)

Status: Part-Time Seasonal Position

- September through December 2026
- 10-15 hours per week
- Monday through Friday between 9am-4pm (with occasional weekend and evening events)

Reports to: Monitoring Coordinator/Monitoring Manager

Work Location: FOTR Headquarters in Plymouth, MI (remote and field work throughout the Rouge River watershed)

Rate of Pay: \$17.00/hour

Friends of the Rouge (FOTR), founded in 1986, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to restoration and stewardship of the Rouge River ecosystem through education, citizen involvement, and other collaborative efforts. The Rouge River is one of the nation's most polluted waterways and is located in metropolitan Detroit in southeast Michigan. Friends of the Rouge engages watershed residents in restoration, monitoring, and recreation on the Rouge River and advocates and supports its continued improvement.

Friends of the Rouge understands the values of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice are critical to achieve our vision of a Rouge that is healthy, accessible to everyone, and a place where people and wildlife thrive. To that end, we commit ourselves to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice both in our programmatic priorities and our internal organizational development through inclusive recruitment of staff and board members, and fostering a diverse and inclusive culture.

POSITION CREATION AND PURPOSE

This internship was created and funded by Orin and Char Gelderloos to expand the knowledge, exposure, and leadership experience of a student anticipating entering the environmental non-profit field. By spending several months immersed in a non-profit organization participating in monitoring, restoring, paddling and learning about the Rouge River and the Friends of the Rouge, the intern will gain insight and knowledge into the field.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This internship will include a mix of field and office work across the organization. The intern will assist with Friends of the Rouge's initiatives like:

- Participatory science programs involving large-scale volunteer coordination, education and outreach, riverine sampling techniques, data collection, and analysis (*HEAVY FOCUS*). This will include benthic macroinvertebrate monitoring and fish surveys.
- Implementation of stormwater infrastructure projects, mainly rain garden installations
- Recreation on the Rouge, e.g. assist with paddle trips and associated outreach events

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- Mentoring experience with organizational leadership, membership, development and outreach to better understand the workings of a non-profit organization
- Opportunity to develop communications to reach and empower communities to interact with the Rouge River

QUALIFICATIONS

- A strong interest in environmental nonprofit work/management
- Demonstrated ability to follow instructions
- Commitment to learning and applying new skills
- Demonstrated organizational skills and attention to detail
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Must have a valid Michigan Driver's License and have reliable transportation, or have the ability to get to the FOTR office or event site
- Available to work 10-15 events in the evening or on weekends
- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Experience working with diverse people in a variety of settings

PREFERENCES

- Interest and some background in environmental science or any of its related fields
- Knowledge and interest in social media content creation
- Interest in scientific data communication and writing
- Outgoing and interested in engaging with people
- A good communicator (verbal, written and electronic)

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Able to conduct in-river field surveys in chest waders. Some lifting is required (up to 50 lbs). Outdoor work will involve uneven ground, steep or slippery slopes along water bodies. Work is done in all types of weather. Ability to effectively communicate in English is required.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

This position is a mix of outdoor field work and office work. This position requires travel to [all parts of the watershed](#) (which includes 47 cities and towns).

POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of Friends of the Rouge (FOTR) to provide equal membership, employment and service opportunities to all eligible persons and to administer personnel policies and practices in accordance with all applicable laws.

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We do not discriminate on the basis of race, ancestry, creed, religion, color, personal appearance, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, family responsibilities, and the presence of any sensory, physical or mental disability, learning disability, matriculation, membership in any labor organization, lawful source of income, political affiliation, or political ideology.

Updated: February 27, 2026

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT – AT WILL EMPLOYMENT STATUS

All persons employed by FOTR, regardless of classification status, are employed on an at will basis. As such, employment can be terminated with or without cause and with or without notice at any time, at either the employee's option or that of FOTR. No supervisor, coordinator, manager, or other representative of FOTR, other than the Executive Director, has the authority to enter into any agreement or contract for employment for any specified period of time. The provisions contained in this policy supersede any and all previous oral or written statements or representations that have been made by FOTR or by someone purporting to represent FOTR. Employees should be aware, while FOTR employees are required to participate in regular performance evaluations; this evaluation process is not intended to be a means of creating legal rights and does not affect the "at-will" nature of the terms of employment.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All interested parties should submit:

- ☐ a cover letter describing your interest and experience relating to this position
- ☐ a resume
- ☐ three references

Please submit as a single PDF file of all three in the following format: Your Full Name_FOTR_Gelderloos Intern_ Application. **Incomplete applications will not be considered.** ([HOW TO COMBINE MULTIPLE FILES INTO ONE PDF](#)).

E-mail to: Sam Davis (she/her), Monitoring Coordinator, sdavis@therouge.org. Deadline for submission: Sunday, August 23rd, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. Late submissions will not be considered.