

Wild Society — Part-time Backpacking Guide Job Description, 2026



Wild Society is a wilderness education nonprofit based in Kingston, WA. Our mission is to cultivate wonder and belonging in the natural world, which we do by running youth backpacking trips in the Olympic Mountains.

Backcountry Guides are responsible for guiding and teaching Backpacking Camps for 12-18 year olds in the Olympic Mountains. Our curriculum is built around natural history, basic backpacking skills, and wilderness awareness, taught within a culture of gratitude and respect. Guides must share these values and should have their

own strong relationship with the backcountry. All trips have two guides and up to 10 participants. Wild Society programs follow a daily structure that incorporates reflection, direct instruction, and exploration. Guides engage participants throughout the day to encourage deeper understanding of and connection to the natural world.

Guide Responsibilities:

- Guide campers ages 12-18 on 4-8 day backcountry backpacking trips in the Olympic Mountains, departing from Kingston, WA.
- Collaborate with a co-guide on all aspects of the trip.
- Teach Wild Society curriculum including: daily structure, basic backpacking skills, leadership, Leave No Trace, natural history, and wilderness awareness skills.
- Maintain an environment of safety through adherence to Wild Society policies, as well as maintaining a general attitude of safety and risk prevention.
- Leading and teaching in culturally responsive ways to a diverse client base.
- Participate in pre- and post-trip preparation including, but not limited to, gear and food packing, camper information review, de-issuing gear, and post trip reporting.
- Adhere to all National Park and National Forest regulations.

Required Qualifications:

- Experience with backcountry trips.
- 21+ by the start of the season.
- Valid driver's license.
- Ability to pass a comprehensive background check.
- Strong sense of personal relationship with the natural world.
- Experience working with youth 12-18 years old.
- Hold a valid Wilderness First Responder certification prior to start date.
- Hold a valid Washington Food Handlers Card prior to start date.

- Drive to help the organization continually reexamine practices to center ourselves around justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

Desired Experience:

- Knowledge of the Olympic Peninsula.
- Ability to observe and communicate phenomena of the natural world.
- Can provide narratives of indigenous world view.
- Are familiar with at least some elements of multiple disciplines such as botany and ethnobotany, ecology, geology, ornithology and mammalogy, hydrology, meteorology, and astronomy to weave stories illuminating the inter-relatedness of the natural world and our place within it.

Time commitment:

- Paid staff training June 19-20, 2026.
- Part time guides must commit to at least one backcountry trip: July 11- August 31, variable dates. Each trip has a Prep Day the day before.
- Additional flexible dates/hours for office and logistics support (gear maintenance,, food prep, etc.)

Compensation: \$25/hour for frontcountry work, \$200/day in the field.

Guides are selected based on their training, experience, and availability. We are looking for people who have a tremendous passion for the outdoors, experience working with youth, are comfortable teaching our core curriculum, and believe in our mission as much as we do. We are an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, veteran status, or disability status. We encourage candidates of all backgrounds to apply, even if you may not meet all of the listed qualifications.

To apply: Please send your resume to programs@wildsociety.org

Closing date: Priority deadline April 20, 2026. Open until filled.

Questions? Contact Hannah Black, Program Director: (360) 347-6134, programs@wildsociety.org