

2016-2017 ECO AmeriCorps Members

Member Profiles



Trevor Banister

Trevor served with the NorthWoods Stewardship Center as the Northern Waters Steward. Trevor graduated from Lyndon State with a BS in Environmental Science.

The focus of my service is to protect and improve the quality of the waters in the upper Connecticut River and upper Memphremagog watersheds through projects involving riparian restoration and the implementation of better management practices. Serving in the ECO AmeriCorps program provides me with the opportunity to network with organizations and individuals in the environmental field while also learning valuable technical skills. Most importantly, this experience allows me to make a positive impact on the environment and community.

Joe Bondi

Joe served with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service as a Wetland and GIS Technician. Joe graduated with a BS in environmental science with a minor in wildlife conservation from the University of Delaware.

The focus of my service is preserving Vermont's land resources through conserved land easements and mapping. I enjoy serving and living in Vermont. Last year, I served in the ECO AmeriCorps Program inaugural year as the Outreach Coordinator with the Friends of Northern Lake Champlain in St. Albans.

Dominic Brennan

Dominic served with the Lake Champlain Committee as the Education and Outreach Coordinator. He graduated with a BA in environmental studies and sociology with a minor in outdoor studies from St. Lawrence University.

The focus of my service is project coordination, event and volunteer management. The ECO AmeriCorps program provides a unique niche within the service community. Not only is it an environmentally focused corps, it is specific to water quality and solid waste management which are two issues that are serious problem areas for our nation. Also, being able to foster a close relationship with a staff member at the Dept. of Environmental Conservation (Dept. of Fish and Wildlife in my case) is an incredible opportunity! During the 2015-16 term, I served with a State/National program (CAC AmeriCorps) in Knoxville, Tennessee as a stormwater education coordinator.

Thomas Bryce

Tom served with the Friends of Northern Lake Champlain as an Outreach and Project Coordinator. He graduated with a BS in civil engineering from Wentworth Institute of Technology and obtained a Master of Science in civil & environmental engineering from the University of Vermont.

In my service, my primary focus will be writing grants for outreach and education projects and ecosystem restoration projects, as well as project development, water sampling, GIS mapping, and project implementation. I chose to serve a year with ECO AmeriCorps to expand upon and gain valuable fieldwork and data collection skills, including mapping and water sampling, and to gain extensive knowledge in watershed protection and wetland / ecosystem restoration. I also hope to gain a better understanding of community outreach with farmers and build public relation skills.

Shannon Choquette

Shannon served with the Lamoille and Northeast Kingdom Solid Waste Management Districts as a Solid Waste Implementation Plan Assistant. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in environmental science and conservation biology from Clark University.

The focus of my service encompasses community outreach and engagement about Vermont's Universal Recycling law requirements. Additionally, I provide educational outreach about various composting techniques for your backyard. I wanted to continue my professional journey in environmental outreach and education, and Vermont seemed like a wonderful place to move and begin to build a life. Previously I served with AmeriCorps in the Maine Conservation Corps and with Commonwealth Corps of Massachusetts as an Environmental Educator.

Lindsay Cotnoir

Lindsay served with the Orleans County Natural Resource Conservation District as a Nutrient Management Planner Assistant. She graduated with a B.S. in environmental science from the University of Vermont.

My service position is mainly focused on assisting farms in creating Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) by providing planning assistance, creating elements of their Land Treatment Plans, collecting soil samples from fields and helping the farmers at the Nutrient Management Program class this winter. After growing up and gaining my formal education in Vermont, I wanted to give back to the Vermont community. I chose to serve with ECO AmeriCorps because it allows me not only to give back to my community, but to also gain experience for a future career in the environmental realm.

Maddie Cotter

Maddie served with the Intervale Conservation Nursery as the Conservation Nursery Assistant and Watershed Steward. She graduated with a B.S. in Environmental Studies from the University of Vermont.

The Intervale Conservation Nursery grows native Vermont trees for riparian area plantings all around the state of Vermont. I chose to serve with ECO AmeriCorps because it will help me acquire the skills needed for a field-based job. Last year I served in the ECO AmeriCorps Program with the Vermont Clean Water Initiative Program (VTCWIP) at the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.

