

## ECO AmeriCorps Host Site Application 2022-'23

Since 2015, ECO has enjoyed working with an inspiring list of conservation partners in providing environmental leaders a paid opportunity to serve Vermont communities. ECO AmeriCorps values all voices and identities in the conservation space. We seek to uplift and engage diversity, equity and inclusion commitments in service and in our state. Thank you for your interest in joining us!

For more information on host site application supporting documents:

<https://dec.vermont.gov/administration-innovation/eco/current-host-organizations>

Contact:

[dustin.bowman@vermont.gov](mailto:dustin.bowman@vermont.gov)

802-461-5222

ECO AmeriCorps Living Stipend:

\$21,335 (full-time members)

\$11,295 (half-time members)

Host Site cost based on # of full-time employees:

Full-Time (1,700 hours over 11 months)

0-3 \$7,500

3-10 \$8,400

>10 \$9,800

Half-Time (900 hours over 6 months)

\$4,900 regardless of size

Quarter-Time (450 hours over 3 months)

\$2,450 regardless of size

### Service Site Responsibilities

- Provide host site match based on organizational size
- Participate in ECO member recruitment, confirm member selection, arrange site training, member supervision and support throughout term of service, other forms and documentation as required by AmeriCorps, reviews bi-weekly member timesheets, mileage reimbursement for service-related travel.
- Supervisor must attend AmeriCorps supervisor orientation (or make special arrangements).
- Applicants must submit a Certificate of Insurance, indicating that the entity or entities have met the insurance requirements listed in Attachment C (see risk assessment document).

**Full-Time Member Benefits\***

Living Stipend: \$21,335 Education Award: \$6,495

Other Benefits: Professional development training, networking opportunities, health care, child care assistance, program support, mileage/meals reimbursement for ECO AmeriCorps-related travel.

\*Benefits for half-time and part-time members are prorated.

VT-DEC administers the member's living stipend, health care benefits, child care benefits, timesheets, activity reports, and other AmeriCorps and employee-related benefits and documentation.

**Organization Name \***

Montpelier Parks & Trees

**Organization Address \***

39 Main St., Montpelier, VT 05603

**Supervisor Name and Title \***

Alec Ellsworth: Parks Director & Tree Warden

**Email \***

aellsworth@montpelier-vt.org

**Phone number \***

(802) 585 7673

Which hosting category are you applying to? Note: ECO prefers full-time members for the vast majority of our program opportunities. Please contact Coordinator [dustin.bowman@vermont.gov](mailto:dustin.bowman@vermont.gov) with questions. \*

- Full-Time (September-August)
- Half-Time (flexible)
- Quarter-Time (May-August)

How many ECO Service Members are you applying to host? \*Note\* The program looks to disperse capacity builders geographically and by experience. Consideration will be given to those that can demonstrate unique need. \*

- 1
- 2

Host Site Contribution Method \*

- Lump Sum
- Quarterly, \*program preference is for one-time payment (reach out with questions)

Please provide a brief description of your role at your organization. \*

Our department provides 4 primary services to our community:

1. Managing nearly 500 acres of Parkland for year-round public access and outdoor recreation.
2. Managing our urban forest, which includes over 2000 street trees from downtown to rural roads.
3. Hosting seasonal events, which draw people into our parks and celebrate the changing seasons of VT.
4. Community Farm: A partnership with the Senior Activity Center and Recreation Department which grows food for our meals on wheels program and food pantry.

My role is to supervise these activities, and provide staff support to a number of public bodies including the Parks Commission, Conservation Commission, Tree Board, and City Council.

What is the title of the position you are requesting? \*

Montpelier Parks & Watershed Steward

Describe your proposed service position. Please outline the role. \*

The Montpelier Parks & Watershed steward will serve our local community in many ways. At its core, the member will be care for and enrich our public lands and urban forest, with the goal of positively impacting the watershed and the community. This is a very hands-on service site, and the member will expect to be involved in all four areas of our work.

