



# AmeriCorps

## 2023-24 ECO AmeriCorps

### Water Quality Planner

Environmental Careers and Opportunities (ECO) AmeriCorps is an AmeriCorps program within the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC). ECO AmeriCorps is funded in part by an AmeriCorps state grant provided through SerVermont from the Corporation for National & Community Service. Service sites will provide meaningful service opportunities, regular supervision with oversight of service hours and timesheets, office space and office equipment, orientation to the worksite, additional training (as needed) and mileage reimbursement. The 2023-2024 program will begin mid-September 2023 and end in August 2024.

#### **To be considered, service sites must:**

- Demonstrate a commitment to DEIJ principles and provide a pathway for involvement at the host site and program level.
- Be a non-profit, municipality, state agency, tribal government, or educational institution.
- Provide a position description showcasing activities that are appropriate to the mission of ECO AmeriCorps.
- Provide a work environment that is ADA compliant, drug-free, and carries supplies and equipment necessary for members to perform their duties.
- Be able to provide the cash match and mileage reimbursement at the federal General Services Administration (GSA) rate for service-related travel for the member.
- Attend a supervisor orientation and be available for a minimum of two subsequent site visits and check-ins from ECO AmeriCorps staff.
- Clarify any additional responsibilities to the member according to your organization's policies.
- Notify ECO AmeriCorps staff about conflicts or other issues as they arise.

#### **Other Requirements and Responsibilities:**

- Confirm member selection, on-site training, member supervision and support throughout term of service, other forms and documentation as required by AmeriCorps, mileage reimbursement for service-related travel.
- Main supervisor must attend AmeriCorps supervisor orientation (or make special arrangements).

#### **Host Site cost based on # of full-time employees:**

*Full-Time (1,700 hours over 11 months)*

- 0-3 \$8,000
- 4-10 \$9,000
- >10 \$10,500

*Half-Time (900 hours over 6 months)*

- \$5,250 regardless of size

*Quarter-Time (450 hours over 3 months)*

- \$2,625 regardless of size

For more information about the host site application:

- Visit the ECO Website for supporting documents: [www.ecoamericorps.org](http://www.ecoamericorps.org)
- Or contact Program Supervisor, Dustin Bowman, [dustin.bowman@vermont.gov](mailto:dustin.bowman@vermont.gov), 802-461-5222

*The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation is sponsoring AmeriCorps positions through its AmeriCorps Program. The State of Vermont is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Positions are open to all applicants without regard to race color, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, veteran's status, religion, or creed.*

Name of Organization or Municipality:

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Address of Organization or Municipality:

14 Seminary St

Primary Supervisor Name and Title:

Adam Lougee

Primary Supervisor's email:

[alougee@acrpc.org](mailto:alougee@acrpc.org)

Primary Supervisor's phone #:

8023883141

Please provide a brief description of your role at your site:

I am the Executive Director of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission. As such, I am responsible for programming, budgeting, and overseeing staff.

Which hosting category are you applying to?

Full-Time (September-August)

What is the title of the position you are requesting?

Water Quality Planner

Describe your proposed service project.

*[Note: performance measures are based on improved acres of public land, improved miles of waterways or trails, number of Vermonters provided environmental stewardship education or training, and number of members placed in green jobs after completing their AmeriCorps service. Capacity- building activities are allowed. Please describe any projected impact.]*

- 1) Support ACRPC, in its role as a Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP), with the review of water quality projects and development of CWSP infrastructure. Provide support with appropriate water quality project identification and outreach. Impact will include an increase in the number of projects available to and funded by CWSP.
- 2) Write grants and supervise project design for various municipal storm water (or other water-related) projects in various stages (preliminary design, final design, and implementation phases). This task may involve field service, specifically with assessing sites, but will mainly require writing, coordination, organization, and administering service activities.
- 3) Assist the Addison County River Watch Collaborative with current projects and provide capacity and organizational support in a variety of ways. This will enable the collaborative to provide monitoring of local streams with greater speed and efficiency, and create capacity for water quality project development.
- 4) Support energy planner in providing technical assistance to municipalities in applying to and managing the Municipal Energy Resilience Program. This will expose the ECO to a variety of green industries and critical project management skills as they assist the energy planner in performing outreach to residents and town leadership, prioritizing projects, and managing grants on behalf of participating municipalities.

