



VERMONT

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
ECO AmeriCorps



Fall 2017 Newsletter

Volume 3 Issue 1

Inside this issue:

Page 2. Orientation

Page 3. Meet our members

Page 6. Host Service Sites

Page 7. Meet Farah

Page 8. Meet Emily

Page 9. Fall Gleaning Event

Page 10. Meet Billy

Page 11. Meet Cara

Page 12. Host Site Stories

Page 13. Member Photos

ECO AmeriCorps

1 National Life Drive,
Montpelier, VT 05602

ECO AmeriCorps welcomes 24 new members



Members at orientation with ANR Secretary Julie Moore



Dave, Billy, Liza, Hannah and Eric at Waterbury Reservoir

Orientation at Windridge Tennis and Sports Camp in Roxbury VT



Members in VHCB and ECO AmeriCorps programs enjoy ice breaker games and getting to know each other



VHCB and ECO members are led in the AmeriCorps pledge



All smiles after a tough but quick hike up Stowe Pinnacle



Eric enjoying a beautiful Vermont fall sunset



Sarah, Jess and Farrah atop one of Vermont's greatest hikes, Stowe Pinnacle



The crew learning about Vermont geology from VT State Parks Interpreter Brian Aust



Members learning about the intricacies of composting at Grow Compost



Brodie, Tom and Trevor enjoy a paddle in Waterbury Reservoir



Thanks, Grow Compost in Waterbury for giving us an insider look at their facility!



Billy Ernest is a second year ECO AmeriCorps member serving as the Water Quality Planning Associate for the Windham Regional Planning Commission. He is originally from Almond, NY, and received an A.A.S in Veterinary Technology from SUNY College of Technology at Alfred State in 2012 and a BS in Zoology from SUNY Oswego in 2015.



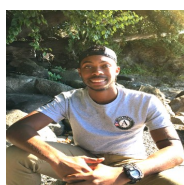
Brodie Haenke is a second year ECO AmeriCorps member serving as the Natural Resources Conservation Assistant at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in St. Albans. He is originally from Eagan, MN, and received a BS in Biology from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.



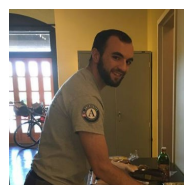
Cara Stapleford is serving with the Central Vermont Solid Waste District as the Community Zero Waste Assistant. She is originally from Garden City, NY, and received a BS in Environmental Science from the University of Vermont in 2017.



Carlie Wright is a second year ECO AmeriCorps member serving as the ECO AmeriCorps team leader as well as the Social Indicators and Communication Assistant for the VT DEC Clean Water Initiative Program. She is originally from Middlebury, VT, and received a BS in Conservation Biology from St. Lawrence University in 2016.



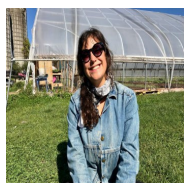
Corey Aydlett is serving as the Education and Outreach Assistant for the Lake Champlain Basin Program. He is from Raleigh, NC, and received a BS in Environmental Technology and Management from North Carolina State in 2017.



Daniel Denora is serving as the Education and Outreach Coordinator for the Lake Champlain Basin Program. Daniel is from Verona, NJ, and received a BS in Environmental Science and Technology from the University of Maryland in 2017.



David Cavagnaro is serving as an Assistant Project Coordinator for Friends of Lake Champlain. He is originally from Kennebunk, ME, and received a BA in Earth Sciences from Dartmouth College in 2017.



Elena Mederas is serving as the Assessment and Planning Assistant for the Vermont Land Trust. She is originally from Clintonville, WI, and received a BA in Geography and Environmental Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2017.



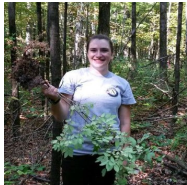
Elijah Schumacher is serving as an Environmental Technician with the VT DEC Monitoring, Assessment and Planning Program (MAPP). Elijah is originally from Cabot, VT, and received a BA in Environmental Studies and Conservation Biology in 2015 from Cornell College.



