



AmeriCorps

2023-24 ECO AmeriCorps

Education Outreach & Data Specialist

Environmental Careers and Opportunities (ECO) AmeriCorps is an AmeriCorps program within the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC). ECO AmeriCorps is funded in part by an AmeriCorps state grant provided through SerVermont from the Corporation for National & Community Service. Service sites will provide meaningful service opportunities, regular supervision with oversight of service hours and timesheets, office space and office equipment, orientation to the worksite, additional training (as needed) and mileage reimbursement. The 2023-2024 program will begin mid-September 2023 and end in August 2024.

To be considered, service sites must:

- Demonstrate a commitment to DEIJ principles and provide a pathway for involvement at the host site and program level.
- Be a non-profit, municipality, state agency, tribal government, or educational institution.
- Provide a position description showcasing activities that are appropriate to the mission of ECO AmeriCorps.
- Provide a work environment that is ADA compliant, drug-free, and carries supplies and equipment necessary for members to perform their duties.
- Be able to provide the cash match and mileage reimbursement at the federal General Services Administration (GSA) rate for service-related travel for the member.
- Attend a supervisor orientation and be available for a minimum of two subsequent site visits and check-ins from ECO AmeriCorps staff.
- Clarify any additional responsibilities to the member according to your organization's policies.
- Notify ECO AmeriCorps staff about conflicts or other issues as they arise.

Other Requirements and Responsibilities:

- Confirm member selection, on-site training, member supervision and support throughout term of service, other forms and documentation as required by AmeriCorps, mileage reimbursement for service-related travel.
- Main supervisor must attend AmeriCorps supervisor orientation (or make special arrangements).

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

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

- 0-3 \$8,000
- 4-10 \$9,000
- >10 \$10,500

Half-Time (900 hours over 6 months)

- \$5,250 regardless of size

Quarter-Time (450 hours over 3 months)

- \$2,625 regardless of size

For more information about the host site application:

- Visit the ECO Website for supporting documents: www.ecoamericorps.org
- Or contact Program Supervisor, Dustin Bowman, dustin.bowman@vermont.gov, 802-461-5222

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation is sponsoring AmeriCorps positions through its AmeriCorps Program. The State of Vermont is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Positions are open to all applicants without regard to race color, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, veteran's status, religion, or creed.

Name of Organization or Municipality:

Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

Address of Organization or Municipality:

1 National Life Drive

Primary Supervisor Name and Title:

Kimberly Jensen, Aquatic Biologist

Primary Supervisor's email:

kimberly.jensen@vermont.gov

Primary Supervisor's phone #:

8024906120

Please provide a brief description of your role at your site:

My role within the VTDEC Lakes & Ponds Program is to oversee and administer the state-wide Aquatic Invasive Species Program and the funding mechanisms in the form of grants and contracts that support the program, staff, contractors, and the statewide network of constituents. The main components of the program include education and outreach, spread prevention programs, surveys and research, and management control projects associated with aquatic invasive species threats and known populations. The main elements of these components are the Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant-in-Aid Program, the Vermont Public Access Greeter Program, the volunteer-training Vermont Invasive Patroller Program, and the Lake Champlain Water Chestnut Management Program.

Which hosting category are you applying to?

Full-Time (September-August)

What is the title of the position you are requesting?

Education Outreach & Data Specialist

Describe your proposed service project.

[Note: performance measures are based on improved acres of public land, improved miles of waterways or trails, number of Vermonters provided environmental stewardship education or training, and number of members placed in green jobs after completing their AmeriCorps service. Capacity- building activities are allowed. Please describe any projected impact.]

The Education Outreach & Data Specialist service member will provide general support for the various elements of the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program that includes broadening the education and outreach components of the program, these may include educational props and materials, webinars, and training activities. The member will assist in the improvement of managing AIS data to improve communication of the program within various sectors, public, inter-agency, and partnerships. This service will improve the effectiveness of the communication for a wide variety of constituents to address the need for gathering, compiling, and sharing data, geospatial information, and effective strategies to protect lakes and ponds from AIS infestations.

