

LACAWAC
SANCTUARY
VOLUNTEER
HANDBOOK



Volunteering at Lacawac

HISTORY

Lacawac Sanctuary has a long history that reaches back to colonial times and touches on the forestry and coal industries of the early 19th century. The Sanctuary's history began with the 1849 acquisition of a large tract of the Wallenpaupack Manor in Wayne County by Burton G. Morss, a sawmill and tannery owner in Ledgedale. William Connell, a self-made businessman who worked in the coal fields early in his life, bought the property for a summer estate called Connell Park. He served in the U.S. House of Representatives, and later died in 1909.

Colonel Louis A. Watres, a lawyer and businessman in Scranton, became involved with Lacawac through the development of the Wallenpaupack power project. In 1913, 15,000 acres of land were acquired along the river in order to create the dam, including the Connell property, which cost Watres \$15,000.

In 1948, L. Arthur Watres, grandson of Colonel Watres, and his mother Mrs. Reyburn Watres moved to Lacawac. They immediately set about restoring the now-degraded estate. Through connections to prominent academics and conservationists, Arthur Watres helped identify Lacawac as the southernmost, unpolluted glacial lake in the United States, an invaluable resource to both conservationists and research scientists. Recognizing that it deserved long-term protection, in 1966, with the donation of 341 acres and several historic buildings, the Watres' formed the Lacawac Sanctuary Foundation to administer and steward the wonderful resource that is the Sanctuary. In 1968, the Sanctuary was designated as a National Natural Landmark.

Presently the Sanctuary is 510 acres, including a mature second growth forest, Lake Lacawac, two ponds, several wetlands, and over a mile of shoreline along Lake Wallenpaupack. The highlight of the Sanctuary's natural resources is the 52-acre, pristine glacial lake roughly in the middle of the property. The kidney-shaped lake is a globally unique resource both for the fact that it is one of the southernmost glacial lakes in the United States, as well as for the fact that it has remained nearly pristine and protected while so many similar lakes in the Northeastern United States have been impacted or otherwise affected by human hands.

The Sanctuary's built infrastructure was established at the turn of the 20th century and today stands as a historically important estate. The suite of buildings include the main house or Lodge, an Ice House, coachman's house, pump house and a carriage house. The Lodge, the Ice House, and the Carriage House are all on the National Register of Historic Places (listed in 1979). Lake Lacawac was listed as a National Natural Landmark in 1968.

Today Lacawac serves as an ecological field research station and public environmental education facility.

PROGRAMS

Volunteers play important roles at Lacawac Sanctuary. They provide invaluable assistance to the staff and the public. Trained volunteers also help to interpret for visitors the cultural, historical, natural and recreational resources of our facility.

TRAILS, FACILITY AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Lacawac has over 9 miles of trails. There are a number of ways you can contribute within this program. We are looking for hikers who can report on trail conditions, stewards who can adopt sections of trail and be responsible for ongoing maintenance, and volunteers who want to join trail work parties. We also have opportunities for gardening, carpentry, facility cleaning, painting, electrical work and plumbing.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Keeping in line with our mission, we have continually worked to connect people of all ages and backgrounds to the land. Our educational programs ensure learning in an outdoors, hands-on atmosphere. There are numerous valuable ways volunteers support our environmental education efforts including leading hikes, assisting with a school field trip or creating interpretive signage or educational materials for the center.

SPECIAL EVENTS

There are a number of events hosted at Lacawac every year, including our Farm to Plate Dinner, Lake to Lake 8K Trail Run, and volunteer work days. Volunteers are invited to help with one or all of these events. Off-site events are also an important of spreading the word about Lacawac. We often look for volunteers who can travel to fairs and festivals to represent Lacawac at public events such as fairs and expos. Their valuable work gains exposure for Lacawac and secures membership support.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Lacawac Sanctuary relies on the support of members and donors. We have an active membership program and a fundraising/development program. Lacawac seeks volunteer support for membership and development in our organization. Lacawac also utilizes administrative volunteers to help with various projects in the office and beyond. These volunteers help with data entry, photography, communications and much more.

TYPES OF VOLUNTEERS

REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

Regular volunteers are those who can commit to a regular schedule every week or few weeks. Regular volunteers are eligible for fixed jobs, such as helping with education programs, doing habitat restoration work, or working at the front desk.

OCCASIONAL/PERIODIC VOLUNTEERS

Periodic volunteers help on an "as-needed basis." Periodic volunteers help with flyer distribution, events, or with other opportunities that arise. Most volunteers are periodic and come help monthly or every few months..