Clarice Cutler

Clarice served with the Vermont Land Trust as the Planning and Assessment Assistant. She graduated with a Bachelor's in Political Science from Reed College.

The focus of my service is to support conservation easement applications by looking up deeds and surveys, generating a suite of maps for each project including agricultural soils and flood plains, delineating riparian buffers, and applying for river corridor easement grants. I also support the stewardship of conservation easements held by Vermont Land Trust by collecting Forest Management Plans from consulting and county foresters and reviewing upcoming treatments in special protection zones and integrating ecological information from older projects into a new geodatabase to ensure that surface water protection zones are buffered according to current policy. I have a deep admiration for the farm and timber lands of Vermont and the people who work them. I'm very pleased to be helping sustain Vermonters' connection to the land by serving with a pioneer land trust this year. I served one year as a VISTA with the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps and one 300-hour term with the Green Mountain Club.

Andrew Donahue

Andrew served with the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District as an Outreach Assistant. He graduated with a B.S. in Biology from Trinity College.

The focus of my service to help educate the public about Vermont's Universal Recycling Law and how households and businesses can abide by the new changes in the law. I am passionate about the environment and would like to help create a more sustainable culture.

Stephanie Drago

Stephi served with the Natural Resources Conservation Service as an Agriculture Land Conservation Easement Assistant. She graduated with Bachelor of Science degrees in environmental studies and geography from Augustana College.

My focus is monitoring conservation easements, specifically agricultural conservation easements. I also have had the opportunity to help with wetland easement monitoring and develop several GIS projects for Natural Resource Conservation Service. I chose to serve with ECO AmeriCorps, because I saw it as a fantastic opportunity to not only get great experience for my future career, but also as a way to help improve water quality in the state of Vermont, explore a new part of the country, and pursue my commitment to service.

Billy Ernest

Billy served with the Windham Solid Waste Management District, the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance, and the Londonderry Group as an Outreach Coordinator. He graduated with an A.A.S. Veterinary Technology, and B.S. Zoology from SUNY College of Technology at Alfred State, and SUNY Oswego.

Food scraps diversion from landfills, assisting institutions (businesses, transfer stations, etc.) to be in compliance with Vermont's Universal Recycling Law, and to promote the Vermont Food Recovery Hierarchy in my communities. The opportunities to develop professionally and personally with like-minded individuals, and to gain contacts within environmental agencies while focusing on community service.

Michelle Graziosi

Michelle served with the VT DEC Biomonitoring & Aquatic Studies Section Lab and the White River Partnership as an Analyst and Stewardship. She graduated with a B.S. in environmental science from University of North Carolina.

At the BASS Lab, the focus of my service is on monitoring and assessment of the chemical properties and biological integrity of Vermont's surface waters. At the White River Partnership, the focus of my service is restoring habitat, improving flood resiliency and strengthening the stewardship network in the White River watershed. I chose to serve another year with ECO AmeriCorps so that I could continue doing something that I really care about: protecting Vermont's natural resources. It was also the perfect opportunity to further develop the skills and experience in environmental monitoring and stewardship that I hope to channel into a future career.

Brodie Haenke

Brodie served with the Missisquoi River Basin Association and the Franklin Watershed Committee as a Watershed Technician. He graduated with a B.S. in geology from the University of Wisconsin.

I assist with the MRBA's water sampling program that records phosphorus, nitrogen, and turbidity in tributaries within the Missisquoi watershed as well as the Missisquoi River itself. The MRBA also plants riparian buffers along stream and riverbanks to help prevent erosion and nutrient loading. I also assist the FWC with their water sampling program that focuses on tributaries flowing into Lake Carmi. I'll help implement a variety of projects aimed at improving water quality within the town of Franklin for the FWC. I'll also be engaging the community on behalf of the MRBA and FWC to raise awareness on water quality issues. I chose to serve with ECO AmeriCorps because I have a passion for fieldwork, natural science, and exploration! ECO AmeriCorps gave me the opportunity to get my hands dirty and my feet wet doing fieldwork in a region completely new to me.

