



September 2020- August 2021 Service Year POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title

Lands, Trails and Education Coordinator

Sponsoring Organization

Middlebury Area Land Trust
Middlebury, VT

Sponsoring Organization's Mission

Working with our community to conserve natural and productive landscapes, and to enhance scenic, recreational, and educational opportunities.

Goals for the ECO AmeriCorps Position

- 8 miles of trail treated and improved for erosion control and invasive plant management
- 40 acres of improved lands
- 25 community members engaged in landowner workshops
- 150 youth engaged in environmental education programming
- 150 volunteers engaged in trail and land stewardship
- 500 trail users educated on topics of erosion control, invasive plant management, Leave No Trace, and property recreation practices
- A 10-year scoping plan for water quality improvement on MALT's lands and trails

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

- Knowledge and/or interest in trail building and maintenance techniques
- Knowledge and/or interest in land monitoring practices such as wildlife monitoring, conservation biology, invasive plant management, erosion control techniques, and watershed improvement
- Teach environmental education for audiences ages 3 to adulthood
- Co-develop and teach summer day camps for ages 3-14, mentor and supervise teen counselors-in-training
- Develop evaluation tools to gauge success of programs, maintain performance measurement records for all programs
- Ability to recruit, manage, inspire and serve side-by-side with volunteers in an outdoor setting
- Experience interacting with youth AND adults in a mission-driven setting, including any combination of environmental education, coaching, public service, volunteering, leading clubs, leading interest groups
- Ability to spend long periods of time outdoors, on foot, and in varying weather conditions

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

- Coursework and/or applicable experience in GIS mapping
- Interest in working with MALT's mapping files in an effort to improve conservation processes and records
- Help publicize programming via social media, website, flyers, and blogs
- Assist with special events as an educator (e.g., Middlebury Green Up Day, the TAM Trek (annual race around the TAM), etc.)

Projects May Include

Our AmeriCrops member will:

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LANDS AND TRAILS by supporting volunteers and stewardship. This will result in:

- 1) Engaging about 150 volunteers in trail and land stewardship days throughout the year.
- 2) Monitoring and improving at least 8 miles of MALT-owned trails adjacent to Otter Creek, a tributary of Lake Champlain. Focusing on invasive species management and erosion control to protect natural characteristics of the trail and surrounding land.
- 3) Investigating potential water quality improvement projects in the Otter Creek watershed, specifically stream bank stability and pollutant transport reduction through improved riparian buffers.
- 4) Writing a 10-year project list for improving MALT's conserved lands. This plan will strive to improve the general water quality and species diversity/abundance of Otter Creek.
- 5) Removing invasive species on up to 40 acres of public lands, many of which include transitional forests and riparian buffers. Exploring new funding opportunities to plant native vegetation in areas where removal occurs.

DEEPEN CONNECTION to, KNOWLEDGE of, and STEWARDSHIP of MALT's 30 miles of trail and 700 acres of public lands. This will be accomplished by:

- 1) Hosting adult workshops and events with local landowners, farmers, and community members. MALT has conserved over 1,000 acres of current use agricultural lands and the member will serve current and prospective landowners with environmentally conscious practices for forestry, wildlife, water, and acceptable agricultural practices.
- 2) Serving as a trailhead steward during peak season, interacting with up to 500 users, teaching proper trail use, Leave No Trace principles, and trail design for erosion control and water quality.
- 3) Leading nature-based, environmentally themed programs for over 150 youth, ages Pre-K through 18. Themes including wilderness skills, nature connection, local ecology, nature art, and service projects on MALT trails and lands will be included.
- 4) Piloting an education program with a local school classroom, focusing on watershed restoration and the connection between Otter Creek and Lake Champlain. The program will include 4 sessions of 2 hours each.

Desired Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent professional experience in an environmental field such as environmental sciences, natural resources, recreation, conservation, or related field
- 2-3 seasons of experience teaching outdoor, science, or environmental education
- Knowledge of, or interest in learning, the use of simple hand tools such as drills, hammers, weed whackers, etc.

- Knowledge of basic nature-connection techniques and pedagogy, such as nature art, sit spots, story-telling
- Demonstrated experience and passion for working with youth, ages Pre-K to 18
- Ability to work independently for long periods of time, and enjoy working as part of a team
- A strong conservation and environmental ethic that can be communicated to the public through education events, volunteer coordinating, written publications, and everyday interaction with the public
- Experience coordinating up to 30 volunteers and/or participants, ideally in an outdoor and/or environmental setting, including proven ability to recruit, schedule, manage, serve, and learn side-by-side with volunteers and/or participants
- Experience in Microsoft Word, Excel, Publisher
- Experience in, or ability to learn, MailChimp and WordPress
- Highly organized with astute attention to detail, experience supervising projects of varying size and duration from start to finish
- Enthusiasm to serve with a fast-paced, passionate, environmental non-profit
- A can-do attitude and willingness to be a problem solver in independent and team settings

Networking Opportunities

The AmeriCorps Member will receive the following additional member benefits:

- 1) Networking through monthly MALT board meetings and Vermont SWEEP (State Wide Environmental Education Program) membership meetings;
- 2) Attendance two environmental education conferences - In Bloom for early childhood nature-based education and Summer-ama by the VT Parks & Rec Dept;
- 3) Shadowing nature science programming at regional organizations such as Crow's Path, Common Ground Center, and Willowell Foundation;
- 4) Field naturalist programs/workshops at partnering environmental education organizations such as Otter Creek Audubon Society and the Aurora Learning Center;
- 5) Participation in monthly Middlebury Conservation Commission meetings;
- 6) Serving as a liaison to the Otter Creek Audubon Society's Education Committee;
- 7) Shadowing with Vermont Land Trust colleagues for best practices in land monitoring;
- 8) Direct mentorship from MALT's volunteer trails coordinator of 30 years;
- 8) Access to affordable and local housing options coordinated through MALT

Service Conditions

Service will be a combination of indoor and outdoor time. The position will focus on outdoor service in the fall/spring/summer seasons. Occasional days/portion of days will be spent outside during winter months. Members will be expected to regularly to lift 30 pounds and handle simple hand tools such as drills, hammers, wheelbarrows, shovels, weed whackers, hand clippers/loppers, etc. Members will spend some full days moving on their feet in varying weather conditions.

Service hours will be primarily Monday-Friday from 9:00 to 4:30 and occasional service on weekends.

Service will be a combination of independent/team time in the field and office. Member is expected to be comfortable working independently in front-country wilderness settings. Member will be exposed to various VT wildlife such as deer, coyote, birds of prey, etc. Member will serve closely with potentially hazardous invasive plants such as poison parsnip. Member will be trained in proper handling and personal protection techniques.

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.