

## *From the inside the Forest Service...*



As the Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention Team Leader for the Northern Region of the US Forest Service it is my job to get you a job. I get asked multiple times a day how to get a job with our agency and what tips I have to offer. Here they are:

**Outreaches** - The Forest Service uses a pre-announcement or “outreach” process first before we formally advertise jobs. This is an important step for us as the responses we get help us determine how to advertise the job. At least once a week check the outreach database that houses all the jobs we are outreaching for. If you find an outreach of interest, make sure to fill out the form and send it in to the hiring manager.

Link to the [outreach database](#)

**Call the Hiring Manager** – This is likely the single most important thing you need to do when applying for a Forest Service job. Hiring manager’s contact information is found on the outreach for each job (see above). The Federal application process is highly centralized and we can receive upwards of 200-400 applicants per job. If you don’t stand out, you won’t. Do not simply submit an application and hope for the best. Hiring decisions are still made at the local level and influenced greatly by the local hiring manager. You need to call or better yet, stop by and visit, with the hiring manager. Be prepared to ask questions about the job, the location, housing, specific skill sets they are looking for, etc. Also be prepared to tell them about yourself, why you want the job, what your future goals are, etc. Hiring managers are also great people to ask questions about USAjobs.gov

Listing of [Forest Service districts](#)

**Start Early with USAjobs.gov** – This website is the only way to apply for Forest Service jobs. The website is hard to manage, difficult, and unforgiving. Although it is unfortunate this is the case, it is still the only means managers have to hire. You will need to start with setting up a profile on USAjobs and get your documentation ready. This can take a fair chunk of time and you need to plan ahead at least a few weeks in advance of a job coming open to ensure you have everything you need. You must follow the instructions, include all documents that are required, and complete required fields to the letter or your application will not be considered for the position. If you have questions about this, call the hiring manager for the position in addition to the HR number that is given. Again, this is where you need to give yourself time in the process. Take a look at similar jobs so you are familiar with what all is needed to apply and prepare in advance.

It's also good to search USAjobs once a week for jobs you'd be interested in. This is in addition to the outreach database. Think of it like reading a newspaper or checking Facebook and get into the routine.

**Consider Summer Jobs to Get Your Foot in the Door** – In Region 1 of the Forest Service (Montana, North Idaho, and parts of the Dakotas) we hire over 1000 people for summer jobs. These jobs are a great way to get familiar with the Forest Service, the type of work we do, and the people. Although this is slowly changing, the culture of the Forest Service is to hire people who have work experience with the Forest Service or related agency. Getting a seasonal/temporary or summer job will make it much easier to come back again for seasonal work or to move into a permanent position.

**Consider Working in Wildland Firefighting Jobs** - There are more fire fighting jobs in the agency than any other. As such, if you apply there is greater potential of getting hired. Firefighting jobs are demanding on many levels so you need to make sure you are physically and mentally ready for such a job. Once you are hired as a firefighter, it can lead to moving upward or laterally into a position you want to do long term. The experience in fire will forever be valued for any position you apply to within the agency.

**Be Persistent and Don't Lose Hope** – If you are serious about working for the Forest Service, stick with it. Make yourself known. Follow the process to the letter. It will be worth it.

Check out our [Region 1 Jobs website](#) for more information as well as connect via social media.



Amber Kamps, USFS Northern Region Outreach, Recruitment, & Retention Team Leader

[akamps@fs.fed.us](mailto:akamps@fs.fed.us) - (406)439-9138