GROUPS AND BUSINESSES

We are always looking for help from groups and businesses! We have many projects during the year that are great for larger groups of people interested in making a difference in the community. If you are part of a group or a business and would like to discuss service projects at Lacawac, please let the volunteer coordinator know.

COMMUNITY SERVICE WORKER

Community service workers are completing required hours as mandated by the courts or to regain attendance credits for school. Community service workers are not considered volunteers and are therefore held to strict expectations while completing service. If you are a community service worker, be sure to talk with the volunteer coordinator about the rules and expectations you need to abide by to complete community service at Lacawac.

BENEFITS OF BEING A LACAWAC VOLUNTEER

The overall act of volunteering comes with many benefits, to the volunteer, to the sponsoring organization, and to the community as a whole. There are countless studies outlining the health and wellness benefit of volunteering. We at Lacawac Sanctuary feel that there are benefits, in addition to the general volunteerism benefit, that we are able to offer.

GIVING BACK

We hear time after time that our volunteers are so grateful for the opportunity to give back to Lacawac because they have appreciated the great work we have been able to accomplish.

MATERIALS

Lacawac happily supports you, our volunteer, with the tools and materials you need to be successful in your work. Trails volunteers are given access to tool sheds and the lumber and other materials needed for their work. Educational guides are given access to educational materials and engaging activities for their events. These are just two examples of the support the organization gives, if there is ever a need that arises during your service to Lacawac, please contact us to discuss this. They will gladly work with you to make you the most successful volunteer you can be.

MEET NEW PEOPLE

While a lot of the work our volunteers do is self-led and may be accomplished by solo volunteers, a number of our programs utilize groups of volunteers together. Work parties, trainings, and other events can be a great opportunity for you to meet like-minded individuals within our community. We also welcome you to invite your friends to come along with you during your volunteer efforts to get them involved with Lacawac as well.

DOLLARS FOR DOERS AND OTHER VOLUNTEER GRANT PROGRAMS

As a volunteer, you have the opportunity to support this organization financially without having to open your wallet or checkbook. Often called Dollars for Doers, these philanthropic programs offered by corporations provide monetary donations to non-profits when employees (and sometimes even retirees or spouses) volunteer. These grants are typically based on the number of hours the employee gives. Each company has different guidelines and specific requirements so be sure to check with your employer to determine if they participate.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A VOLUNTEER

We appreciate all of our volunteers and recognize that volunteers are a vital part of our organization. As such, we recognize that each volunteer has certain rights:

- The right to say no to any job or task asked of you
- The right to not complete a task because you do not have the appropriate safety equipment or personal protective gear
- The right to end your volunteer service at any time
- The right to voice your opinion
- The right to receive feedback from your volunteer supervisor or a staff member
- The right to enjoy and benefit from your volunteer service
- The right to feel included as part of a team
- The right to be acknowledged and valued as part of this team

Volunteers who accept the responsibility of our program are expected to:

- Abide by the policies and procedures of Lacawac Sanctuary
- Keep contact information and records up-to-date with the volunteer coordinator
- Sign-in and sign-out to record the number of hours worked
- Report accident or injury to the volunteer coordinator
- Communicate with the volunteer coordinator
- Keep yourself and others safe
- Take pride in and be loyal to the Ogden Nature Center

REQUIREMENTS

AGE REQUIREMENT

People of any age are welcome to volunteer at Lacawac. However, youth under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Youth groups such as scout or school groups who want to volunteer must bring one adult for every 6 youth.

DOCUMENTATION OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Lacawac relies on you to tell us all the great work you are doing. Please remember to sign in and out at Lacawac's Visitor Center.

REIMBURSEMENT

Pre-approved expenses can be reimbursed with prior authorization from Lacawac staff. Any expenses that were not pre-approved will not be eligible for reimbursement. Unreimbursed expenses incurred during your volunteer service may be eligible for tax benefits. Contact your tax professional for more information.

CLEAR COMMUNICATION

Lacawac staff and volunteer coordinator welcome any and all questions or concerns you may have, so feel free to contact those people at any time. We are here to support you!

PERSONAL CONDUCT

Lacawac strives to uphold a well-run working environment and is able to do so with a few rules of conduct.

Interaction with other volunteers or staff:

In order to maintain a pleasant and enjoyable working environment, please be respectful of other's work style and time constraints. It is important to remember that everyone has their own strengths and interests. While a person may have a different work style than your own, it does not make one better than the other. We are certain that all volunteers and staff members are able to treat each other respectfully. It is also important to note here that employees of Lacawac "wear more than one hat" and may not work typical business hours because some positions are less than full time. Please keep that in mind when attempting to communicate with a Lacawac staff member.