What data collection tools will the member use to record the impacts of their service activity?

The ECO member will track the number of individuals to whom they reach out or support in developing a water quality project on behalf of the Clean Water Service Provider. They will also track the estimated phosphorus reductions of projects implemented through the CWSP using the Phosphorus Calculator provided by ANR. The number and size of water quality related projects (road erosion inventory, culvert inventory, buffer plantings, etc.) supported or performed by the ECO will also be tracked.

In addition to water quality projects specifically. The ECO will track the number of community members directly supported through energy events, webinars, etc. through surveys.

Please provide any additional information (data, statistics, reports, etc.) that demonstrates the compelling need for the proposed position:

Through designation as the Clean Water Service Provider for Otter Creek, our office has been allocated about 1 million dollars to develop and implement water quality projects with the goal of better managing phosphorus throughout the watershed. Unfortunately, the Otter Creek lacks a unified organization or voice already working to promote water quality and few projects are ready to apply to this program. Our staff lack the capacity to perform the outreach and education to engage community members in developing projects. Therefore, the ECO member serves a critical role in expanding our ability to promote water quality in the longest stream in the state.

What initiatives does your organization take to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice (DEIJ)? Please include any historical data or details for on-going strategic plans, partnerships, and projects, as relevant.

ACRPC believes DEIJ constitutes good government providing utilitarian services to all members of our community. We practice it every day. Examples of recent initiatives that serve all members of our community include:

- Participated in the development of a Health Equity Planning toolkit for municipalities across the state. This toolkit is designed to ensure towns incorporate equitable access to resources including, housing, recreation, transportation, clean water, etc. into their long term planning and projects.
- Encouraged and developed a health equity training that was provided as a webinar across the state to educate town leadership on concepts of equity and the programs available to them to further engage in equitable development.
- Funded pedestrian walkway planning studies in Bristol, Middlebury, and Ferrisburgh that would improve pedestrian connectivity to schools, and access to the HOPE (Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects) resale store.
- Contracted for the Flood Resilient Communities Fund grant to reduce flooding of mobile home parks and low-lying community areas.
- Hot Weather Planning initiative to identify cooling sites, shelters, and publicly-accessible swimming areas for periods of extremely hot weather.
- Development of Vergennes Art Corridor public art plan for the city. Goals for the plan include; art projects that are created by marginalized and under-represented residents. All projects are accessible to all members of the community.
- Produced a study of the needs in the Town of Bristol's 5 municipal parks to ensure ADA accessibility in each park.

In addition, our current ECO member with the support of ACRPC staff is developing a map resource to identify areas at high risk of natural disasters and food scarcity, lack of accessible transportation and other critical issues. This initiative will better prepare ACRPC to drive improvements in the services and programs available to disadvantaged individuals in our communities.

Outline how DEIJ principles can be incorporated into your organization's work moving forward. (Provide examples of any trainings, workshops, projects, partnerships, etc.)

Additional trainings on health equity and transportation equity are scheduled for this coming year and will be centered on DEIJ principles.

Additional actions may include further incorporation of DEIJ principles and concerns into ongoing efforts around housing, energy resilience, natural resources, and emergency management.

Describe specific challenges that your organization has faced while integrating DEIJ Principles.

Our staff is extremely busy engaging in the projects noted above that provide real benefit to all members of our community. We are experiencing a significant influx in funding and programming being managed in our office and capacity is limited. We are engaging with DEIJ principles to the best of our ability through existing work and provide opportunities for training on best practices for our staff.

How will the ECO member be included or supported in on-going or future DEIJ work at the organization, if they so choose?