1. Managing Parks: Member will engage in sustainable trail design/build and maintenance, managing our forested landscape, removing invasive species, improving riparian areas, and making our Parks safe and accessible to all.
2. Urban Forest Management: Member will be involved with tree maintenance, planting, and removals. This work will be supported by our City Arborist and other team members.
3. Seasonal Events: Member will work together with our whole team to produce our annual seasonal events. These include the Enchanted Forest (fall), Ice on Fire (winter), All Species Day (Spring), and Parkapalooza (Summer).
4. Community Farm: Member will help lead volunteer groups to engage with the farm and the surrounding riparian landscape.

Most importantly, we try to accomplish our mission by involving community members as much as possible. The member will be expected to play a leadership role with our High School Conservation Corps, job trainees from the Department of Labor, and many other volunteer groups that we host. The member will be supported in this role by our staff and other experienced volunteers.

We usually start the service term by having the member work closely along side our staff. The first third to half of the year is a time for learning, gaining skills, and understanding our mission. The second portion of the service term offers the member an opportunity to take on more of a leadership role. The member will be expected to lead groups, and if possible develop projects within our mission where they see a need in the community.

What are the essential functions that the applicant must be able to perform? These may be listed in bullet form. \*

- Lead job trainees, volunteers, school groups, and numerous other groups looking to do community service in the Parks to conduct a variety of improvements related to our watershed goals such as restoring riparian areas, trail improvements, removing invasive plants, and planting beneficial native species.
- Conduct follow-up management on the previous years' efforts to remove woody invasives, plant native species and ensure ongoing success of our invasives management plan.
- Organize efforts to increase improve management of herbaceous invasive plants, including engaging local volunteers, landowners, and/or neighborhoods in removing invasive plants and planting native species.
- Assist in managing a healthy treescape along the streets in Montpelier. Montpelier is a city of hills and rivers. Most of the trees in the in the right of way are located in roadways not far from waterways, and many are located along steep gradients. Planting and maintaining healthy trees on the ROW's in Montpelier will help with storm water management, reducing erosion on our hillsides, and generally contribute positively to our watershed.
- Work with the Montpelier Tree Board (a volunteer group) on their neighborhood tree planting program, investing in our city's future treescape.
- Collaborate with the Community Services Department to manage a community farm that protects a key riparian area and provides sustainable agriculture education opportunities.

What are the secondary functions? These are projects or tasks that may be accomplished as time allows or applicant's interests evolve. \*

- Develop/improve interpretive signage.
- Hold workshops in neighborhoods on invasive control techniques.
- Instigate neighborhood efforts to control invasives along riparian corridors.
- Lead local volunteers in citizen science efforts to gather information about existing invasives threatening the rest of the cities waterways.
- Attend committee meetings such as the Parks Commission and Conservation Commission to understand and contribute to community management of our public resources.

What are the desired qualification for this position? \*

-Interest and ability to serve with a wide range of people to improve the watershed. Our organization thrives on volunteers of all stripes---from kids with behavioral challenges, to service groups, to high functioning college age students, to senior citizens in our community. Applicants must be interested in being a leader for groups of all kinds.

- Be interested in being a "model" for a variety of people for problem solving, being a community catalyst, developing and implementing plans, and "getting things done."

- Interested in physically and intellectually challenging activities in ALL types of weather.

- Creative, outside the box thinking and problem solving.

- A willingness to learn technical skills around the wide variety of tools we use here (tractors, chainsaws, vehicles, wood processing, trail tools, carpentry, snow management, trail grooming, etc.)

- Competency in writing.

---

Will the member have access to "vulnerable populations"? This includes youth, elderly and individuals with disabilities. \*

Yes

No

What initiatives does your organization take to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice and how will the ECO member be included or supported in this work? \*

The City of Montpelier has as "Social and Economic Justice Advisory Committee" (SEJAC) which was established in 2018 to assist City Council in addressing and reshaping the systems, policies, and practices that perpetuate barriers to racial, social, and economic justice in our community. The committee recently completed an equity assessment of the City's delivery of services, which included a list of recommendations for how we could improve. In our department we are implementing the following practices:

- Lowering the bar to access public spaces and recreation through better maps, more outreach, and easier access to information.