Emily Markstein is a second year with ECO AmeriCorps member serving as the Conservation Nursery Field and Watershed Steward at the Intervale Conservation Nursery. She is originally from Binghamton, NY, and received a BA in History from SUNY Oswego in 2015 and an MA in Medieval Studies from the University of St. Andrews in 2016.



Eric Thorpe is serving with the VT DEC Waste Management and Prevention Division at the VT DEC. He is originally from Somerset, MA, and received a BA in Liberal Arts with a concentration in Sociology and Sustainability from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.



Farrah Ashe is serving as the Batten Kill Watershed Habitat Steward with the Batten Kill Watershed CISMA. She is originally from Londonderry, NH, and received a BS in Environmental Science from the University of Vermont in 2017.



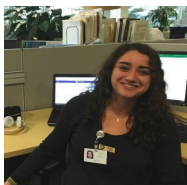
Hannah Yates is serving as the Green Infrastructure Collaborative Assistant with the Lake Champlain Sea Grant. She is originally from Charlottesville, VA, and received a BS in Geology from the College of Charleston in 2015.



Heather Murphy is serving with the Missisquoi River Basin Association as the Watershed Outreach Technician. She is originally from Morgan, VT, and received a BS in Environmental Science from Johnson State College in 2017.



Jessica Richter is serving as the Water Quality Monitor and Road Erosion Steward with the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission. She is originally from St. Charles, IL, and received a BS in Marine Science from Eckerd College in 2017.



Jordyn Geller is serving with the VT DEC Clean Water Initiative Program as the Best Management Practices Verification and Project Communications Coordinator. Jordyn is originally from Croton-On-Hudson, NY, and received a BS in Environmental Science from the University of Vermont in 2017.



Liza Morse is serving as the Vernal Pool Monitoring Project Coordinator for the Vermont Center for Ecostudies. She is originally from Amherst, MA, and received a BA in Spanish and Biology from Grinnell College in 2015.



Marissa Ng is a second year ECO AmeriCorps member serving with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) as the Wetlands Assistant. She is originally from Upton, MA, and received a BS in Biology from the University of Vermont in 2016.



Nikki Boudah is serving as the Water Quality Planner for the Addison County Regional Planning Commission. She is originally from Middlebury, VT, and received a BS in Environmental Science from the University of Vermont in 2017.



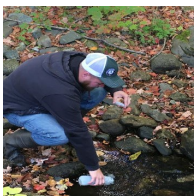
Sarah Lundquist is serving as the Waste Diversion Assistant at the Addison County Solid Waste Management District. She is originally from Mountlake Terrace, WA, and received a BA in Psychology and American Sign Language from Western Oregon University in 2017.



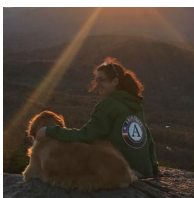
Sujata Gautam is serving as the Education and Outreach Specialist for the Lamoille Regional Solid Waste District. She is originally from McKinney, TX, and received a BS in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Houston in 2017.



Thomas Bryce is a second year ECO AmeriCorps member serving as the GIS and Field Technician for the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. He is originally from Chatham, MA, and received a BS in Civil Engineering from Wentworth Institute of Technology in 2014 and an MS in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Vermont in 2016.