Through the resources collected during our health equity work this year, our current ECO has begun to develop maps and GIS tools to better describe and identify areas with at-risk populations in our region that require additional support and resources (transportation infrastructure, food access, internet, etc.). Any future ECO member is welcomed to support the continuation or expansion of this mapping effort. In addition, we welcome the member to express interest in other ongoing projects or propose new initiatives that fall within our scope.

Does the supervisor have adequate time and leadership experience to manage an ECO member? Please explain how:

As the Executive Director of the ACRPC, I am well prepared to manage an ECO member. I am committed to making time to provide the supervision our ECO members require. My door is always open when I am in the office and I schedule regular meetings on a weekly basis with Eco - members to ensure they receive the attention that they deserve. While I will be the supervisor and main point of contact for the ECO member, the member will also receive projects and guidance from the rest of ACRPC staff as well as the Addison County River Watch Collaborative executive director. In this way, the member will gain a diverse set of experiences and perspectives throughout their service balanced with the consistent support and guidance that I can provide.

Will the member have access to networking opportunities in this position? Please explain:

The member in this position is highly encouraged to leverage their position to expand their network. The Addison County Regional Planning Commission serves 21 municipalities, supports the state in enacting programs, and interacts with several local non-profit organizations. The member will have the opportunity to serve in many capacities and demonstrate their abilities to a variety of local and state-wide groups. The member is also encouraged to communicate career/ networking interests to staff so that introductions can be made and connections shared.

Does your organization currently host or plan to host an AmeriCorps member from another program? If yes, briefly describe the duties of this other position.

No

Please list any clothing/equipment the member will need that you cannot provide (e.g., hiking boots, waders, raingear, etc.). Is a reliable vehicle expected? As the host site, you are responsible for providing all tools and technical equipment needed for the position (e.g., computer, phone, GPS, etc.).

Hiking boots, rain gear, and sunblock will not be supplied by the Commission to perform field service. Waders/boots will also not be supplied, however, it is unlikely such equipment will be needed. A reliable vehicle is expected for this position.

Is there someone in your organization's network that might be interested in mentoring your ECO service member? \*Note, 1-2 hours per month, not required

Yes

Are you willing to search with program staff over the summer to help your ECO member secure affordable and safe housing?

Yes

Many of our members are not from Vermont and are seeking a sense of community away from home. In what ways would you be willing to help them establish community connections? (Housing, peer networks, affinity spaces, local resources, fun places to go)

Our office has successfully supported several generations of ECO's to find affordable, appropriate housing and we are happy to do so again. We also provide recommendations on local resources and places to visit, hike, ski, and swim.

Provide approximate impact numbers (e.g. miles of rivers treated) in each focus area.

Water Quality and Trail Improvement - Please project Impact Numbers on miles of river/stream/trail treated and/or improved.

2

Land Conservation and Remediation - Please project impact numbers on acres of public parks or other public, publicly managed or tribal lands improved.

1

Community Engagement Outreach and Education - Please project number of individuals receiving environmental stewardship education or training.

30

Sponsoring Organization's Mission:

Planning together to improve and sustain healthy, prosperous, and beautiful communities.

ACRPC accomplishes that mission by:

- 1) Providing a forum for municipalities to discuss and resolve mutual concerns;
- 2) Providing planning and technical assistance (during all project phases) to help communities implement projects and objectives from Town and Regional plans;
- 3) Collecting and distributing research, planning information, and expertise collaboratively; and
- 4) Developing an actionable, relevant, and visionary Regional Plan.

Goals for the ECO AmeriCorps Position:

Our goal for the ECO position is to expand our capacity in providing critical services to our community. Primarily, the ECO will support the generation of new water quality projects and direct existing projects toward the Clean Water Service provider program.

Essential Functions. Functions that applicant must be able to perform. These may be listed in bullet form:

1) Support ACRPC, in its role as a Clean Water Service Provider, with the review of water quality projects and development of CWSP infrastructure. Provide support with appropriate water quality project identification and outreach.

2) Write grants and supervise project design for various municipal storm water (or other water-related) projects in various stages (preliminary design, final design, and implementation phases). This task may involve field service, specifically with assessing sites, but will mainly require writing, coordination, organization, and administering service activities.

