



AmeriCorps Project Conserve 2024 – 2025 Service Description



AmeriCorps Position Title: Polk County Vegetation Management Associate
Host Site: Conserving Carolina

Supervisor Name: David Lee
Supervisor Title: Natural Resources Manager
Supervisor E-mail: David@conservingcarolina.org

Physical Address: 847 Case Street, Hendersonville, NC 28792
Mailing Address (if different):

Phone: 828-697-5777
Fax:
Website: www.conservingcarolina.org

Host Site Mission Statement:

Conserving Carolina is dedicated to protecting and stewarding land and water resources vital to our natural heritage and quality of life and to fostering appreciation and understanding of the natural world.

Summary of Position:

The Project Conserve member will work directly with Conserving Carolina's Natural Resources Manager and community groups to develop a community led initiative to identify, prioritize and control kudzu in Polk County, NC. The member will conduct detailed inventory and mapping of existing kudzu infestations within priority areas of the county that will be used to plan for and track control efforts in future years. Additionally, the member will build on existing community efforts by organizing an education and outreach campaign to raise awareness about the impact of kudzu and mobilize community volunteers to help with the effort to get it under control.

Qualifications – Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Degree or background in natural resource management, environmental sciences, biology, geography, land conservation or another applicable field.
- Willingness to work long hours in the field sometimes in adverse conditions.
- Background in invasive species identification and management a preferred
- Applicant should be organized, self-motivated with an ability to work independently, see what needs to be done, follow through and complete tasks.
- Ability and willingness to work with a wide variety of people with diverse backgrounds and interests
- Ability to develop and implement project plans
- Experience working with groups and volunteers preferred
- Experienced with current technology such as computers, tablets and software including Microsoft Office suite
- Ability/willingness to operate chainsaws, brush cutter, mowers, apply herbicide etc.
- 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 typically 9-5 Monday through Friday. Occasional night and weekend events required

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 one or two overnight stays.*

Position Responsibilities and Duties:

CONSERVATION EDUCATION (35%)

- Work with Conserving Carolina Staff, other AmeriCorps members, and community groups to educate and engage the local community.
- **Community Education and Engagement Plan:** Development and implementation of an education and outreach plan, including the creation of educational materials, workshop curricula, and an online resource hub. This plan aims to increase awareness of the kudzu issue and mobilize community action. (CB)
- **Public Awareness Campaign:** Launch of a public awareness campaign utilizing social media, local media outlets, and community events to raise the profile of the kudzu problem and the eradication initiative, aiming to reach at least 5,000 residents. (CB)
- Create and build on processes to support this community identified and lead need to control kudzu.
- Strengthen and build new relationships and partnerships in the community. The work will lay the foundation of this larger multi-year effort to engage the community and control kudzu. (CB)

AT-RISK ECOSYSTEM IMPACTS & TRAILS (55%)

- Conduct detailed inventory and mapping of existing kudzu infestations that will inform an initial strategic plan outlining potential eradication methodologies, tools, and approaches.
- Lead community volunteers and contracted work crews to implement land management and habitat restoration activities on Conserving Carolina Preserves and other public land in Polk County.
- Create and build on processes to support this community identified and lead need to control kudzu. (CB)
- Strengthen and build new relationships and partnerships in the community. The work will lay the foundation of this larger multi-year effort to engage the community and control kudzu. (CB)

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT (10%)

- Work with Conserving Carolina staff, AmeriCorps members, and community members to recruit, train, and manage volunteers to improve public land through non-native plant control and train volunteers on non-native plant identification and reporting. This effort will engage the community directly in the project and foster a collaborative approach to eradication.
- Build new relationships and partnerships with individual volunteers and volunteer organizations, engaging them to make direct improvements to the public and private land in Polk County. (CB)

Essential Functions:

Essential functions are the fundamental job duties:

- *Meaning the position exists to perform the function;*
- *There is a limited number of employees among whom the performance of the function can be distributed;*
- *And/or the incumbent is hired for expertise or ability to perform the function due to its high specialization.*

Equipment / Software Used: ArcGIS Field Maps, ArcGIS Online, Microsoft Word, Excel, Publisher, Outlook, Adobe Acrobat, hand and power tools such as shovels, rakes, loppers, pruners, backpack sprayers, weed eaters, chainsaws reciprocating saws, and ATVs. Training Provided

Physical Demands: Sitting at a desk, working outdoors (sometimes in adverse conditions), strenuous hiking in rough and steep terrain, working with chemicals to control non-native invasive species, working with hand and power tools

Transportation Needs: Driver's license required. Must have personal vehicle to commute into the office.

Setting/Location of Service Activities: This position involves approximately 80% field work and 20% office work. Conserving Carolina's office is located in Hendersonville at 847 Case Street. Field work will be conducted primarily in Polk County, NC no more than 1 hour drive from Conserving Carolina's office.

Other Considerations:

Choose the essential functions of this position:

- 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.
- Conducting field-based monitoring, assessment, and management of conservation properties, public lands, and/or water quality monitoring sites.
- Using mapping software and other computer programs to create quality reports, management plans, maps, and/or analysis, based on field data
- Other Essential Functions: