**Position:** Weather Observer/Staff Meteorologist  
**Updated:** August 2015  
**Type:** Salaried – Exempt from Overtime  
**Reports to:** Co-Director of Summit Operations

**General Description**

A Mount Washington Observatory (MWO) Weather Observer’s principal role is weather observation—the collecting of weather data at the summit of Mount Washington, New Hampshire. The principal work location for this position, for the entirety of the 8-day work week (Wednesday-Wednesday), is the mountaintop weather station. During the 8-day work week, the Weather Observer/Staff Meteorologist is living in a remote mountaintop station with limited access. Bunk room and living quarters are shared with other staff, volunteers, and guests.

The Staff Meteorologist serves as one of the principal contacts between MWO and the National Weather Service (NWS), and provides researchers and other staff with up-to-date information concerning the meteorological equipment and accepted procedures on the summit. S/he must keep the station in working order and maintain high standards to properly support both MWO’s contract with NWS, as well as other contractors and/or researchers. S/he is fully responsible for quality control of observational data, both past and present, as well as any and all weather forecasts that are crafted and disseminated to the general public. Due to these requirements, this position generally compels the Staff Meteorologist to work the 12-hour night shift.

In addition to collecting weather data, he/she performs many other tasks while on duty at the Observatory. These tasks include educational outreach, hospitality, logistical planning, coordination, and research support, as well as the direction of interns and volunteers. As a group, Weather Observers are responsible for helping to maintain the summit facility and for the overall quality of our various programs.

**Supervisory Responsibilities:**

The Weather Observer/Staff Meteorologist is required to assist in the oversight and motivation of intern and summit volunteer positions.

1. **Summit Interns:** Assists in the training of summit interns, specifically with regards to weather operations such as weather observation, forecasting, radio training, and data entry projects
2. **Summit Observers:** Oversees the METAR-certification of all newly-hired weather observers. The Weather Observer/Staff Meteorologist must ensure that new observers are adequately trained and certified in accordance with NWS standards outlined in the Federal Meteorological Handbook-1 (FMH-1) within three (3) months of date of hire for Staff Meteorologists, or six (6) months of date of hire for all other observers
3. **Summit Volunteers:** Assists in the orientation and logistical coordination of new summit volunteers

**Essential Tasks:** The Weather Observer/Staff Meteorologist is responsible for the following:
1. Weather Observation:
   a. Transmitting of consistent, accurate weather observations in a punctual manner to the National Weather Service (NWS) twelve times per day (generally 5PM – 5AM EST)
   b. Ensure that all weather observers practice current, sound methodology in observation techniques and data analysis
   c. Make and clearly record decisions surrounding the coding and dissemination of weather data, with particular attention to the application of coding procedures to MWO’s unique mountaintop location
   d. Maintain weather data records using written forms, paper charts, digital files, and database methods as appropriate; ensure these forms are kept in sufficient stock

2. Internal Data Quality Assurance/Quality Control:
   a. Nightly, weekly, and monthly checks of all summit observational data and related forms in a timely manner
   b. Long-term storage, management, and quality assurance of climate record
   c. Oversight of all observation-related training for full-time summit weather observers, including METAR-certification training
   d. Nightly checks of all mesonet stations and their collected data

3. Instrumentation
   a. Oversee instrumentation upkeep and repairs by summit staff, and make related recommendations to the Co-Directors of Summit Operations
   b. General maintenance of weather instrumentation and data systems, including regular de-icing in the winter months
   c. Keep an up-to-date log of all summit instrumentation and maintain a calibration schedule with appropriate records
   d. Help maintain an up-to-date log of all mesonet instrumentation and maintain a calibration schedule with appropriate records, in conjunction with IT staff

4. Forecasting
   a. Dissemination of current and future weather conditions to appropriate outlets, including media, social media, and Search-and-Rescue inquiries
   b. Creation and dissemination of local and statewide forecasts, via the internet, radio, television, and social media

5. National Weather Service (NWS) relations
   a. Maintain a working relationship with the local WFO in Gray, ME and the Observing Program Leader
   b. Help to ensure that all aspects of the NWS contract are fulfilled in accordance with the FMH-1
   c. Implement any changes in observation coding or otherwise, specified by NWS, including the coordination of the annual station inspection visit to the summit station

6. Research & Product Testing
   a. Assist in the execution of product tests at the summit weather station
   b. General oversight, upkeep, and maintenance of all research projects in process under the auspices of summit operations