What data collection tools will the member use to record the impacts of their service activity?

The member can record number of participants involved in the service, number of hours provided of training or co-leading projects, and number of "hits" from webpages or webinars that we hope to develop and post.

Please provide any additional information (data, statistics, reports, etc.) that demonstrates the compelling need for the proposed position:

The Aquatic Invasive Species Program staff's responsibilities are many and varied. These responsibilities change throughout the year as the spring, summer, and fall are comprised of a short and busy field season with a number of technicians, followed by an extremely dense administrative operation that incorporates data compilation, reports, and the development of E&O publications for the public. The off-season also includes a huge investment in data collection, analysis, and reporting. Often, important stand-alone projects that the program may benefit from to improve the operations, or to increase the public knowledge, are not initiated or are not completed. Having a dedicated Service Member to complete specific projects will fulfill a need that is long overdue.

What initiatives does your organization take to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice (DEIJ)? Please include any historical data or details for on-going strategic plans, partnerships, and projects, as relevant.

Vermont DEC provides important services to all Vermonters and visitors to the state, including clean water and air, wildlife habitat management, waste management, drinking water provision, and climate change mitigation / adaptation. One of the focus areas of the DEC is combating environmental injustice. DEC

leadership believes that we are at a pivotal moment of self-reflection in our society, examining the legacies of the systemic racism and our disenfranchisement of the most vulnerable. Therefore, as we review DEC's role in creating just and equitable outcomes for Vermonters, it's clear that we must do more to engage with overburdened and underserved communities across Vermont. To that end, DEC has established an environmental justice (EJ) committee, and is developing EJ and Title VI policies.

Additionally, the Agency of Natural Resources has also established a Diversity and Equity Committee working on similar efforts to promote equity and inclusion in regards to Vermonter's access to environmental services.

ANR and VTDEC have programmatic leads that are assisting individual programs to support DEIJ within the agency. All of the staff are involved in the training opportunities, and do consider these opportunities in the work that we accomplish.

Outline how DEIJ principles can be incorporated into your organization's work moving forward. (Provide examples of any trainings, workshops, projects, partnerships, etc.)

The AIS Program can improve the manner that we advertise our trainings and field sessions to reach a broader audience. When we develop new publications or trainings we do incorporate DEIJ principles in these opportunities. For example, we have a French version of Clean Drain Dry rack-cards, we provide alternatives to sampling tools or locations that would be available to anyone, rather than those that live on a lake, and we also consider the impacts of AIS on subsistence individuals (those who may choose to get sustenance from fish or plants that are effected/impacted by invasive species such as Abenaki population).

Describe specific challenges that your organization has faced while integrating DEIJ Principles.

We are challenged with the fact that the targeted population of lake landowners are often high-to middle class, predominantly white, and well-educated. However, those that recreate or endeavor on lakes are most likely more divers, though difficult to engage with.

How will the ECO member be included or supported in on-going or future DEIJ work at the organization, if they so choose?

The ECO member would be included in the training opportunities within the Agency. As a team, we also discuss how the program can be more inclusive and considerate of those that are difficult to engage with.

Does the supervisor have adequate time and leadership experience to manage an ECO member? Please explain how:

Yes, the Supervisor and the Lakes & Ponds Program staff have hosted and mentored a number of ECO members and other program interns in the past. With the addition of a new full-time employee, we hope that this individual could also work with them to provide guidance from an entry-level perspective. Since the duties will be performed mostly at home offices, we will hold team meetings every week to communicate the completion of tasks and next tasks moving forward.

Will the member have access to networking opportunities in this position? Please explain:

The Lakes & Ponds Program and the AIS Program has weekly meetings that the member will be asked to participate in. They may also participate in other VTDEC or Lakes & Ponds Program workshops, trainings, events, and projects as needed and as they arise.

