



AmeriCorps Project Conserve 2026 – 2027 Service Description



AmeriCorps Position Title: Community Building Coordinator
Host Site: Balsam Mountain Trust

Supervisor Name: Rachael Hart
Supervisor Title: Wildlife Curator
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Host Site Mission Statement:

The Balsam Mountain Trust inspires people to be responsible stewards of the natural and cultural resources of the Southern Blue Ridge Mountains through education and conservation leadership.

Summary of Position:

The Conservation Building Coordinator (CBC) at Balsam Mountain Trust will perform conservation education with designated animal ambassadors to the public. As well as recruit, train, and cultivate a group of trained conservation volunteers that is unaffiliated with a specific park, property, or land. Working with diverse stakeholders across all types of land ownership, the CBC will identify and facilitate service projects that improve natural habitat. Additionally, the CBC will nurture curiosity and wonder amongst volunteers and the public through formal and informal science education programs. The CBC will have a designated professional-development fund of \$1000/year for development opportunities approved by supervisor and that are in alignment with AmeriCorps service description.

Qualifications – Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Academic experience in social work, community development, natural resource management, or equivalent demonstrable work experience.
- Prior experience in volunteer management, community convening, community outreach, and/or event planning.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills for clear and effective communication with volunteers, staff, and community members.
- Outgoing interpersonal skills to foster relationships, and resolve conflicts.
- Ability to manage multiple tasks, prioritize effectively, and meet deadlines.
- Skills in developing recruitment strategies, conducting interviews, and providing volunteer training.
- Ability to plan and execute volunteer events and activities.
- Proficiency with databases, spreadsheets, and online communication tools.
- Ability to work effectively with diverse individuals and groups, while focus on the needs of volunteers and the community.

- Ability to work respectfully with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures.
- A positive and encouraging demeanor to create a welcoming environment for volunteers.
- 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:

Service hours will generally run during regular business hours with occasional early morning and/or late evenings. Service will generally be a 5-day week that must include at least one weekend day.

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 (60%)

- Our AC member will support and deliver conservation education programming using animal ambassadors to teach youth and family audiences about the unique biodiversity of region.
- In-school programming will focus on 4th graders whose science education standards align with animal adaptations and biodiversity.
- Our AC member will also participate in similarly themed family-oriented library programs and other public events.
- As part of supporting the animal ambassador program, our member will be trained and participate in all aspects of the care of the animal ambassadors.
- Our AC member will collaborate with BMT staff to develop a new “Natural History of WNC” workshop series at the Jackson County Library. Consisting of lectures and workshops led by content experts, this series will be free to the general public but also serve as part of the training curriculum for conservation volunteers (see below). Not unlike a “museum docent” program for the natural world, conservation volunteers will increase their natural history literacy and nature interpretation skills while also being trained in more applied natural resource management techniques (see below) (CB)

AT-RISK ECOSYSTEM IMPACTS & TRAILS (25%)

- Our AC member will actively reach out to regional land managers to promote the availability of a trained “unaffiliated” corps of volunteers for at-risk ecosystem service projects. Volunteer service projects will be carefully scoped out by our AC member to ensure that volunteers are adequately prepared for service. Service projects will be driven by stakeholder input, with consideration for impact on at-risk ecosystems and volunteer capacity to complete the work. (CB)

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT (15%)

- Our service member will collaborate with Trust staff to develop a new and unique way for the public to engage in volunteerism and community building in Jackson County and surrounding areas. By implementing best practices in volunteer recruitment, training, cultivation, communication, and recognition, our service member will slowly build a community of volunteers who feel valued while providing value to the region. (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: Familiarity with Microsoft 365 products.

Physical Demands: Ability to hike moderate distances with equipment both on and off trails. Ability to conduct moderately strenuous physical activities associated with habitat improvement (ex. Physical removal of invasive plant species, trail maintenance, etc.),

Transportation Needs: Transportation to and from work.

Setting/Location of Service Activities: Balsam Mountain Trust nature center will base of operations with direct service activities primarily occurring in community centers and forested lands.

- 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.
- Other Essential Functions: handling and teaching with designated animal ambassadors for education