2026 JFR Crew Leader Information

6 W's of JFR

What

The Junior Forest Ranger program is a paid summer job that exposes high school students to a wide variety of careers in the natural resource sector. This includes everything under forestry, wildfire, environment and parks, conservation, stewardship and fish and wildlife.

The work projects you may take part in include trail building, stream assessments, helicopter rides, getting out to an actual wildfire or mock wildfire, ATV certification, mountain pine beetle work, flora and fauna identification, assisting with wildlife research, and every crew takes part in various opportunities of Indigenous learning. These are just some of the projects you may take part in during the summer, as it depends on the area you are stationed.

The projects that are planned are organized by the Crew Leaders before the summer begins. These projects are based on the six pillars of the JFR program which are all formed by the partnerships we have developed over the last 60+ years. These are the six pillars which make up the JFR program:

1. Wildfire: Introduce JFR crews to wildfire prevention, wildfire operations, emergency preparedness and recovery. Projects build awareness of how wildfire affects Alberta's landscapes and communities and how trained personnel prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.
2. Natural Resources and the Environment: Build knowledge and practical understanding of Alberta's forests, ecosystems, wildlife, vegetation, habitat and environmental conditions. Projects help JFR crews observe the natural world, collect or interpret information, and understand how natural-resource professionals monitor and manage it.
3. Parks and Stewardship: Develop the skills, awareness and sense of responsibility needed to care for Alberta's parks, trails, recreation sites and other natural spaces. Projects give crews opportunities to contribute practical work that supports safe and responsible outdoor recreation.
4. Technical Skills and Certifications: Build practical outdoor and field skills that help JFR crews work safely, navigate unfamiliar places, use equipment appropriately and become more capable in outdoor settings. Some skills can be taught by trained JFR leaders and specialized or regulated activities require qualified instructors.
5. Community Engagement and Outreach: Develop leadership skills and build connections with the communities they work in. Leaders and Crew members take on different leadership opportunities, community events, help the public understand the JFR program and the value of Alberta's natural spaces and natural resource work.
6. Culture and TEK: Provide opportunities for JFR crews to learn about First Nations and Métis communities in Alberta, their cultures and relationships with the land, and environmental observations and teachings shared through Elders and Knowledge Keepers. Activities should be guided by community partners and delivered respectfully, with attention to local protocols and permissions.

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Who

Crew Leaders and Sub-Leaders are over 20 years old as of the first day of Crew Leader training. Successful applicants are placed with a co-leader in 7 of the 10 Forest Areas in Alberta and will be given a crew of 6 to 8 High School students. Prerequisites for Crew Leaders and Sub-Leaders:

- Minimum 20 years old as of the start of leader training
- Minimum High School Diploma and related training/courses AND experience
- Have experience working with youth and project planning
- An unrestricted, Alberta Class 5 Driver's License, or equivalent
- A minimum of Standard First Aid with Level A or C CPR certification
- A Defensive Driving Certification
- An acceptable Drivers Abstract
- A Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector check
- Complete a JFR fitness test
- Prepared to live and work in the outdoors
- Willing to take on new challenges and have fun!

Where

There will be 7 crews based out of the possible ten different forest areas across the province. The 10 forest areas include: High Level, Peace River, Grande Prairie, Lac La Biche, Rocky Mountain House, Slave Lake, Whitecourt, Fort McMurray, Edson and Calgary.

Every JFR crew stays at or near a wildfire base in cabins or trailers. Some of nights will be spent in tents if you are completing a project farther away from base. There are times during the summer where you may be living and working in semi-remote locations.

When

Applications open mid-December on the GoA Job Board and will be open until all positions are filled. Qualified individuals will be contacted for a virtual interview.

The program will begin with Leader Training at the Hinton Training Centre in mid-May. Members join the program during member training the first week of July. The program concludes the end of August with the annual Bull of the Woods competition.

Why

The JFR program offers an amazing career building opportunity for students, to help prepare them for their future. The summer offers a rewarding, challenging and fun experience. Participants will meet new people from across Alberta and be able to see new parts of the province. Crew Members as well as Leaders gain valuable job experience in natural resource management, have the chance to meet professionals in the field, and learn about what careers they may be interested in.

Other

- Paid summer employment: Crew Leader (Natural Resources 4) $26.70 to $33.79 (NR4) per hour; Sub Leader (Natural Resources 3) $25.82 to $32.67 (NR3) per hour
- Free accommodations and meals for the summer

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- Evenings and weekends are usually spent hanging around camp, having a campfire, playing sports or games, going fishing, swimming, hiking, and heading into town.
- Every crew member is given a water bottle, t-shirts, gloves, safety glasses, other JFR swag, and loaned Uniforms and hard hat.
- Leaders must provide their own personal gear; however, reimbursement for steel toe boots is available. Recommended equipment list can be found here on our website.

Contact Us

- Email WF.JFR-Alberta@gov.ab.ca
- Call 780-405-7483 or 780-974-2860
- Reach us on Facebook, Youtube, Instagram
- Website www.albertajfr.ca

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