

# ECO AmeriCorps

2024-2025



## Field Tech & Outreach Specialist

Friends of Northern Lake Champlain, 6 Fairfield Hill Road, Saint Albans, VT 05478

Friends of Northern Lake Champlain is a non-profit organization that works to clean the waters of northern Lake Champlain and its watershed by working collaboratively with citizens, businesses, farmers and government to reduce land-use pollution.

Position Supervisor: Bridget Butler, Executive Director

I oversee all functions of FNLC work including, outreach, education, water quality projects & sampling, and fundraising.

### The Role:

The Field Tech & Outreach Specialist position has evolved into being a combination of on-the-ground water quality monitoring and providing outreach programming to the public and specific audiences within the Missisquoi & Direct Lake watersheds. This position will report to the Executive Director and collaborate with the ED and our Project Coordinator by:

1. Collecting water samples along Rock River tributaries in northwestern Vermont. Sampling occurs biweekly during the field season including high flow event water quality samples at 14 sites. Season runs roughly April through November. Includes some data analysis and social marketing about our monitoring.
2. Supporting the Project Coordinator with all work focused in the Rock River watershed, including project identification and scoping, farmer interviews, stream/ditch assessments, etc. This includes attending meetings with farmers, partners, and consultants.
3. Supporting our outreach and education efforts including StreamWise and LakeWise programming and assessments, Lake Lessons for elementary school students, and coordinating with our local regional planning commission to serve residents of Saint Albans City and Town. This includes

organizing webinars, workshops, stream clean ups and other activities for the public, as well as social marketing for these events.

Our organization is in a growth stage, making the move from a mostly volunteer board led organization to one with full-time year-round staff. We're still a very small organization trying to meet the needs of the demand for water quality projects that will support the state's efforts to meet EPA mandates concerning Lake Champlain. An ECO member allows us to add to our capacity to continue to build upon our work in the watershed and maintain consistency with our services to the communities around us.

Our water quality data is shared with the state, as we track the success of best management practices on farms and the broader landscape. We use the Agency of Natural Resources phosphorus calculator to track each project's impact on decreasing the amount going into Lake Champlain. We track contact hours and numbers of people we serve through our outreach and education programs.

By supporting FNLC's water quality monitoring, project implementation, and educational outreach events, that non-point source phosphorus loss into the northern arm of Lake Champlain will be reduced to support the State's goal of satisfying EPA's TMDL goals.

#### Essential Functions:

- Physical ability to walk 3 miles and ability to collect, filter, and process water samples in a variety of Vermont climate conditions.
- Serve independently to meet deadlines and project milestones.
- Have or obtain a valid driver's license and reliable automobile to travel to water quality testing sites.
- Willingness to "get hands dirty" to help implement small scale green stormwater infrastructure.
- Follow written protocols.
- Be a self-motivated critical thinker.
- Willing to serve on projects with school aged children.
- Willing to participate in occasional night and weekend educational events

#### Secondary Functions:

- Basic laboratory skills
- GIS knowledge and ability
- Grant writing

#### Desired Qualifications:

FNLC is seeking an ECO AmeriCorps member with a bachelor's degree, background, or interest in geology, biology, natural resources, environmental studies, or environmental engineering. The ideal candidate will have the ability to use word processing and spreadsheet software to compile and analyze data and must be a self-starter with the ability to serve independently.

What initiatives has your organization undertaken to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ)?

By addressing water pollution, FNLC strives to support DEIJ by improving drinking water safety, recreational opportunities, and improvement of the environment for all. FNLC works with the public to advocate for environmental improvements that benefit marginalized populations. We support an "all in" approach to solving water quality issues and that carries through to our organizational makeup and commitment to inclusion, diversity, and equity. Whenever possible we participate in workshops, such as implicit bias training, to remain mindful and educate ourselves for continuous improvement.

Many of the towns we serve have been identified as disadvantaged communities with rankings from 1-4 according to the Lake Champlain Basin Program's definition of communities with disadvantages and the accompanying mapping tool. These towns include Swanton, Highgate, Saint Albans Town and City, Fairfield, Alburgh, Grand Isle, and South Hero.

### How is climate resiliency part of the work your organization does?

Flood resiliency is a big topic in our community and directly effects our mission.

### Networking Opportunities

FNLC has strong statewide connections with lake leaders and agency personnel. ECO members will interact with local watershed groups, the FNLC Board of Directors, and the community in general, on a constant basis. We have monthly meetings with the Missisquoi Bay Partners group, which connects everyone in our region focused on water quality. We make it a point to invite the ECO's to participate at WUV, ANR, and VAAFV meetings and introduce them to personnel on a regular basis and try to provide the ECO member with a return on the great financial sacrifice that they are making to serve FNLC's mission.

### Misc.

I've been a part of the Vermont conservation community for over 30 years and have led and mentored many folks through my work with Audubon Vermont, the ECHO Center, Cold Hollow to Canada, and my own business Bird Diva Consulting. The Vermont ECO leadership has invited me to present topics and lead outings for members for many years and I have extended invitations to interested ECO members to attend my Bird Diva courses at a deeply discounted rate, as well as made time for one-on-one discussions or time in the field to support their interest in birds and nature. Mentoring this next generation is one of my biggest joys.

I live in Saint Albans and have been in northwestern Vermont for more than 10 years, and have lived and worked in Vermont since the late 90s. I am very well connected and have loads of knowledge about the communities in this part of Vermont. I understand both the challenges and delights of living in this rural part of the state. I'll do my best to help meet their needs outside of the workday with whatever resources I have.

This position is a hybrid position with office time doing administrative tasks, processing water samples, compiling data, and completing reports. Time outside the office is spent in a variety of Vermont seasonal conditions taking water samples, leading programs in the field, conducting shoreline or stream assessments, etc.

## Recommended

- Boots and/or waterproof footwear
- Rain gear
- Sun/Insect protective headwear
- Vehicle (FNLC will reimburse mileage at federal rate)

## Minimum Qualifications:

- Be a US citizen, a national, or legal permanent resident alien of the U.S.;
- Be at least 18 years of age upon entering the Pre-Service Orientation (there is no upper age limit);
- Be a high school graduate or have a GED certificate or be willing to work towards their GED as part of their service-year successful completion requirement. A member cannot have dropped out of high school to join AmeriCorps. If a member has a documented medical reason/professional opinion why they cannot finish high school, they might be eligible; call in this case;
- Has not been convicted of murder or sexual assault and is willing to undergo a National Service Criminal History Check;
- Must submit to Agency of Human Services checks, i.e. Adult Abuse and Child Abuse Prevention;
- Be committed to the ECO AmeriCorps program, and its ethic of service and personal and professional development of its participants;
- Have the ability and enthusiasm to drive to, attend, and participate in required trainings and events, and be prepared to drive up to 2-3 hours each way

To Apply: [My AmeriCorps - Home Page](#)

Position begins September 17th 2024 and ends August 15th 2025

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