



VERMONT

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
ECO AmeriCorps



Water Investment Division

September 2020- August 2021 Service Year POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title

Dam Safety Program Assistant

Sponsoring Organization

State of Vermont, Department of Environmental Conservation, Water Investment Division, Dam Safety Program, Montpelier, VT

Sponsoring Organization's Mission

The Department of Environmental Conservation's mission is to preserve, enhance, restore and conserve Vermont's natural resources and protect human health for the benefit of this and future generations.

The Dam Safety Program's (DSP) mission is public safety relative to dams. This includes the determination of risk factors associated with dams and dam failures, including potential for loss of life, property damage, and damage to the environment. We manage a permit program for construction and alteration of non-federal, non-hydroelectric dams, conduct visual dam inspections, educate dam owners and the public about dam safety issues, are in the process of developing the State's first Dam Safety Rules to guide future dam regulation, operate and maintain State owned dams, participate in dam rehabilitation and dam removal projects, and participate in Emergency Action Planning for dams.

Goals for the ECO AmeriCorps Position

- 1) Assist in the identification of risk factors relative to dams through participation in the inspection program and dam hazard class determination/confirmation initiative.
- 2) Increase/improve public and partner education regarding dam safety
- 3) Serve as a team member of the Dam Safety Program, working cooperatively with us and other state-agency staff and partners
- 4) Gain relevant experience in the civil and environmental and sciences fields by participating on a variety projects, and developing time management and project prioritization skills

Essential Functions. Functions that the applicant must be able to perform

- Perform field tasks with basic physical fitness
- Collect and analyze field data
- Process, organize, and manage project data, with strong attention to detail
- Technical Writing

- Communicate with a wide range of audiences
- Self-motivated, time management skills, enjoys variety of projects

Marginal Functions. These are secondary to Essential Functions, may be negotiable, and can be completed as time allows.

- ArcGIS and related applications
- Database projects using Microsoft Access
- Hydraulic and hydraulic modeling
- Outreach and education for the public

Projects May Include

This member will serve on two primary projects that will help in DSP's risk identification, tracking, reporting, and communications efforts. On the two main projects as well as other tasks, the Member will work closely with Program staff.

1) Dam Safety Inspections: This will include planning, obtaining permission, assisting with dam inspections in the field, being responsible for the collection of field data, analyzing the data and information, and drafting, under the direction of Program Staff, the reports. This is a great opportunity to visit different areas of the state and observe dams of various sizes, design, condition, and hazard classification. The Member's assistance in this task will allow us to perform more inspections that previously able, improving our level of service and understanding of the condition and risk factors of dams statewide.

2) Dam Hazard Classification Confirmations: This will include performing desktop reviews of pertinent file information, field data collection, map and aerial image review, computer modeling, mapping, and communications with Owners and Emergency personnel. The Member's assistance is needed to launch this important initiative.

In addition to these two projects, the Member will be fully immersed in our program's work and may assist with other initiatives based on the Member's interests such as: operations and minor maintenance of state owned dams, participation in the Dam Task Force, dam repair/removal application review, policy development and public education/outreach, and coordination with sister programs including the Rivers Program.

Desired Qualifications

- Background or interest in technical, engineering, and or science disciplines.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Strong organizational skills
- Course work related to civil and environmental engineering or scientific studies.
- Experience with data management and organization
- Enjoys a fast-paced and changing work environment
- Positive and passionate attitude and a team player
- Ability to organize a project/research plan and follow methodologies
- Ability to effectively present technical information for a public audience through verbal and written communications
- Valid Driver's License

Networking Opportunities

The ECO AmeriCorps member will be serving alongside numerous staff at DEC as well as in the field with representatives from municipal government, NGOs/environmental organizations, private consultants, hydropower producers, and the general public. They will be exposed to organizations including the Vermont Dam Task Force and Association of State Dam Safety Officials. Also, being in DEC there is an opportunity for them to be exposed to many of the other programs within the organization. The DSP regularly interacts with the Rivers Program, Lakes and Ponds Program, Wetlands Program as well as the Department of Fish & Wildlife.

Service Conditions

Service is to be performed with a mixture of field and office work. It is estimated that the position will be 30% field and 70% office. This position may involve extra or non-regular hours to complete field work, attend public meetings which may be held in the evening, and to assist in response to flooding.

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.