The Ottawa National Forest will soon be hiring a GS-0101/0401-07/09 Recreation Planner. The purpose of this outreach is to determine the potential applicant pool for the position described below and to establish appropriate recruitment methods and areas of consideration for the vacancy announcement. Responses received from this outreach notice will be relied upon to make these determinations.

Your response by:  
January 27, 2016  
would be greatly appreciated

About the Position

The Ottawa National Forest, in Michigan’s Western Upper Peninsula, will soon be advertising for a GS-0101/0401-07/09 Recreation Planner. The duty station for this position will be: Watersmeet, Michigan, OR Ironwood, Michigan. The incumbent would serve as a member of the Forest’s recreation staff and work across all Districts.

The Ottawa National Forest has a very diverse and active recreation program, managing three wildernesses; multiple developed recreation sites; an extensive dispersed recreation program, including OHV trails and non-motorized trails; recreation residences and special uses; as well as, multiple partnerships. The incumbent of this position would be responsible for management of developed and dispersed recreation areas, including wilderness and trails; oversight of concessionaire permits; NEPA support; and, coordination with multiple partners and volunteers.

About the Forest

The nearly one million acres Ottawa National Forest is located in the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan, an area known for its remote character, relatively pristine lakes and streams, vast northern hardwood forests, and abundant wildlife. The Ottawa offers numerous recreational opportunities, including stream and lake fishing (blue-ribbon trout streams), deer and small-game hunting, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, hiking, birding, cross-country and downhill skiing, and many others.
The half million acres that make up the southern portion of the Ottawa contains numerous glacial lakes, which are home to bald eagles, ospreys, loons, smallmouth and largemouth bass, walleye, northern pike, and other native fish and wildlife species. Some of the highest-quality streams and rivers in the Midwest are also found on the Ottawa, with several now designated as Federal Wild, Scenic, or Recreational Rivers. Rivers on the Forest drain into both the Lake Michigan and Lake Superior watersheds, with several of the Lake Superior streams having numerous waterfalls. There are three designated Wilderness areas on the Ottawa, Sylvania, McCormick and Sturgeon River Gorge.

Field units are located in rural areas, with very small (Kenton - approx. 200 population) to somewhat larger (Bessemer/Ironwood area - approx. 10,000 population) towns. Somewhat larger nearby cities include: Marquette, MI (approx. 25,000 population - 75 miles east of Kenton); Wausau, WI (approx. 35,000 population - 120 miles south of Watersmeet).

Watersmeet, Michigan and Surrounding Areas
Watersmeet is located in the center of the Ottawa National Forest in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. This unincorporated community has a population of 1,472 and is the known for its outdoor recreation opportunities. Camping, hiking, canoeing, fishing, and hunting are just a few activities that occur in this northwoods community and the surrounding areas. Historically, Watersmeet was the railroad hub for the Upper Peninsula. Now it is the snowmobiling hub connecting every town in the western UP with trails in northern Wisconsin. There is a K-12 school located downtown Watersmeet. Modern medical facilities are located within 50 miles in Wisconsin and/or Ironwood, Michigan. Opportunities for higher education are also located within 50-100 miles. A casino operated by the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Chippewa Indians generates many local jobs and supports an increasing tourism economy. Housing is available at below national average costs. For more information: http://www.watersmeet.org/

Eagle River, Wisconsin, is located approximately 30 miles south of Watersmeet. With a year-round population of 1,400, the residency swells during summer months with seasonal home owners. This is a full-service community with hospital and medical facilities; a small airport; public and private elementary/middle schools; a public high school; access to higher educational facilities; and, several churches affiliated with a variety of religions. Because of the many lakes that populate the area around Eagle River, the city is known for being a popular vacation destination. High snow totals make the area a mecca for the winter enthusiast. Affordable land and housing costs, quality schools, a growing tourism industry, community services and medical facilities merge to create a quality of life that lures new residents and retiree’s alike. For more information: http://www.eagleriver.org/relocate.asp

Ironwood, Michigan
Located on the western edge of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and just 15 miles south of Lake Superior, Ironwood offers a unique north woods living experience that appeals to the outdoors enthusiast. Ironwood is a city for all seasons, offering a multitude of recreational opportunities just outside your door. Hiking, biking, camping, fishing, boating, downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling are just a few of the experiences that await you. In addition, there are 4 downhill ski facilities and 2 cross-country ski facilities within 30 minutes or less of Ironwood. With a population of just over 5,000, Ironwood is a full-service community offering both public and private K-12 schools and access to higher education at Gogebic Community College (which is rated among the top 10% of community colleges in the nation). A full-service hospital is located in Ironwood, with larger medical facilities within 50-100 miles. An active arts program, including two live theatres, dance groups and museums provide for entertainment throughout the year. Dance programs, theatre groups, musical groups and art studios are always welcoming new members. Housing prices are variable depending on location, but are generally somewhat lower than other parts of the Midwest. Prices for lakefront
property/housing are considerably higher than for off-water property, due to high demand and limited availability in some areas. Rentals can be difficult to obtain in some areas, but some may be available.

How to Apply
The vacancy announcement for this position will be posted on the U.S. Government’s official website for employment opportunities at: www.usajobs.gov. All applications must be received through this website.

By responding to this outreach notice, you will receive notification of the availability of the vacancy announcement. Please pay close attention to the opening/closing dates of all vacancy announcements.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
Melissa Simpson, Natural Resources Specialist (Rec)
Phone # - 906-932-1330, ext. 511
E-mail Address – mdsimpson@fs.fed.us