- Expanding our outdoor recreation offerings by building accessible trails and the necessary accompanying facilities.

- When hiring, expand our outreach to attract a wider variety of candidates.

- Serving our most vulnerable residents through our Community Farm project.

- Offering meaningful employment opportunities in conservation to young people in our community, which provides not only the opportunity to engage with this field but also a means to support their income.

---

Please provide information that provides a compelling need for the proposed position (data, statistics, resources, etc.) \*

- Montpelier has 4 rivers running through it, and is a key part of the Winooski Watershed. Reducing erosion and improving our riparian areas is a key goal that is outlined in many regional and municipal plans including VT's Clean Water Initiative Program, Montpelier's Stormwater Master Plan and the Winooski River Tactical Basin Plan.
- Only ~30% of Montpelier's residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park, as outlined in the Trust for Public Land's "Park Score" of Montpelier. Expanding access and improving our public lands is one of City's key goals to get every resident within a 10 minute walk of a Park.
- 20 years of battling invasive species in our Parks has shown that we are making real and steady progress in improving our forested landscapes and riparian areas. Americorps members play a key role in leveraging volunteer labor to make progress on the huge task of eliminating invasive species.

Describe the supervisor's leadership experience. Will they have adequate time to manage and mentor an ECO AmeriCorps member? \*

I manage our staff of 4, and also have supervised over 5 ECO Americorps members in my time here. Managing and mentoring these members fits in with our mission and is part of my role here. I also facilitate the mentorship and training opportunities available to members through our other staff members and community groups.

Describe how your organization has adapted to COVID-19. What communication strategies and tools have you implemented? i.e. teleservice, remote service, etc. \*

- Most of our work is outside and can be done in a COVID-safe fashion.
- When our work is inside, our team uses masking to prevent potential infection.
- Remote service is available for office-based tasks.

Describe networking opportunities that will be available to your service member. \*

- Working with community groups such as the Parks Commission, Conservation Commission, and Tree Board. These groups are often full of experts in their field, and provide a good opportunity for members to network with these people and observe conservation and land management practices at the municipal level.
- Being based in Montpelier offers many other networking opportunities due to our adjacency to state offices.
- The member will attend conferences with our staff including the Vermont Parks & Recreation Association conference, ISA New England Conference, and VT Arbor Day conference.
- Other opportunities are available depending on the members time and interest.

Is there someone in your organization's network that might be interested in mentoring your ECO service member? \*Note, 1-2 hours per month, not required

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Does your organization currently host or plan to host an AmeriCorps member from another program? If yes, briefly describe the duties of this other position. \*

Yes, we plan to host a VHCB Americorps member. This person is more focused on the Community Farm aspect of our work, but also shares many of the same duties and will work alongside our ECO Americorps member.

Please list any clothing/equipment the member will need that you cannot provide (e.g., hiking boots, waders, raingear, etc.). Is a reliable vehicle expected? As the host site, you are responsible for providing all tools and technical equipment needed for the position (e.g., computer, phone, GPS, etc.). \*

- Work boots with a safety toe
- Warm weather gear sufficient to work outside in all temperatures
- Rain gear sufficient to work outside in the rain



Are you willing to search with program staff over the summer to help your ECO member secure affordable and safe housing?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

## Performance Measures

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.

Document can be found here: <https://dec.vermont.gov/administration-innovation/eco/current-host-organizations/prospectivehostsites>

Water Quality and Trail Improvement - Please project Impact Numbers on miles of river/stream/trail treated and/or improved. \*

10

Land Conservation and Remediation - Please project impact numbers on acres of public parks or other public, publicly managed or tribal lands improved. \*

480

Community Engagement Outreach and Education - Please project number of individuals receiving environmental stewardship education or training. \*

300

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

# Google Forms