Josh Klavens

Josh served with the Lake Champlain Basin Program as a Best Management Practice Tracking Coordinator. He graduated with a B.A. in environmental studies from Green Mountain College.

The focus of my service is to process tactical basin planning information, which means I help organize and interpret their data and records in a way that enables them to understand their programs' impacts on the basin and where the best investments they can make are. The rest of my sites are generally public outreach and education oriented apropos of Lake Champlain conservation issues. I desired to serve in the ECO AmeriCorps Program to become involved in conservation efforts within the State of Vermont. I served with the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board in the summer of 2016 before this position as a camp counselor at the North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier, Vermont.

Emily Markstein

Emily served at Montpelier Parks, Trees & Conservation as the Montpelier Parks & Watershed Steward. She graduated with e B.A. in History from SUNY Oswego and obtained a Masters of Letters in Medieval Studies from the University of St. Andrews.

The focus of my position is to maintain and improve Montpelier's park system for residents and visitors. I will be gathering information about invasive plant species and implementing management plans to protect riparian areas around Montpelier. This service will involve community outreach and education about the threats invasive species pose and potential mitigation strategies residents can implement. Other essential functions of my position include reducing erosion issues on park trails and roads and assessing areas where erosion may be causing watershed related problems. I chose to serve with ECO AmeriCorps because I wanted to continue my work with environmental conservation in New England. I wanted to help serve those who may not have many opportunities to protect the environment through education and community involvement.

Marissa Ng

Marissa served with the VT Department of Fish and Wildlife as the Information and Outreach Specialist. She graduated with a B.A. in Biology from the University of Vermont.

The focus of my service is creating outreach materials for landowners regarding riparian and aquatic habitat management. I chose to serve with ECO AmeriCorps because I felt that the program promotes practices that I value such as conservation and responsible land use. I've always been passionate about the environment and serving in this program allows me to act on that and give back to a community and state I've come to love.

Andrew Nguyen

Andrew Served with the Friends of the Mad River as a Stewardship Coordinator. He graduated with a B.S in Biology from James Madison University and obtained a M.S. of Environmental Science and Management from University of California; Santa Barbara.

The focus of my service is stormwater management planning, water quality monitoring and outreach. I chose to serve with ECO AmeriCorps so as to contribute to the long-term planning for communities affected by major storm events. I served with ECO AmeriCorps in 2015 - 2016 as the Outreach and Project Coordinator for Windham County Natural Resource Conservation District and *the Windham Regional Commission*.

Rachel Ross

Rachel served with the VT DEC Clean Water Initiative Program as a Communication and Outreach Assistant. She graduated with a B.S. in environmental science from Union college.

The focus of my service is extending the outreach of the Clean Water Initiative Program through social media and a series of educational videos on various topics pertaining to clean water. These include agriculture, grants, water monitoring, storm water, and algae blooms. I've always been driven to create positive change in the way that humans are affecting the natural environment. Additionally, I grew up in Vermont and want to give back to the state that I love. There is no better way to accomplish these two goals than through the ECO Americorps program.

Annie Schatz

Annie served with Lake Champlain Sea Grant at University of Vermont as a Green Infrastructure Collaborative Assistant. She graduated with a B.S. in biology from Pitzer College.

Supporting the work of the Green Infrastructure Collaborative – specifically through communication, educational resource development, and Green Infrastructure Roundtable network coordination. Serving in the ECO AmeriCorps program provides me with the opportunity to network with organizations and individuals in the environmental field while simultaneously learning valuable technical skills, and most importantly allows me to make a positive impact on the environment while accomplishing these objectives.

Zack Simpson

Zack served with the ECO AmeriCorps Team Leader. He graduated with a B.A. in environmental science from Capital University.

