AmeriCorps Project Conserve
2018 – 2019 Service Description

AmeriCorps Position Title: Citizen Science Assistant
Host Site: Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Service Term: September 4, 2018 – July 31, 2019

Supervisor Name: Susan Sachs
Supervisor Title: Education Coordinator
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Host Site Mission Statement:
The education program in Great Smoky Mountains National Park provides an array of educational offerings designed to create a "ladder of opportunity" to connect students to park resources in order to instill a personal sense of stewardship. Specifically in our education programs for schools, we strive to provide a sequence of opportunities for learners to interact with park resources in ways that foster emotional and intellectual connections to the park.

Summary of Position:
This position offers a diverse set of opportunities for someone interested in educating the public about the scientific process by involving them in real research. Research studies cover a wide array of topics including effects of acid deposition on salamanders, lichens, soils, streams and snails; monitoring of ground level ozone effects on sensitive plants and monitoring for the impacts of changing weather patterns on park resources. Audiences include all ages but with a special focus on middle and high school aged children and community volunteers.

Qualifications – Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:
- Applicant should have a background in the scientific process and be comfortable using it in education programs.
- Applicant should have some experience working with student groups, most specifically with middle or high school ages
- Applicant should be comfortable developing and presenting programs to the public including school children and adults
- Applicant should be familiar with plants and animals of the Southern Appalachian mountains

- Applicant should have the ability to juggle multiple projects, work under pressure and maintain a positive attitude
- Applicant should be prepared to work outdoors in a variety of weather conditions
- Applicant should be comfortable with living and working in a remote location
- Eligible applicants must be at least 18 years of age, be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States, and consent to a criminal history check.

Preferred Service Hours / Weekly Schedule:
Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 4:30 with some occasional Saturday or evening work

Position Responsibilities and Duties

Conservation Education: 75%

- The AmeriCorps member will present environmental education programs to primarily middle and high school audiences. Most programs are part of our citizen science educational offerings for area schools. Other education activities will involve working with partnering organizations who bring youth out to the park in the summer months for recreation and education programs.

Volunteer Infrastructure Program (VIP): 10%

- Volunteers recruited will work with the park's Adopt-a-Phenology plot tree study. The Citizen Science AmeriCorps member will work on tracking volunteer hours, collecting volunteer information and evaluating the volunteer program.

At-Risk Ecosystem Impacts: 15%

- The Citizen Science AmeriCorps member will coordinate activities for community volunteers who participate in our Adopt-a-Phenology plot tree study. These are adult volunteers separate from our education programs. Coordination involves publicizing our need for volunteers, coordinating with park staff to provide training, providing support for the volunteers and communicating needs between the volunteers and park staff.

Additional Comments

PLEASE NOTE: In addition to fulfilling host site service responsibilities, all Project Conserve members are required to fully participate in team trainings, service projects and statewide AmeriCorps events. Project Conserve team events will occur approximately twice per month in locations throughout the service area and may require up to three overnight stays.

Essential Functions

Equipment / Software Used: computers with Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint
Physical Demands: Must be able to hike up to 8 miles in strenuous mountain terrain, some off trail work required
Transportation Needs: must have a personal car for off duty needs, a government vehicle is usually available for on duty needs
Setting/Location of Service Activities: The position is based out of the Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This is located near the town of Maggie Valley.
Other Considerations: Housing is available in the park near the town of Cherokee, NC

- Using computer software and online programs for conservation-based education and outreach initiatives, including social networking, written articles and press releases
- Leading, coordinating, and interacting with diverse individuals in field-based and office settings (ex. landowners, students, low-income residents, partner organizations).
- Developing and implementing educational programs and events for groups (presentations, workshops, educational hikes and outings, etc).
- Training, supporting, coordinating, and recognizing volunteers for conservation-based volunteer opportunities.