7. Transportation
   a. Safe and competent operation of Observatory vehicles (excluding the Snow Cat) during the summer months in all manner of weather conditions.
   b. Actively ensure the safety of all passengers (staff and/or guests) while operating or riding in Observatory vehicles, in accordance with MWO’s safety standards
8. Outreach & Social Media
   a. Assist in daily updates to all social media outlets, particularly during notable weather events or vital MWO fundraising events
   b. Assist in capturing digital images of notable summit events, including but not limited to weather phenomena, MWO fundraisers & events, and staff images
   c. Compose regular blog entries for website dissemination
   d. Write an article for MWO’s quarterly magazine, Windswept, and other articles as required
   e. Interaction with the media, membership, and the general public in person, over the phone, via e-mail, or through social media as required
   f. Act as a resource for staff developing educational programs
   g. Assist in providing hospitality and support for day and overnight trips to the summit weather station

9. Organizational Success
   a. Regular participation in and support of ongoing fundraising efforts
   b. Work with other Observatory departments as needed
   c. Interaction with scientific, educational, and other professional communities as required

10. Facilities
    a. Participation in general building maintenance and upkeep, including the yearly winterization effort, monitoring building statistics, and assisting in snow removal efforts
    b. Maintenance and repair of MWO’s leased space (tower, offices, living quarters) on the summit, keeping the facility neat, clean, orderly, and in good repair

11. Public Safety & Emergency Response
    a. Assist in dissemination of weather-related information to New Hampshire Fish & Game, White Mountain National Forest, Mount Washington State Park, and the Appalachian Mountain Club, among others
    b. Assist in the maintenance of first aid supplies at the summit facility
    c. Assist in providing safety tours to overnight MWO guests, and assist in enforcing safety regulations with all guests that pass through the confines of the Observatory
    d. Be willing and able to handle emergency situations with MWO staff and guests

Because every department within the Observatory depends in varying degrees on the resources of the summit, it is essential that a Weather Observer supports, communicates, cooperates, and works as a team member with all departments to ensure optimization of each department’s goals.

**Additional Schedule & Logistical Obligations**

1. Work Schedule
   a. Is present on the summit for a full shift, Wednesday to Wednesday, opposite the other Weather Observer/Staff Meteorologist.
   b. Is required to work the 12-hour night shift during shift weeks, being on duty from 5:30 PM – 5:30 AM, with 2 hours of discretionary break time.
   c. Occasionally may be required to assist in special events, activities, or projects while off-site and/or off-shift.

2. Logistics
   a. Coordinates unfinished tasks, ongoing projects, and other vital logistics with the opposite Weather Observer/Staff Meteorologist regularly at shift change
   b. Participate in the weekly food order process, including crafting lists and/or shopping for necessary weekly items before shift change Wednesday.
3. Off-Summit Living: Due to the nature of the week-on/week-off schedule, it is commonplace for summit staff to live considerable distances from the summit weather station. Despite this distance, the Weather Observer/Staff Meteorologist is always responsible for timely arrival to the base of the Mt. Washington Auto Road for shift changes. Due to the nature of Mount Washington’s weather, regular Wednesday shift changes may be rescheduled last-minute to earlier or later times; the Weather Observer/Staff Meteorologist is still responsible for his/her on-time arrival to the base amidst these (and any other) circumstances.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:
• Must be in excellent physical condition and capable of self-rescue in extreme weather conditions and/or assisting others as necessary.
• Able to lift in excess of 50 lbs, strength for shoveling, the ability to climb stairs and ladders frequently, and must be able to handle constant exposure to a combination of high winds, low temperatures, and white-out conditions.
• Computer literacy, including a thorough knowledge of Microsoft operating systems, Microsoft Office (Excel, Word, and PowerPoint, as a minimum).
• Experience with computer programming, particularly
• All Weather Observers serve as the Observatory’s ambassadors. They must be courteous and comfortable working with the general public, Observatory guests, and fellow staff members in tight living situations.
• METAR certification within three (3) months of acceptance of the position. Failure to achieve certification in this period may result in termination.

Education and Experience
• A minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree in Meteorology or Atmospheric Science.
• Previous experience with real-time weather forecasting is highly preferred.
• Previous experience with performing manual surface weather observations is preferred.
• Previous experience with live and/or pre-recorded radio broadcasting is preferred.
• Previous experience with meteorological instrumentation maintenance & troubleshooting is preferred.
• An interest in the outdoors and historic knowledge of MWO and Mount Washington in general is desirable.

Work Environment
This position is year-round and is based on the summit of Mount Washington. The typical work-week is Wednesday to Wednesday at the summit, although occasional interruptions in this week-on/week-off schedule are possible due to weather conditions or scheduling changes. The summit of Mount Washington is a remote location and should be considered a dangerous work environment. Safety must be at the forefront of all obligations.

Salary: The duties and tasks listed above are for a salaried, exempt from overtime position. Salary range is commensurate with experience.