When dealing with media or the public:

While you are representing Lacawac, please present yourself in a professional manner. From time to time our volunteers may have interactions with media outlets. You can direct media inquiries to Lacawac's Volunteer Coordinator if you are more comfortable with that arrangement. Our volunteers are often the first contact people have with Lacawac. Many of our greatest supporters have noted they made the decision to support the organization based on an excellent interaction with a volunteer.

LEGAL INFO

SAFETY

Lacawac Sanctuary prides itself on maintaining a safe working environment for our staff and volunteers. Depending on the volunteer position, there may be some risks involved with the work you will be asked to do. We strive for complete transparency about the work you may take on. We also support our volunteers' well-being and safety by providing training meant to decrease the risks involved with the work.

Please request the necessary safety equipment as applicable. If it is not available for you to borrow, you are asked to not do that job until you have the proper safety equipment. It is certain that proper understanding of the work and inherent risks is one of your best tools for protection.

As always, in the case of an emergency situation, contact 911 immediately and remain calm and in control.

Lacawac asks that any safety-related incidents occurring during your volunteer service be reported promptly to Lacawac Staff or the Volunteer Coordinator.

Important Safety Information:

- Please inform the Volunteer Coordinator of any medical issues or allergies that could potentially impact your volunteer work i.e. allergy to bees, epilepsy, etc.
- Please contact a staff member first if there are non-emergency safety issues involving a member of the public on our grounds. In case of emergency, call 911.
- When you arrive to start your volunteer time at Lacawac, please tell a staff member that you are here, where you plan to be, and when you plan to leave.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY AND NON-HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the policy of Lacawac Sanctuary to recruit, train, develop, and promote volunteers and employees on the basis of individual qualifications and merit without regard to sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, disability, medical condition, age, marital status, race, color, religion or national origin, or in any other manner prohibited by law.

We are committed to providing a work- and volunteer-environment free from all forms of harassment. Lacawac does not tolerate or condone harassment of any kind by a volunteer or employee. Any volunteer or employee acting contrary to this policy will be subject to corrective action up to and including separation from their position.

If you feel you have been subject to or witnessed discrimination or harassment, immediately contact the Volunteer Coordinator. They will promptly investigate the complaint. All reports of harassment and discrimination will be investigated fully, objectively, immediately and confidentially. In the event of a complaint involving the Volunteer Coordinator, please contact Lacawac's President and that person will be responsible for investigating the complaint.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Lacawac strives to maintain and build a positive reputation while enhancing the goals in its mission. Countless conversations, information, inquiries and other interactions take place about Lacawac via social media. We encourage you, and the public to take part in these conversations and share optimistic and positive remarks about Lacawac. Volunteers must remember that what you post is often a direct reflection of yourself and Lacawac. A seemingly harmless post can cause damage. For example, discussing a negative interaction at Lacawac.

General guidelines when online:

- Be conscientious when mixing your volunteer and personal lives.
- If you are not sure, do not post. When in doubt, ask.
- If the news media contacts you about Lacawac, refer them to Lacawac's President.
- Be respectful, professional and avoid making defamatory statements.
- Refrain from using social media while volunteering.
- If you have questions, please ask Lacawac staff or the President.

Do not do the following when online:

- Discuss confidential or sensitive information related to Lacawac's internal business.
- Discuss sponsorship, donations or projects.
- Discuss sensitive visitor, employee or volunteer interactions.
- Use Lacawac logos, photos, or images without permission

TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

ENDING YOUR VOLUNTEER SERVICE WITH LACAWAC SANCTUARY

Situations in your life may change. If you are no longer able to or interested in volunteering with Lacawac, contact the Volunteer Coordinator. We ask that any work that is in-process be completed before the end of your volunteer service. If this is not feasible, please inform your point of contact to discuss a transition plan.

SOMETIMES THE FIT JUST ISN'T QUITE RIGHT

Lacawac sets procedures to ensure your goals for volunteering are compatible with our goals. From time to time, a disagreement may arise. To help manage these moments, Lacawac has set a protocol. Volunteers are invited to inform the Volunteer Coordinator of a situation as soon as an issue arises. These staff will work with both parties to mitigate the situation. The steps to resolving the conflict may include, but are not limited to, discussion of the volunteer position requirements with the volunteer, retraining of the volunteer, finding

another placement for the volunteer that is better suited to the needs and skills of the volunteer and the organization, or termination of service.

Termination of volunteer service is the last step reluctantly taken if the issue is not resolved. Possible grounds for termination of volunteer service may include, but are not limited to: gross misconduct or insubordination; theft of property or misuse of Lacawac materials; harassment, abuse, or mistreatment of Lacawac employees, volunteers, or event participants; misrepresentation of the organization; and failure to abide by the policies and procedures agreed upon.