

AMERICORPS PROJECT CONSERVE MEMBER SERVICE DESCRIPTION

September 1, 2010 – July 31, 2011 Service Year

Position Title: AmeriCorps Water Quality Associate, M-F 9-5, some nights, weekends

Host Site's Name: Environmental and Conservation Organization (ECO), 21 Third Avenue West, Suite 4, Hendersonville, NC 28792, www.eco-wnc.org

Site Supervisor: David Weintraub, Executive Director, eco@eco-wnc.org, phone 828-692-0385, fax 828-693-0942

Environmental and Conservation Organization's (ECO) Mission Statement:

ECO's mission is to preserve the natural heritage of the mountain region of Western North Carolina as an effective voice for the environment. We fulfill this mission through focusing on four key areas: green infrastructure, water quality, energy conservation/renewable energy and recycling. Founded 20 years ago as a hiking group, we became increasingly alarmed by the degradation of the environment. Since then, ECO has risen to become a preeminent and influential leader in promoting environmental issues affecting our region. We work with citizens, business leaders, like-minded environmental groups and government officials to create a balance between growth and environmental preservation. We undertake water quality monitoring of six watersheds, adopt-a-stream cleanup of dozens of waterways, public policy development towards natural heritage protections, energy expos, workshops and forums to encourage greater stewardship of our environment and recycling programs and activities that encourage sustainable practices. Through grassroots organizing, we galvanize the community to protect what is most valuable about the southern Appalachian Mountains – our natural resources.

Given that water quality is critical to protecting ecosystems, the Water Quality Administrator plays an extremely important role in working with the scientific community, planners, volunteers and landowners to protect the region's watersheds. Through monitoring and community education, the WQA promotes greater environmental stewardship among a variety of stakeholders.

Main purpose of this position:

The Water Quality Administrator advances ECO's ability to monitor the health of over 30 streams in 6 watersheds (including biomonitoring, bacterial monitoring, chemical testing and follow up on red flag streams), to work with landowners to educate and resolve pollution problems at the source, and to develop cooperative relationships with community partners, agencies, and ECO committees, to devise proactive programs that ameliorate point and non point pollution in the county and the region.

General Summary:

Acting as an assistant to the executive director, the AmeriCorps WQA will work with volunteers to accomplish the work of ECO's Water Quality Committee -- primarily assisting existing teams doing semi-annual biological monitoring of streams and organizing a bio-monitoring training session; assisting with ECO's Adopt-A-Stream program; assisting with ECO's NC Big Sweep project; coordinating bacterial testing and investigating sources of stream pollution as identified through ECO's Volunteer Water Information Network; and other projects assigned by the executive director and/or the Water Quality Committee.

Special conditions of service (if any): All members will participate in AmeriCorps Project Conserve sponsored events, service days, and training days. Training days will require a minimum of two overnight stays.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities & Qualifications:

- The candidate must be proficient at identifying benthic macro invertebrates and understand their role in aquatic systems
- Friendly, outgoing personality conducive to recruiting and working with water quality volunteers.
- Strong science & biology background with ability to collect and assist with the analysis of water quality samples.
- Proficient in GIS, chemical analysis, land stewardship and be interested in not just the science, but how science can be put to service to protect the land.
- Must be willing and capable of physical work throughout the year.
- An eligible member must be 18 years of age and have documentation of citizenship / naturalization / resident alien status. Driver's license is required.