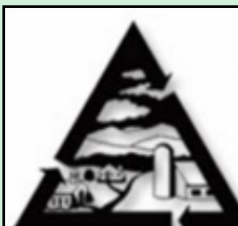


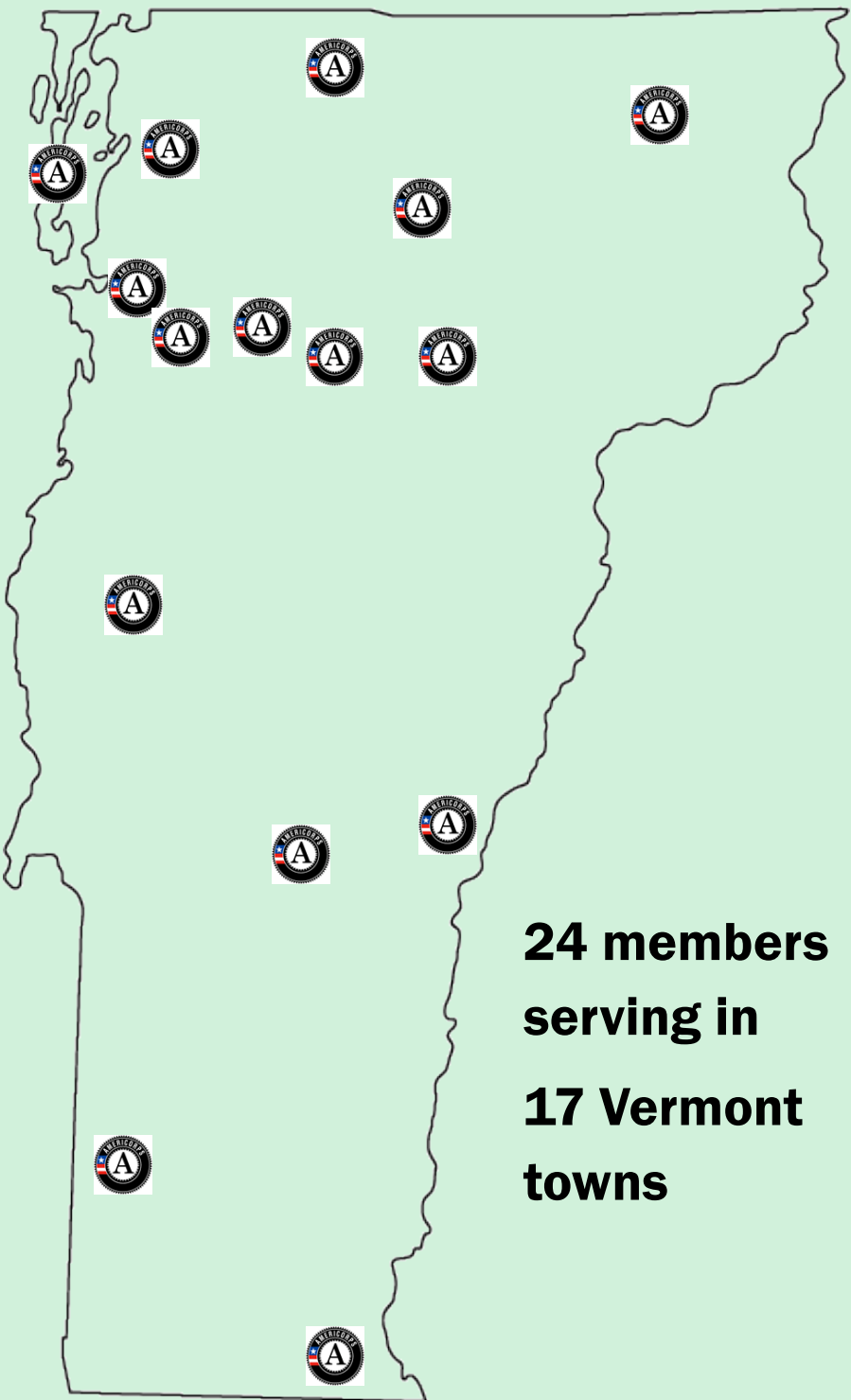
Trevor Banister is a second year ECO AmeriCorps serving as the Northern Waters Steward for the Northwoods Stewardship Center. He is originally from Walden, VT, and received a BS in Environmental Science from Lyndonville State College in 2016.













Becca Harris is serving as the Conservation Easement Stewardship Assistant for the USDA NRSC. She is originally from Hobbs, NY, and received a BA in Environmental and Political Science from Tulane University in 2016.





**24 members
serving in
17 Vermont
towns**

Farrah Invades Invasives with BK CISMA



Farrah is serving with the Batten Kill Watershed CISMA. She co-hosted an invasive species workshop with Vermont Fish and Wildlife in Manchester on October 21st. Here she can be seen speaking to the attendees. She created the basis of all advertising materials for the event, and developed a handout for the attendees to take home with them. She looks forward to hosting more workshops and volunteer-oriented events in the future.

