



2021-2022 Service Year

Environmental Careers and Opportunities (ECO) AmeriCorps is an AmeriCorps program within the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC). The emphasis of the program is on building capacity in nonprofit organizations and municipalities throughout rural Vermont communities. Program focus areas include the following:

- engagement, outreach, and education
- improvement of water quality
- protection and restoration of public lands

ECO AmeriCorps is funded in part by an AmeriCorps state grant provided through SerVermont from the Corporation for National & Community Service.

All ECO AmeriCorps members have some college education (preference given to college graduates with a science background) and will receive technical training and mentorship from VTDEC throughout their term of service. VTDEC handles the administrative components of the program, including providing living stipends, health insurance, and monthly trainings to members.

Service sites will enter into a host site agreement with VTDEC to provide meaningful service opportunities, regular supervision (in-person/remote) with oversight of service hours and time sheets, office space and office equipment, orientation to the worksite, additional training (as needed), and mileage reimbursement. In addition, each service site will provide a cash match as noted below. The amount of match is based on the number of full-time employees in the host site organization. The host site organization is the entity that signs the host site agreement with VTDEC. The program accepts mostly full-time positions, with 23 member slots dedicated to supporting full-time service members and only two to three dedicated to supporting half-time and quarter-time positions each year.

Full-Time Member Benefits* *Living Stipend: \$17,300 Education Award: \$6,345*

Other Benefits: Training, networking opportunities, health care, childcare assistance, program support, mileage reimbursement for ECO AmeriCorps-related travel.

VTDEC administers the member's living stipend, health care benefits, childcare benefits, time sheets, activity reports, and other AmeriCorps and employee-related benefits and documentation.

Applicant Information		
Name of Organization or Municipality: Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation Lakes & Ponds Program		
Primary Supervisor Name: Kimberly Jensen	Primary Supervisor Title: Environmental Scientist	
Mailing Address: 1 National Life Drive, Davis 3		
City: Montpelier	State: VT	Zip:
Phone: (802) 490-6120	Fax:	
Email: kimberly.jensen@vermont.gov	Website: https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes -	
Sponsoring Organization's Mission:		
The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation Lakes and Ponds Management and Protection Program's mission is to protect, enhance, and restore ecosystem health of Vermont lakes and ponds so that these water bodies maintain a range of uses to Vermonters.		

Please provide a brief description of your role at your site:
My role within the VTDEC Lakes & Ponds Program is to oversee and administer the state-wide Aquatic Invasive Species Program and the funding mechanisms in the form of grants and contracts that support the program, staff, contractors, and the statewide network of constituents. The main components of the program include education and outreach, spread prevention programs, surveys and research, and management control projects associated with aquatic invasive species threats and known populations. The main elements of these components are the Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant-in-Aid Program, the Vermont Public Access Greeter Program, and the Lake Champlain

WaterChestnut Program.

What is the title of the position you are requesting?

Planning and Outreach Assistant

Describe your proposed service position:

The Planning and Outreach Assistant service member will provide general support for the various elements of the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program that includes the grant coordination and administration, spread prevention programs, and species management and control operations. The member will assist in the development of a variety of technological tools to improve the planning of aquatic invasive species (AIS) management practices and spread prevention programs throughout the State of Vermont and improve the effectiveness of the communication for a wide variety of constituents to address the need for gathering, compiling, and sharing data, geospatial information, and effective strategies to protect lakes and ponds from AIS infestations.

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

- Perform GIS mapping and data analysis of Aquatic Invasive Species Program projects, including the VT Public Access Greeter Program, Water Chestnut Management Program, Aquatic Macrophyte Surveys, and other Lakes & Ponds Monitoring Programs.
- Develop educational and outreach materials and guides to increase the understanding of preventing and managing AIS infestations by the program's constituents and the general public.

Marginal Functions. These are secondary to Essential Functions, may be negotiable, and can be completed as time allows. These may be listed in bullet form:

- Participate in the social media communication group for the Department of Environmental Conservation and develop and publish content for DEC's various social media channels
- Support other ongoing lake monitoring and assessment efforts of the DEC Lakes and Ponds Program on a demand driven basis

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

Mud boots, hiking boots, rain gear, and appropriate outdoor clothing for all types of weatherconditions.

Desired qualifications:

- . Duties require knowledge equivalent to completion of a Bachelor's Degree in Natural Resources, Forestry, Agriculture, or a related field. Advanced degree in Resource Management, Environmental Science, Regional Planning, or a related field is desired. Another combination of education and experience providing comparable knowledge and skills may be acceptable.
- . Facility with GIS maps and mapping, and ability to read and understand grant agreements and scientific publications. Strong spatial, reading, and technical writing skills.
- . Ability to coordinate and work on multiple projects simultaneously, and to maintain attention to detail while producing a steady volume of work in compliance with deadlines.
- . Excellent interpersonal and communication skills. Ability to communicate with different personalities.
- . Familiarity with operating and trailering motorboats and watercraft.

In total, approximately 5,000 acres are surveyed and monitored annually through the through the Water Chestnut Operations that the service member would assist with. Historically, approximately 1,000 acres of sites are monitored and harvested through hand harvesting operations. Three-hundred acres are monitored and harvested through mechanical operations.

The service member may also assist with education and outreach for approximately 100 individuals through the Vermont Invasive Patrol Program workshops, and co-leading Vermont Youth Conservation Corps crews.

Provide additional information (data, statistics, reports, etc.) that demonstrates the compelling need for the proposed position(s).

The Aquatic Invasive Species Program staff's responsibilities are many and varied. These responsibilities change throughout the year as the spring, summer, and fall are comprised of a short and busy field season with a number of technicians, followed by an extremely dense administrative operation that incorporates grants, contracts, and contractors. The off-season also includes a huge investment in data collection, analysis, and reporting. Often, important stand-alone projects that the program may benefit from to improve the operations, or to increase the public knowledge, are not initiated or are not completed. Having a dedicated Service Member to complete specific projects will fulfill a need that is long overdue.

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

Yes, the Supervisor and the Lakes & Ponds Program staff have hosted and mentored a number of ECO members and other program interns in the past. Since the duties will be performed mostly at home, we will hold team meetings every week to communicate the completion of tasks and next tasks moving forward.

Describe networking opportunities that will be available to the member during service?

The Lakes & Ponds Program has bi-weekly meetings that the member will be asked to participate in. They may also participate in other VTDEC or Lakes & Ponds Program workshops, trainings, events, and projects as needed and as they arise.

Does your organization currently host or plan to host a member from a different AmeriCorps program? If yes, explain the duties of the other AmeriCorps position(s).

Currently hosting an AmeriCorps member.

In what ways does your organization support diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice?

Vermont DEC provides important services to all Vermonters and visitors to the state, including clean water and air, wildlife habitat management, waste management, drinking water provision, and climate change mitigation / adaptation. One of the focus areas of the DEC is combating environmental injustice. DEC leadership believes that we are at a pivotal moment of self-reflection in our society, examining the legacies of the systemic racism and our disenfranchisement of the most vulnerable. Therefore, as we review DEC's role in creating just and equitable outcomes for Vermonters, it's clear that we must do more to engage with overburdened and underserved communities across Vermont. To that end, DEC has established an environmental justice (EJ) committee, and is developing EJ and Title VI policies. Additionally, the Agency of Natural Resources has also established a Diversity and Equity Committee working on similar efforts to promote equity and inclusion in regards to Vermonters' access to environmental services.

Kimberly Janson

*The 2021–2022 program will begin mid-September 2021 and end in August 2022 for full-time members.