3) Assist the Addison County River Watch Collaborative with current projects and provide capacity and organizational support in a variety of ways, which can include, but are not limited to:

- Organizing efforts to obtain written landowner permission at various sampling sites;
- Coordinating sampling activities for one of the next focus rivers; and
- Updating the River Watch website
- Grant Writing
- Data analysis

4) Support energy planner in providing technical assistance to municipalities in applying to and managing the Municipal Energy Resilience Program. This will expose the ECO to a variety of green industries and critical project management skills as they assist the energy planner in prioritizing projects and managing grants on behalf of participating municipalities.

What are the secondary functions? These are projects or tasks that may be accomplished as time allows or applicant's interests evolve.

The following list details projects ACRPC would be interested in having an ECO AmeriCorps member implement or support during their service term. Follow through on each of these projects will be dependent on the Member's technical skills and interests in addition to the present needs of the Commission.

1) Update road erosion inventories and culvert inventories on VT-Culverts database to include size and angle of approach for each of the culverts in the region as a way of evaluating their efficacy during a bank-full flood event. Both inventories will involve field service, specifically in locating and assessing the culverts. This project may also include the development of materials to instruct future Members on how to conduct culvert assessments and update applicable databases. If possible, evaluate culvert efficacy through modeling tools, to determine which ones are in need of replacement.

2) Organize/coordinate an annual Conservation Commissions/River Conservancy/Nature Conservancy meeting based on watershed rather than Town boundaries to enable greater unification and collaboration

on organizational projects and treatment of waters in entire watersheds. Addison County watersheds to coordinate conservation efforts include: Lemon Fair, New Haven River, Otter Creek, Dead Creek, Little Otter Creek, Middlebury River, Lewis Creek, and Lake Champlain-Direct. The Member likely could coordinate annual meetings for 1-2 watersheds.

3) Support municipalities in the organization/ coordination of a regional energy fair through the Municipal energy resilience program. This project would put the ECO in a position to communicate directly with green industry leaders from around the state.

4) Support the collection and organization of known bicycle/pedestrian needs throughout the region to communicate to the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

5) Continue past ECO initiatives including the development of an ADU grant program, health equity mapping project, local trail building and maintenance, etc.

6) Based on the interests and strengths of the ECO, our office is open to new projects or expansions of existing initiatives to best serve their personal goals and provide additional services to our member municipalities.

#### Desired Qualifications:

ACRPC seeks out candidates who poses a passion for water quality, good interpersonal, writing, and computer skills, and who functions well in a small team environment. The Candidate must possess a bachelor's degree in planning or a related field with a strong ability to think independently and to use and understand plans, maps and statistics. The candidate should be able to coordinate interest groups, possess a familiarity with water quality rules and farming practices and local and regional planning. Proficiency with GIS systems and grant writing abilities are also desired.

#### 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

Service Conditions (will the position be largely outside, office based, hybrid or seasonally/project dependent, in schools, etc.) \*

Office based with opportunities for projects in the field.



Will the member have access to "vulnerable populations"? This includes youth, elderly and individuals with disabilities.

Yes

#### Time Requirements:

Full time: will need to complete a minimum of 1700 service hours, serving approximately 40 hours/week over the course of the 11-month service term, September 13, 2023 - August 9, 2024

#### Orientation and Training:

ECO will provide members with orientation at the beginning of the service term. Host sites are expected to provide additional on-boarding training as well. Throughout the service term, ECO will provide in-person and virtual trainings to members on a variety of topics.

#### Benefits:

- Education award of \$6,895 (pre-tax) upon successful completion of service
- \$23,000 Living Allowance, paid bi-weekly
- Training
- Childcare assistance, if eligible
- Health Coverage
- Access to AmeriCorps Alumni Network
- Student loan forbearance and interest payments, if eligible

#### Evaluation and Reporting:

Mid and final performance reviews, quarterly reports, weekly timesheets, and end of service survey.  
Thank you for your interest in AmeriCorps!