Internship Opportunity
Stewardship Program Intern

The Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation (LF) **Stewardship Program Internship** offers undergraduate students a hands-on opportunity to build knowledge and practical skills applicable to careers in ecological restoration, conservation, natural resource management, and related environmental fields. Interns learn alongside staff while gaining experience in habitat restoration, conservation science, native plant propagation, invasive plant management, and community-based stewardship.

The Stewardship Program Internship provides the opportunity for students to:

- **Deepen their knowledge** about the Laguna de Santa Rosa ecosystem and the importance of watershed conservation.
- **Build important hands-on skills** necessary to enter the field of environmental restoration.
- **Gain experience with habitat restoration practices** in riparian corridors, vernal pools, wetlands, and other habitats within the Laguna watershed.
- **Develop strong communication and collaboration skills** by learning and working alongside Foundation staff, volunteers, community partners, and stewardship event participants.
- **Explore community-based conservation** and learn how public participation, education, and volunteer stewardship contribute to long-term ecological goals.
- **Help improve the general public's understanding** of the importance of the Laguna and the surrounding watershed areas.
- **Build familiarity with environmental career pathways** through participation in the day-to-day work of restoration, conservation science, and environmental education professionals.

The Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation is a watershed-based 501(c)3 non-profit organization in Sonoma County, California. We work to restore and conserve the Laguna de Santa Rosa and inspire the local community to appreciate and care for this vital resource. Our work includes restoring riparian forest habitat along creeks that flow into the Laguna, conserving vernal pools and the endangered species that depend on them, growing locally collected native plants in our nursery, and providing environmental education opportunities for children and the broader community.

Learning Opportunities & Internship Activities

Depending on seasonal and project needs, interns may participate in a variety of supervised activities designed to build practical knowledge and experience, including:

- Develop native plant propagation and nursery skills through collecting seeds and cuttings, planting, upsizing, and sanitizing plants and equipment, and learning the latest best management practices.
- Gain experience with conducting plant surveys and vegetation monitoring, including the collection and organization of project data.

- Learn restoration installation techniques through participation in native planting and the installation and maintenance of irrigation systems.
- Develop familiarity with field and shop equipment, including proper use, organization, routine maintenance, and storage.
- Learn about ongoing restoration stewardship, including how activities such as debris and trash removal and controlling invasive plants through manual and mechanized techniques contribute to site health, safety, and successful restoration outcomes.
- Build community engagement and volunteer coordination skills by participating in stewardship volunteer workdays, including event set-up, participant check-in, engaging with volunteers, and learning how the collective efforts advance ecological goals.
- Practice environmental communication and storytelling by creating occasional short social media content highlighting projects, accomplishments, and internship learning experiences.

Qualifications & What We're Looking For

Applicants must be current undergraduate and graduate students. We welcome students interested in exploring careers in habitat restoration, conservation science, ecology, environmental science, natural resource management, or related fields. We're looking for interns who are curious, dependable, ready to learn, and interested in gaining hands-on experience in ecological restoration and conservation. Ideal applicants will have the following qualities and interests:

- Be currently studying environmental science, ecology, plant biology, conservation, habitat restoration, geography, natural resource management, or a related field.
- Have an interest in learning about ecological restoration and the Laguna de Santa Rosa watershed.
- Be comfortable asking questions, receiving guidance, and learning alongside Foundation staff and other participants.
- Demonstrate reliability, attention to detail, and ability to follow directions and established safety procedures.
- Enjoy working outdoors and be comfortable participating in hands-on field activities in varying weather and site conditions.
- Be able to work collaboratively with staff, volunteers, and community members.
- Previous experience using landscape or power tools is helpful but not required.
- Interest in environmental justice, community-based conservation, or nonprofit environmental work is also welcomed.
- Conversational Spanish and experience with diverse communities are welcomed but not required.

Physical Requirements

The Stewardship Internship includes regular outdoor and field-based activities. With or without

reasonable accommodation, interns should be able to:

- Participate in physical activities such as planting, mowing, digging, vegetation management, and other restoration activities.
- Work at a computer and handle field data and other program materials.
- Lift and move materials weighing up to 30 pounds.
- Hike up to two miles over uneven terrain during restoration and field-site activities.
- Spend time outdoors in varying weather conditions and in natural areas where poisonous plants, stinging or biting insects, and other environmental hazards may be present.
- Navigate a two-story building via stairs.
- Safely work in environments with varying noise levels, ranging from quiet office or nursery settings to louder conditions when tools and equipment are in use.

Travel Requirements

Local travel may be required for internship activities at restoration and project sites throughout the Laguna de Santa Rosa watershed. Interns must have reliable transportation to and from the Laguna Environmental Center and access to a vehicle for travel between project sites when needed.

The Laguna Environmental Center is not readily accessible by public transportation; there are currently no bus stops within convenient walking distance.

Internship Schedule

The Stewardship Program Internship is primarily scheduled on Fridays. Internship hours will be arranged within the Stewardship field team's regular Friday schedule of 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m. Participation in occasional Saturday Stewardship Volunteer Workdays is also an expected part of the internship experience.

Because much of the internship involves hands-on field experience, interns should expect to spend a significant portion of their scheduled time outdoors at the Laguna Environmental Center and restoration or project sites throughout the watershed.

Compensation and Duration

Internships are paid via a stipend. The $1,630 stipend is intended to cover travel, meals, or other personal costs the student incurs related to the internship. The student receives half of the total stipend upon completing 50% of the agreed-upon hour commitment, and the second half at the end of the internship. The Laguna Foundation cooperates fully with academic credit-granting programs. Students receiving academic credit should consult with their professors or advisors concerning evaluation forms or other requirements.

Internships require a 90-hour commitment located in Sonoma County, CA. We offer one Stewardship internship session that aligns with the Spring semester (January - May) academic calendar.

Our paid internship program aligns with the college semesters at Sonoma State University and the Santa Rosa Junior College, but applicants enrolled in other schools are also encouraged to apply.

Application Procedure and Deadline

Prospective interns should email **one PDF document** containing all of the following: A cover letter indicating interest and availability (dates and number of hours per week), a résumé, and an unofficial transcript. In your cover letter, please tell us about yourself, what inspires you to pursue an internship in the natural resources field, and why you are interested in an internship at the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis starting on the following dates:

- Spring: Advertising November 1, 2026 through January 10, 2027. Interviews will be scheduled starting December 14, 2026.

Contact

Elias Lopez, Stewardship Project Manager, elias.lopez@lagunafoundation.org