In my service, I am responsible for providing both support and programming logistics for the serving ECO Members across the state to ensure their year of service is productive and successful. I am additionally responsible for managing and spreading the social media outlets utilized by the ECO AmeriCorps program. After serving the ECO AmeriCorps Program's inaugural year, I signed on to serve as the program's Team Leader because I wanted to see the program continue to grow and expand its service to the State of Vermont. Since we are still relatively new to the State I wanted to also make sure that our message and the actions of our members were seen and heard by extending the reach of our social media outlets. In 2015 - 2016 I served in the ECO AmeriCorps Program's inaugural year as the Watershed Steward for the City of Montpelier's Parks Department in Montpelier, Vermont.

Bonnie Woodford

Bonnie served with the Vermont Department of Forest, Parks & Recreation's Urban and Community Forestry Program as an Educational Outreach & Technical Assistant. She graduated with a B.S. in environmental science from Paul Smith's College.

The focus of my service is to enhance my service site's ability to lead citizens, businesses, and governments in understanding the value of and active stewardship in urban and community forests by providing a myriad of educational programming and technical assistance. I chose to serve a year with ECO AmeriCorps because I wanted to work in the environmental field and make a difference in my community. This seemed like an amazing opportunity to expand my knowledge and get involved in the environmental community in Vermont.

Carlie Wright

Carlie served with the Addison County Solid Waste Management District as the Waste Diversion Program Assistant. She graduated with a B.S. in conservation biology from St. Lawrence University.

The focus of my service with the Addison County Solid Waste District is centered around outreach and education on Vermont's new Universal Recycling Law (Act 148). I will be working closely with our Public Outreach Coordinator to develop new outreach materials (brochures, stickers, fliers, posters) as well as do classroom presentations in schools for kids k-12. A big goal of the ACSWMD is improving education and awareness and sometimes that starts with the youngest residents. When I graduated from college I was unsure what to do with my fancy new degree. I knew I wanted to work with people and I knew I wanted that to be focused on the environment somehow, but I didn't know how to combine the two. I have always had a real passion for community service and after finding ECO AmeriCorps through an online thread I thought it would be a great idea. Additionally, I thought AmeriCorps would introduce me to a network of people that I can call upon later in life after my service term has been completed.

Jimmy Young

Jimmy served with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Services as a Conservation Assistant. He graduated with a B.S. in Environmental Energy & Policy from the University of Delaware.

The focus of my service is assisting with creating & editing conservation plans on agricultural and forested properties, creating conservation & resource concern maps using Toolkit (specific ArcGIS tool for the NRCS), certification of conservation practices, such as cover crops and biomass/forage, and assisting property owners with better understanding their land and potential conservation practices that can be done to mitigate a resource concern. My service experience so far has been with a quasi-judicial agency and a non-profit, both excellent and very rewarding experiences. I learned a significant amount last year serving with a non-profit and gained great professional experience in the environmental field, which is exactly what I wanted. This year I wanted to get a different experience, particularly with the Federal Government, which is why I am with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Services. I feel that serving within a federal agency will give me a different perspective along with having a focus on agriculture and forestry compared to specifically water quality within the transportation and stormwater field. I was a member of the ECO AmeriCorps program in 2015-2016 and I served with the Northwest Regional Planning Commission and the Missisquoi River Basin Association as a Project & Outreach Coordinator, located in St. Albans, VT. My focus of service was on stormwater education & outreach, road erosion & culvert inventories, and the surface water monitoring program for the entire Missisquoi river system.

Chris Yurek

Chris served with the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, the Connecticut River Watershed Council, and the Ottauquechee Natural Resources Conservation District as a Water Quality Monitoring Assistant. He graduated with a B.S. in environmental science from Keene State College.

Depending on which of my three host sites I am at, the focus of my service can vary. In general, my service focuses on remediation efforts at sites with impaired water quality, assisting with stakeholder involvement in the federal relicensing of hydroelectric projects, coordinating water quality monitoring efforts in the Ottauquechee Watershed, or conducting assessments/inventories on road erosion. To gain pertinent experience and to help protect and enhance Vermont's surface water resources, which I have frequently utilized for recreational purposes most of my life. I served one prior year with ECO AmeriCorps (2015 - 2016).