Farrah spends a portion of her time managing invasive species in the field. The image to the right shows her using a weed wrench to remove a large honeysuckle bush at the Equinox Preserve in Manchester. Early in the season, she hand-pulled invasive plants, now, she can be found cutting larger invasive vegetation which is then chemically treated on the preserve. She is currently pursuing pesticide applicator certification.



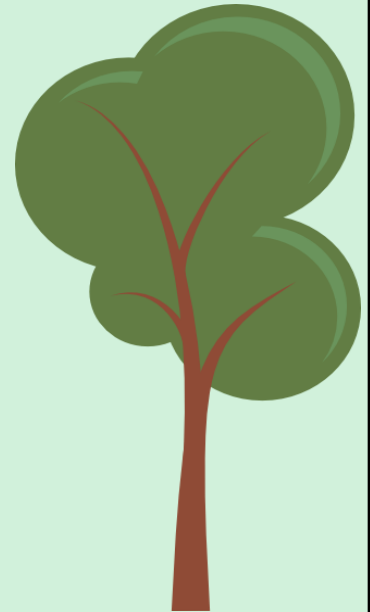
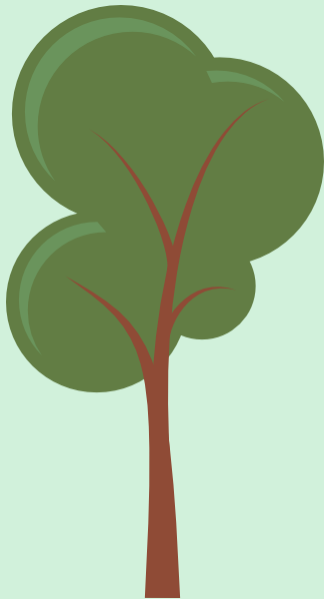
Farrah has had the pleasure of assisting in two different rare and endangered plant surveys in her area. Here is an image of a bog where she found parasitic dwarf mistletoe while helping locate rare fern populations in the area for the US Forest Service. She also participated in a rare plant survey with the New England Wildflower Society. During that survey, she helped locate populations of two other rare plants.



Emily Can't Be-Leaf How Much She Loves Serving at the Intervale Conservation Nursery

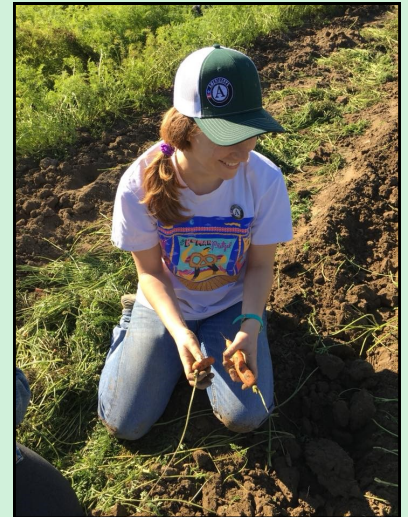


Emily is a returning second year ECO AmeriCorps member. Last year, she served with the Montpelier Parks and Trees Department and is now serving in Burlington with the Intervale Conservation Nursery. Emily jumped right into things at the nursery, assisting the team in prepping for Fall Harvest. The first few weeks flew by with lots of weeding, watering and getting to know the ins and outs of the nursery. Fall Harvest is a process that is very labor intensive but extremely rewarding. It consists of several production processes, from removing the trees from the field with a special tractor implement, to pruning, sizing, and finally bagging and tagging the trees!



Now that harvest is over, Emily has been assisting the Nursery Planting Crew with several planting projects throughout Vermont, creating and restoring riparian buffer zones. When she isn't out planting, Emily can be found at the nursery assisting with finishing orders and preparing the trees for winter. This includes inventorying trees that will be harvested in the spring, taking down the irrigation system, and closing up the greenhouse. Emily is greatly appreciative of the welcoming and supportive staff at the organization and is very excited for the remainder of her service year with the Intervale!

