



AmeriCorps

2023-24 ECO AmeriCorps

Riparian Forest Coordinator

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 Land Trust

Address of Organization or Municipality:

8 Bailey Ave, Montpelier VT 05602

Primary Supervisor Name and Title:

Allaire Diamond, Ecologist

Primary Supervisor's email:

allaire@vlt.org

Primary Supervisor's phone #:

802-879-6672

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

As VLT's Ecologist, I consult on ecologically significant features on all of our projects, new and previously conserved, lead our ecological restoration program, and develop programming including educational events and written materials around these topics.

Which hosting category are you applying to?

Full-Time (September-August)

What is the title of the position you are requesting?

Riparian Forest Coordinator

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.]

VLT seeks a Riparian Forest Coordinator to support our strategic and programmatic goal of establishing high-quality forested riparian buffers along streams and rivers throughout our portfolio of conserved lands. Each year, we conserve about 15 new farms, adding these to our portfolio of over 1000 conserved farms statewide. While buffers are mapped in the new easements, the lands they cover often lack natural forested cover. In addition, we are actively protecting buffer areas on the hundreds of farms that were conserved before our universal buffer policy was developed. The Riparian Forest Coordinator will support, and in some cases lead, all aspects of our buffer establishment program. They will support VLT project directors in buffer-related components of new farm project development; physically flag new buffers on the ground; assess the need for tree planting on new and older projects using both remote data tools and field work; design, coordinate, and carry out tree planting projects, often with the assistance of watershed partners; tend and monitor planted trees; interface with volunteers; and track data on all of these activities using internal tracking tools. The position includes significant time in the field using hand or mechanical tools, and requires high organizational and time management skills and self motivation. Comfort communicating effectively with a variety of partners, volunteers, landowners, and VLT colleagues is critical. The member will be supported in refining these skills by their VLT supervisor and others.

This position also includes critical support of other water quality efforts, including wetland restoration and our ash monitoring project.

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

The member will use a set of tools including data sheets, ArcGIS mobile and desktop tools, spreadsheets, and databases. They will also use email to track communication with partners and volunteers, a camera to record images, and Microsoft Teams to track service tasks.

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

In previous years, ECO AmeriCorps members have made possible the planting of thousands of trees on conserved farms throughout the state. Without their service, this program area would be un-resourced and rely solely on partners coordinating tree plantings independently on conserved farms. While our partners do excellent work, the AmeriCorps coordination on the VLT facilitates more, and more comprehensive, riparian forest establishment.

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.

DEIJ efforts are a major priority in Vermont Land Trust's strategic plan. We have a staff DEIJ workgroup (previous AmeriCorps members have served on this) as well as a board DEIJ committee. VLT is working actively to increase land sovereignty among historically marginalized groups, and has several ongoing conservation projects and programmatic initiatives. In the riparian restoration arena, VLT has begun consulting with indigenous partners to develop more robust restoration plans that support Abenaki and other indigenous gathering practices, and the AmeriCorps member will likely serve on some of these projects.

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

We currently and will continue to support historically underrepresented groups directly through focused conservation projects and facilitating a land sovereignty fund. We have trainings and internal workgroup efforts available to all staff. We incorporate inclusive language into our hiring process. Currently, we are engaging a BIPOC-led consultant group, Braided Wisdom, who is helping us address a number of questions about our role in furthering BIPOC land sovereignty and land justice initiatives.

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

We remain a majority white organization in a space (land conservation) historically dominated in our region by white and male people. In striving to be inclusive and create a sense of belonging for all people, both internally and in our outward facing work, we continue to identify challenges and grapple with tough questions about how we might be inadvertently perpetuating harmful systems. For example, our applicant pool for new positions continues to be fairly homogenous.

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 is welcome to join the DEIJ workgroup or any other staff workgroup, and will be part of DEIJ trainings and other efforts, the same as VLT staff.

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

Yes. Allaire has worked with all of VLT's ECO AmeriCorps members and this will be her third year supervising. She and her supervisor have developed and continue to refine tools for supporting members, including standing weekly meetings and collaboration via Microsoft Teams.

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

The member will join a network of VLT staff and partners, particular our partners in the local watershed protection space, that provide a deep well of connections, if the member is interested in exploring this.

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 host a VHCB AmeriCorps member who is typically based in Brattleboro and supports land management activities.

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.).

Hiking boots, muck-type boots, rain gear, winter gear. A reliable vehicle is expected for travel to field sites throughout the state. VLT reimburses for mileage at the federal rate.

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)

We usually begin service by introducing the ECO member to our staff and providing time for several days spent in the field with various staff members. These colleagues as well as the supervisor are wonderful resources for identifying fun local places to go, etc. We're all very interested and excited to provide recommendations to members based on their interests.

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.

4 miles of river/stream planted buffers monitored and tended. 1 mile of stream planted.

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

20 acres improved through planting, tending (clearing and watering), and invasives removal

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

40 volunteers

Sponsoring Organization's Mission:

With families, communities, and partners, we conserve land and foster life-long connections to the farms, forests, and natural areas that define us. Rooted in Vermont since 1977, we have protected more than 620,000 acres of farmland, forestland, and community lands, covering over 11% of the state. Much of this land is privately owned and contributes to our abundance of local food, maple and timber products, tourism and recreation, and the vitality of our towns and villages.

Goals for the ECO AmeriCorps Position:

-Detailed above-

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

Support VLT's strategic and programmatic goal of establishing high-quality forested riparian buffers along streams and rivers throughout our portfolio of conserved lands by performing the following functions:

Physically flag new buffers on the ground on conserved farms.

Assess the need for tree planting on new and older conservation projects.

Design, coordinate, and carry out tree planting projects, often through collaborating with watershed partners.

Comfortably interface with volunteers, partners, landowners, VLT colleagues, and other stakeholders, as a representative of VLT.

Tend (water and weed around) and monitor planted trees post-planting (trees are monitored for three years).

Track data on all of these activities using internal tools.

Assist project directors in buffer-related components of new farm project development.

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

Support additional projects, such as wetland restoration and ash monitoring, as needed.

Refine tracking tools as necessary, or develop new ones, in consultation with supervisor.

Desired Qualifications:

Excellent interpersonal, organizational, and time management skills.

Interest in spending extended periods of time outside performing a variety of physical tasks.

Skill, experience, and interest in communicating and engaging with a range of people.

Experience using ArcGIS, Microsoft Excel, and other Microsoft programs.

Ability to manage multiple tasks independently and prioritize.

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.) *

The position will include significant amounts of time outside in all conditions, with field components focused in fall, spring, and summer. Winter is largely office based and involves planning for future projects. Member will engage with volunteers that may be youth or students, depending on the projects. Projects may occur throughout Vermont but the member will be based in our Richmond office, and most projects in northwestern or central Vermont.

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