

Grafton Lakes State Park/FFLA Volunteer Fire Tower Steward

CATEGORY: Trained

SUPERVISOR: Director NYS Chapter FFLA- Laurie Ranklin, or GLSP Vol. Coordinator- Tamara Beal

LOCATION: On-site

Located on the Rensselaer Plateau, Grafton Lakes State Park consists of over 2,500 acres and over 25 miles of trails. The park is an invaluable open space recreational and educational resource complete with a fire tower, Welcome Center, 1,000-foot beach, and opportunities for boating and fishing. Trails in the park serve a wide variety of user groups including mountain bikers, hikers, and horse-back riders.

Forest Fire Lookout Association (FFLA)- Founded in 1990, the FFLA is an organization involved in research and promoting public awareness of current and former lookout sites. The NYS Chapter is active in restoration and includes lookout enthusiasts, hikers, foresters, conservationists, and many others.



SUMMARY:

The Volunteer Fire Tower Stewards are a friendly face up at the Dickinson Fire Tower. Their main duty is to inform patrons about the history of the fire tower, answer questions about trails and hiking, encourage leave no trace principles, remove any trash, and cover up graffiti in the tower. While hiking up to the tower, Stewards should take note of any trees down in the trail and report the number of visitors that signed the trail registry the last month. Stewards should also report any maintenance issues with the tower right away, i.e., broken or warped boards, broken railing, or graffiti that is excessive. This position requires volunteers to commit to one weekend day a month June-Oct and a training session in May. Must be able to hike three miles and climb the 60 ft tower.

Volunteers will not have any enforcement authority but will instead offer guidance to visitors on the rules and regulations of the park and the fire tower (such as 6 persons on the tower at one time, leave no trace principles, no one on the tower during a lightning storm, etc.). Serious offences should be reported to the vol. coordinator (or another park employee or the park police if urgent).

DUTIES:

- Chat with patrons about the history of the Dickinson Fire Tower and why fire towers were built
- Donate one weekend day a month June-Oct: **be up at the tower** 10am-2:30pm
- Cover up any graffiti on the fire tower or in the cab
- Chat with patrons about upcoming park events, programs, other good hiking trails or environmental fun facts
- Clear small, downed logs, light garbage, and other debris from trail and the base of the fire tower
- Encourage Leave No Trace policies
- Carry and hand out brochures, trail maps, flyers, etc.
- Maintain strong communication with the volunteer coordinator for scheduling and any trail or patron concerns

REQUIREMENTS:

- Successfully complete all volunteer trainings
- Must have access to a phone or email and a reliable source of transportation
- Environmental knowledge is not required
- Love for hiking, history, and people
- Excellent interpersonal skills and a positive, outgoing attitude
- Work requires moderately strenuous physical exertion (three-mile hike total, including 80 steps to the top)

For more information, or to apply, please contact:

Tamara Beal, Environmental Educator and Volunteer Coordinator

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518-279-1155 or graffonlakesvolunteers@parks.ny.gov