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.

The AIS Program is currently hosting an ECO AmeriCorps member, Lia Ivanick. Lia's service includes a variety of tasks. Lia was involved with the plant surveys at the end of the 2022 field season, from there she assisted in developing field reports, conducted research on a few early detection infestations as requested by local organizations, and her major role is to develop AIS webpages that are focused on Vermont to replace those that are linked to national AIS webpages.

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.).

Mud boots, hiking boots, rain gear, and appropriate outdoor clothing for all types of weather conditions. A reliable vehicle is not necessary if the member is comfortable using the bus, or carpooling.

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

Maybe

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

Maybe

Many of our members are not from Vermont and are seeking a sense of community away from home. In what ways would you be willing to help them establish community connections? (Housing, peer networks, affinity spaces, local resources, fun places to go)

Providing information on local resources and fun places to go. Our 2021 ECO AmeriCorps member ended up in a shared apartment with the AIS seasonal technicians, I think there is opportunity for a lot of social comradery in the program.

Provide approximate impact numbers (e.g. miles of rivers treated) in each focus area.

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

100

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

1000

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

Program:

ECO AmeriCorps

Sponsoring Organization Name:

Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

Sponsoring Organization's Mission:

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation Lakes and Ponds Management and Protection Program's mission is to protect, enhance, and restore ecosystem health of Vermont lakes and ponds so that these water bodies maintain a range of uses to Vermonters.

Goals for the ECO AmeriCorps Position:

The goal of the ECO AmeriCorps Position is to firstly provide a professional development experience for the member to gain skills, confidence, and information as a field scientist; secondly is to assist the AIS program in completing a capacity-building project to improve the mission of the program; and last is to improve/restore/protect the natural world that we care deeply about.

Essential Functions. Functions that applicant must be able to perform. These may be listed in bullet form:

- Develop educational and outreach materials and guides events to increase the understanding of preventing and managing AIS infestations by the program's constituents and the general public.
- Participate in the social media working group for the Department of Environmental Conservation and develop and publish content for DEC's various social media channels.
- Support other ongoing lake monitoring, assessment efforts, and data compilation of the DEC Lakes and Ponds Program as needed.

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

- Perform GIS mapping and data analysis of Aquatic Invasive Species Program projects, including the VT Public Access Greeter Program, Water Chestnut Management Program, Aquatic Macrophyte Surveys, and other Lakes & Ponds Monitoring Programs.

Desired Qualifications:

- Duties require knowledge equivalent to completion of a Bachelor's Degree in Natural Resources, Forestry, Agriculture, or a related field. A combination of education and experience providing comparable knowledge and skills may be acceptable.
- Ability to coordinate and serve on multiple projects simultaneously, and to maintain attention to detail while producing a steady volume of service in compliance with deadlines.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills. Ability to communicate with different personalities.

· Familiarity with operating and trailering motorboats and watercraft helpful.

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

Service Conditions (will the position be largely outside, office based, hybrid or seasonally/project dependent, in schools, etc.) *

Hybrid and seasonal - Outdoors 100% during the spring/summer/fall; Indoors, work at home or office in winter.

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

Yes

Time Requirements:

Full time: will need to complete a minimum of 1700 service hours, serving approximately 40 hours/week over the course of the 11-month service term, September 13, 2023 - August 9, 2024

Orientation and Training:

ECO will provide members with orientation at the beginning of the service term. Host sites are expected to provide additional on-boarding training as well. Throughout the service term, ECO will provide in-person and virtual trainings to members on a variety of topics.

Benefits:

- Education award of \$6,895 (pre-tax) upon successful completion of service
- \$23,000 Living Allowance, paid bi-weekly
- Training
- Childcare assistance, if eligible
- Health Coverage
- Access to AmeriCorps Alumni Network
- Student loan forbearance and interest payments, if eligible

Evaluation and Reporting: Mid and final performance reviews, quarterly reports, weekly timesheets, and end of service survey