ECO Members glean with the Intervale Center and Vermont Food Bank



October Gleans by the Numbers

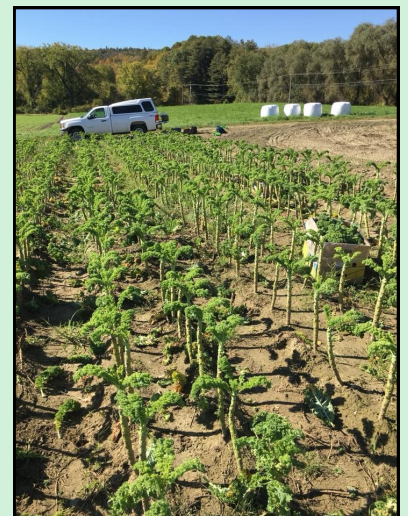
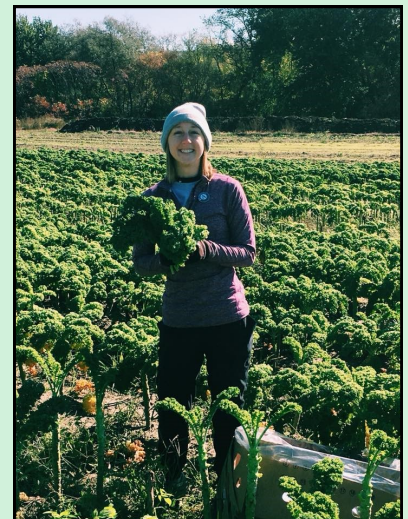
Spinach: 7 lbs.

Kale: 120 lbs.

Carrots: 138 lbs.

of Vermonters fed?

Priceless



Billy is Walking the Road to Success with Windham Regional Commission



The past few months of service with the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) seem to have passed too quickly for Billy. That's probably due to the amount of experiences he has had. As a second year member he thought his expectations would be pretty spot on, but he was quickly shown the possibilities would exceed them by miles. He has had



opportunities to conduct road erosion inventories through the municipal roads general permit, to learn GIS skills and create maps, to present the VTANR Atlas at a landowner workshop, to assist road foremen in the selection of road projects, to investigate erosion issues around streams and lakes with VT DEC Watershed Coordinator Marie Caduto to investigate stream geomorphology, and to meet some exemplary people who he is delighted to be serving beside. That's just a scratch of what he has been doing, and this service year is proving to continue with providing him excellent opportunities to grow professionally and personally.



Cara Wastes No Time with the Central Vermont Solid Waste District

Having interned for the Intervale Center's Gleaning and Food Rescue Program during the summer and fall seasons of 2015 and 2016, Cara had a lot of exposure to the impacts of food waste in her community. She is serving at the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD), in Montpelier. As the Community Zero Waste Assistant, she has been able to learn about the ins and outs of solid waste management here in Vermont.

Her very first day of service was spent at the Tunbridge World's Fair, helping with vendor food scrap composting. This diverted 6 tons of food scraps from the landfill! She spent some time at schools supporting a Waste Audit at Twinfield Union School auditing ten classes' worth waste to help students understand the difference between what can be composted, recycled, and thrown away.

As a member of the outreach team, one of her first tasks was creating outreach materials for an

e-waste collection event for America Recycles Day. Creating a flyer and press release to advertise the event was Cara's responsibility. The collection took place on November 15th and was a huge success with more than 150 participants who came to recycle e-waste.

One of her main projects on for the rest of the year is organizing and hosting Repair Cafés throughout the district. Her goal is to hold at least three Repair Cafés with the first one scheduled for January. Repair Cafés are free community meeting places that are all about repairing things. Participants can bring broken items to be fixed for free by volunteer repair experts. To help make these events successful, she facilitated a community partnership with the Onion River Exchange, that the district will collaborate with for these events.

Her service thus far has been extremely busy, but very rewarding! She looks forward to the upcoming months and projects that she will continue to accomplish.



