



AmeriCorps Project Conserve **2019 – 2020 Service Description**



AmeriCorps Position Title: Land Protection & Education Associate
Host Site: Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy

Service Term: September 3, 2019 – July 31, 2020

Supervisor Name: Michelle Pugliese, Jess Laggis
Supervisor Title: Land Protection Director, Farmland Protection Director
Supervisor E-mail: michelle@appalachian.org, jess@appalachian.org

Address: 372 Merrimon Ave. Asheville, NC 28801
Phone: 828 253-0095 x 207
Fax: 828-253-1248
Website: www.appalachian.org

Host Site Mission Statement:

Founded in 1974 as a non-profit, charitable organization, SAHC works to conserve the unique plant and animal habitat, clean water, local farmland, scenic beauty, and places for people to enjoy outdoor recreation in the mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee for the benefit of present and future generations. We achieve this by forging and maintaining long-term conservation relationships with private landowners and public agencies, owning and managing land, and encouraging healthy local communities.

Summary of Position:

This position will provide support to the Land Protection Director and Farmland Protection Director to respond to new landowner inquiries, educate landowners about their conservation options, analyze land projects with SAHC staff, and educate farmers about succession planning on protected agricultural lands. The position also entails working with SAHC's GIS database to prepare for priority landowner engagement and education. As needed, the AmeriCorps Associate may assist staff in educational activities associated with active land protection projects. The proposed position will support Project Conserve's long-term goals of increasing community understanding and support for conservation by educating landowners about the process of permanently protecting natural and agricultural land with SAHC.

Qualifications – Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Strong commitment to community service and conservation
- Excellent organizational and communication skills
- Attention to detail
- Self-motivated ability to see what needs to be done and to follow through on tasks in a timely manner.
- Degree or background in natural resource management, GIS mapping, geography, environmental or natural sciences, or resource policy
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Proficient in the basics of Arcview 10 GIS mapping software
- Comfortable working on a PC and the Microsoft Office suite.

- Willingness to work in the office and in the field in sometimes adverse conditions and potentially steep terrain.
- Desire and talent for serving as part of a team
- Enthusiastic, creative and self-motivated person able to serve with and motivate coworkers
- 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:

40 hours/week, Monday - Friday, typically 9 - 5 PM (daily schedule may vary). One and possibly two weekend retreats with board and staff. There are additional opportunities to volunteer on weekends to participate in guided hikes, habitat management workdays, membership events and other activities that take place on SAHC's protected properties.

Position Responsibilities and Duties:

CONSERVATION EDUCATION (100%)

- Produce tools for landowner education, and communication regarding conservation parcels through GIS information management (manage ongoing mapping projects and specific parcel mapping)
- Perform site visits with landowners, during which we will explain how conservation easements or acquisitions work and join the landowner on a hike of their property while assessing the land for its conservation values
- Respond to new inquiries from landowners who contact SAHC to learn about conservation options
- Compile and deliver landowner information packets
- Create GIS and database foundations in order to conduct proactive outreach to landowners of high priority conservation lands, and begin engaging with those landowners
- Assist with community engagement to educate established farmers, easement holders, and beginning farmers about land and enterprise transition from one generation of farmers to the next through articles, newsletters, and community events
- Assist Land Protection staff with educational activities associated with active land projects
- Opportunities may exist to work with education events at the Community Farm

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: ArcMap GIS, Microsoft Office, handheld GPS units
 Physical Demands: mix of office and field work
 Transportation Needs: car not required, but is helpful
 Setting/Location of Service Activities: Rural region within 1.5-2 hours of Asheville, NC

- Leading, coordinating, and interacting with diverse individuals in field-based and office settings (ex. landowners, students, low-income residents, partner organizations).
- Using mapping software and other computer programs to create quality reports, management plans, maps, and/or analysis, based on field data