



[Values into Action | Hildene](#)

Service Year 2021-2022

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.

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: Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home		
Primary Supervisor Name: Andrea Luchini	Primary Supervisor Title: Horticulturist and Greenhouse Manager	
Mailing Address: 1005 Hildene Road P.O. Box 377		
City: Manchester	State: VT	Zip: 05254
Phone: 1-800-578-1788	Fax:	
Email: andrea@hildene.org	Website: Values into Action Hildene	
Sponsoring Organization’s Mission:		
Hildene exists to carry the values of Abraham Lincoln to future generations by educating and inspiring others to put those Values into Action. Our core values are integrity, perseverance, and civic responsibility and our key actions are land conservation, historic preservation, sustainability, civil civic discourse. In all we do, we strive to inspire guests to make the world a better place.		

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

As Horticulturist and Greenhouse Manager, I oversee all the ornamental gardens on the estate and manage our 1800 sq ft greenhouse. In addition to those duties, I also oversee our Forest Management Plan and work closely with co-workers on implementing our invasive plant removal and trail upkeep.

What is the title of the position you are requesting?

Forest Steward

Describe your proposed service position:

Hildene is a 412-acre property centered around the historic home of Robert Lincoln (son of President Abraham Lincoln). It is nestled in the Valley of Vermont, between the Taconic and Green mountain ranges. The property includes a 1905 Georgian Revival mansion, a 1903 Pullman train car, ornamental and vegetable gardens, orchards, two working farms, a teaching greenhouse, and 12 miles of trails through forest, meadow, and wetland. Every year, Hildene welcomes over 40,000 guests and over 3,000 schoolchildren. They come to tour the estate and to enjoy the extensive educational programs for all ages which include summer camps, community and school programming, lectures, and a unique collaboration with our local high school.

This dynamic property has a trail network that connects all the diverse aspects of the estate from the historic home, farms, and forest, to the Batten Kill valley below. As steward, the member will promote healthy forests on our property through the trail network. This will include performing general trail maintenance (including invasive plant removal), instituting and leading a trail walk program, and advancing our native woody plant nursery.

Goals for this position include:

Provide member with experience in environmental stewardship from the forest perspective.

Begin a woody plant nursery that will supply trees and shrubs for our property as well as for sales to other organizations in the community.

Create a trail walk program that inspires members and guests in healthy forest management.

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

- Advance native woody plant nursery by collecting seeds from the forest, performing seed treatments and sowing with follow-up seedling care; also performing other nursery-related tasks such as potting up, researching best practices, and coordinating initial plant sales to area organizations. Requires knowledge and/or interest in plant identification and plant propagation.

- Ability to assess status and perform general maintenance of trail system using hand tools such as pruners, loppers, and saws.

- Perform manual invasive plant removal using hand tools and assist with goat invasive plant browsing project as needed.

- Implement a series of forest-related education programs in collaboration with the programming director. Requires knowledge of and/or interest in environmental education and communication

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:

None

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.).

Hiking boots/closed toed sturdy shoes, rain gear, and general outdoor clothing for all weather conditions.

Desired qualifications:

- Ability to serve independently
- Able to adjust quickly to changing circumstances by taking initiative and problem-solving
- Ability to serve on multiple projects simultaneously while maintaining attention to detail and producing a steady volume of tasks in order to meet deadlines
- Ability and desire to lead educational programs for the public
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills. Ability to communicate with different personalities.
- Be true to Hildene's history and mission
- General knowledge of Vermont's flora and fauna

Describe how the position will contribute to the program's National Performance Measures:

1. Number of individuals educated on environmental stewardship; number of individuals with an intention to change behavior
2. Number of miles of trails/streams/rivers improved
3. Number of acres of publicly owned or managed land improved

1. The forest steward will be creating and implementing a trail walk program with the aim to provide education on forest and wetland ecosystems and best management practices. Goal = at least 50 individuals
 2. The forest steward will inventory our 12 miles of trails, through forest and wetland, for needed improvements and conduct as many improvements as possible. Goal = at least 2 miles of trails improved.
 3. The forest steward will focus on invasive species removal along at least 2 trails within our network. Goal = 20 acres
- The forest steward will be helping to create a woody plant nursery that provides native plant material to local conservation groups such as the county conservation district and the US Forest Service. Indirectly, the position should be helping to improve many acres of public land.

Provide approximate impact numbers (e.g., miles of rivers treated) in each focus area. Refer to the 2021–2022 Performance Goals document for an explanation on each focus area.

Focus Area	Projected Impact Numbers	
Water Quality Improvement	Miles of river/stream/trail treated and/or improved	
Protection and Restoration of Public Land	Acres of parks or public land treated and/or improved	180
Engagement, Outreach, and Education	Number of individuals receiving environmental stewardship education or training	50

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

There is an expressed need in the community for a local source of native woody plant seedlings (including Bennington County Conservation District, Bennington County Regional Commission, US Forest Service). Hildene does not use pesticides to control weeds, so we need to use alternative methods to control the spread of invasive plants in our almost 200 acres of forest. With over 40,000 visitors a year, there is a real need for trail improvements that will encourage people to get outside and enjoy the entire property, not just the exhibits. Pandemic-related changes to recreational activities have contributed to an increased number of people utilizing our established trail system. There is more need than ever for trail improvements and possibly new trail development. Hildene strives to see the education potential in every activity and forest trail maintenance provides the perfect opportunity to create educational programming related to forest health.

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

I have twenty years of experience supervising various numbers of staff in different employment situations. Time is always at a premium, but we are committed to making this a success! I will be the primary supervisor of the ECO member, but one colleague will be a secondary supervisor and others have committed to supervising certain aspects of the position. The ECO member should feel like a fully supported member of the team.

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

The ECO member will serve closely with Hildene staff in various departments including horticulture, agriculture, grounds, programming, and education.

In advancing the native plant nursery, the ECO service member will be asked to reach out to area organizations such as the US Forest Service, Bennington County Conservation District, Bennington County Regional Commission as well as other native plant nurseries in the area.

The ECO member will have the opportunity to serve with students from Burr & Burton Academy through our Dene Farm collaboration.

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

Hildene staff formed an IDEA committee which now meets monthly. The mission of the staff committee on inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) is a natural extension of Hildene's mission: Values into Action. The purpose of this committee is to create an inclusive space for reflection and civil discourse among staff and then to serve as an organizing force to assist in advancing Hildene's values of integrity, perseverance, and civic responsibility in an intentional way. By creating a work environment that actively supports these values, the IDEA Committee aims to empower Hildene's staff and the organization as a whole to become a leading cultural institution that employs civic engagement, environmental stewardship, and cultural heritage as foundational avenues through which to promote social justice.

The program will begin in mid-September 2021 and end in August 2022. We look forward to getting to know you!