Batten Kill Watershed CISMA values their ECO AmeriCorps member's service

Submitted by BK CISMA site supervisor Rick LaDue (Equinox Preservation Trust)

Farrah Ashe: self-starter, independent, fast-learner, willing to face challenges. All of those characteristics described by Farrah's references have been on display in her first two months serving with the BattenKill CISMA as our first Habitat Steward. The first challenge Farrah encountered was explaining to the public what a CISMA is, as well as how the BattenKill CISMA functions. The BattenKill Watershed Comprehensive Invasive Species Management Association (BK CISMA) is a public/private partnership committed to addressing the threat posed by invasive terrestrial plants in the watershed. Speaking on behalf of the BK CISMA steering committee we could not be more pleased with Farrah's service in support of our mission. Farrah has quickly become the face of the CISMA, co-leading a woody invasive management workshop with Travis Hart of VT F&W, updating the CISMA Facebook page, writing articles on invasive plant management for the local newspapers, and getting dirty hand-pulling and cutting a wide variety of woody invasives. While the winter may limit field work, Farrah will be busy leading our public outreach efforts in the communities within the watershed and meeting with local landowners and non-profits to outline and coordinate projects for the spring of 2018. You can follow Farrah's service projects on Facebook at BK Watershed CISMA.



Jess Helps Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission meet their goals!

Submitted by TRORC site supervisor, Michael Storace

Jess Richter has been serving diligently at the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission where she has contributed to numerous projects in our thirty towns to help communities address their road-related



erosion and runoff problems. Jess has conducted road erosion inventories in several towns. These inventories assess segments of road that are in close proximity to surface waters to determine sources of runoff and undersized culverts that present vulnerabilities to future flooding. Jess also developed final Road Erosion Inventory Reports for municipalities that identify problem locations and identify mitigation measures that will reduce surface water sedimentation. During her first few months at TRORC, Jess has also assisted the Town of Strafford with assessing damages that occurred during the July 1 storm event. This event, which featured intense rainfall during a 24 hour period, led to numerous road washouts and received a Federal Disaster Declaration by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In the upcoming months, Jess will be partnering with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation to host several outreach events in the White River Watershed regarding the update of the White

River Tactical Basin Plan. The development of this Plan plays a major role in the State's classification process to determine which specific sections of the river and its tributaries are high quality candidates for protection.

ECO members out in the field getting things done



Billy looks pensively at Vermont's beautiful waters



Sara, Sujata, Cara and Eric attended the Students for Zero Waste Conference in Philadelphia



Nikki performing a road assessment



Trevor collecting a water sample



Daniel helping coordinate the Lake Champlain Committee's annual meeting



Sujata feeling the heat from a compost pile



Sarah teaching kids about what is/isn't trash/recycling or compost



Marissa and Liza learning about bats at our Wetlands Training Day in October



Brodie taking a soil sample



Elijah collects samples at Beaver Pond for the LTM Acid Lakes Program



Cara collects electronics for recycling on America Recycles



Dave assists with tree planting in North Troy



Fellow members assisting Heather and the Missisquoi River Basin Association with a tree planting in North Troy



Emily preps for tree harvesting at the Intervale Center



Liza enjoys serving outside on beautiful sunny days



Carlie and Eric on top of a compactor at the Coventry Landfill



Elena relaxes at the Vermont Land Trust's head quarters in Richmond



Corey performs his story at the first ever SerVermont Conference Story Slam



Our members tested their compost knowledge at Green Mountain Compost



Brodie opens his Yankee swap gift at our December training



Members warm up in recently cleared compost holding area and can still feel the heat



Members enjoy a presentation from conservation planner, Jens Hawkins-Hilke



Rhonda Mace leads the ECO crew on a tour of Green Mountain Compost



Nikki is a little chilly during the tour of the Williston Drop Off facility

As our ECO AmeriCorps members wrap up their first quarter of service, we are reminded of the AmeriCorps pledge.

I will get things for America - to make our people safer, smarter and healthier

I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities.

Faced with apathy, I will take action.

Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity, I will persevere.

I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.

I am an AmeriCorps member and I will get things done.