



Position: DNR Planning & Development Specialist

Location: Saint Paul, MN

This is not a residential program; participants must secure housing near the placement location.

Service Term: 1700-hour AmeriCorps position, January – December

Reports to: Conservation Corps Assistant Program Manager and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Site Supervisor(s)

Benefits:

- Living Allowance: \$2,100/month
- Housing Reimbursement: \$100/month (reimbursable upon proof of payment)
- Education Award: \$6,495.00 if eligible and upon successful completion of program requirements
- Student loan forbearance (on qualifying student loans)
- Health insurance
- Childcare assistance
- Training, certifications, networking

About Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa: Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa, a nonprofit organization and AmeriCorps grantee, engages hundreds of youth and young adults each year in meaningful service, leadership development, and environmental stewardship. Our vision is a world in which everyone has equitable access to nature, is equipped to succeed in career and life, and is empowered to make a difference in conserving natural resources. Our projects and programs embody our core values of safety, service, respect, equity, and community. In working toward our vision, we believe it is important to acknowledge that natural resources organizations, including Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa, have a legacy of supporting and benefiting from systems that have restricted access to public lands and careers for marginalized groups. To challenge this, we commit to using equity as a lens for the work we do and decisions we make, building a shared vision surrounding justice, equity, diversity, and Inclusion goals with our partnering organizations and communities and providing an equitable training environment and high-quality programming to all our participants.

Position Summary: The AmeriCorps Planning & Development Specialist is based at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in Saint Paul, Minn. The purpose of this position serves to build the capacity of important public service work at the DNR in the Division of Parks and Trails (PAT) Planning Unit. Under the direct guidance of a MN DNR project advisor, this position will primarily serve to assist

DNR staff with the development of strategic plans, program plans, system plans, and unit plans (state park, state recreation area, and state trail), environmental review documents, legislative studies, research, and evaluation. This position will also provide a support role to the Acquisition and Development Unit, providing GIS (geographic information system) and GPS (global positioning system) support to park and trail development projects and cultural resource field work, database management for asset management, and preparing guidance for development projects across the state parks and trails system.

Members are directly supervised by Conservation Corps Assistant Program Manager and Host Site Supervisor. Members serve in a single placement setting with a partnering nonprofit/government organization. Members complete service projects with direction provided by partnering agencies and representatives of those agencies.

Position Responsibilities and Tasks:

Member must complete service projects to the best of their ability, serving safely, effectively and efficiently to ensure projects are completed to the satisfaction of project hosts and the community. AmeriCorps members are expected to serve a minimum of 1700 hours and complete the entire service term per the start and end dates listed on the Member Service Agreement. The service calendar outlines 1900 available hours of service, with no service (and thus, no accrual of service hours) on Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after Thanksgiving Day. Therefore, absences (sick or vacation) beyond four excused days for full-time 1700 hour AmeriCorps members are deemed excessive, jeopardizing the member's ability to accrue the minimum service hours required for the education award. If a member has excessive absences, the member may need to volunteer with an external organization outside of regularly scheduled service days to earn additional service hours to complete the education award. These additional service hours must be pre-approved by Regional Staff.

Position responsibilities:

- Assist with the development of Parks and Trails Division strategic plans, program plans, system plans, unit plans, environmental review documents, legislative studies, research, and evaluation to (1) accelerate facility maintenance and rehabilitation, (2) accelerate natural resource management, and (3) connect people to the outdoors. The specific projects should focus on division work that furthers Legacy Fund outcomes. Specific tasks may include:
 - Assisting in development and implementation of planning processes that establish a vision, goals and objectives; identify complex or controversial issues; facilitates public input; incorporates implementation and monitoring systems; and that produce technically sound, well-reasoned and defensible recommendations.
 - Working with an interdisciplinary team that conducts physical, biological, and cultural resource inventories, and assesses proposed recreation sites.
 - Assistance with social science research, program evaluation, data collection and analysis, and compilation and synthesis of resource data for evaluating site design and development alternatives.
 - Assessment of regional socio-economic trends and conditions; analysis and interpretation of public policy issues and their implications; evaluation of project alternatives in terms of their ability to satisfy objectives and fulfill legislative intent; and the projection of the impact of facility construction, visitation and operations on local communities and natural and cultural resources.

- Assistance with the organization, coordination, and implementation of efficient and effective citizen and stakeholder involvement processes that help build consensus on complex issues; and documentation of citizen and stakeholder inputs and comments.
- Compilation of background information and preparation of briefing documents, presentation materials, and formal testimony for public hearings and/or committee meetings; and distribution of meeting notes and minutes in a timely manner.
- Assisting with the production of internet and intranet content, press releases, and newsletter articles to announce important planning process milestones (e.g. open houses, planning document review periods).
- Analysis of GIS data and production of maps for use in internal and public meetings, and for inclusion in plan documents.
- Assistance with the design, layout, editing, production printing, posting of plans online, and final distribution of plans, maps, and supporting technical materials.
- Assist with GIS/GPS field work (ground-truthing), photographic collection and organization, and other data collection needs for parks, trails, recreation sites, or other facilities.
- Assist in the planning and development (construction) of facilities within the state outdoor recreation system. Task may include:
 - Assisting with the collection of information by GIS, photographs, and mapping for use in a database or website.
 - Assisting with the organization, coordination, and implementation of efficient and effective citizen and stakeholder involvement processes that help build consensus on complex issues, and documentation of citizen and stakeholder inputs and comments
- Assist in the preparation of environmental review documents.
- Assist in building a “culture of safety” among all employees and programs at the DNR and at the Corps.
- Assist in supporting and moving forward diversity, equity, accessibility, and including initiatives for the Parks and Trails Division.
- Manage projects and ensure project completion and continuity.
 - Develop and implement an annual work plan that provides timelines and balance to the priorities of the various programs listed above. Utilize a work plan tracking document provided by the Corps and DNR to track work accomplishments and reprioritize on a regular basis.
 - Work with teams to develop and implement project plans based on goals, deliverables, level of commitment, and estimated timelines.
 - Document technical project information, applications, and IT approaches for project continuity and expertise transfer.
 - Communicate effectively throughout projects, to update staff on progress, identify issues, and resolve conflicts.
 - Attend scheduled meetings, orientations and workshops, including required Conservation Corps AmeriCorps training sessions and site visits.
- Assist with planning and facilitating meetings, events, and conferences for the public, stakeholder groups, and staff. Responsibilities may include:
 - Develop programs, agendas and facilitation plans for meetings.
 - Complete administrative tasks for arranging venues, travel, and other logistical needs.
 - Publish and edit newsletters primarily using a digital communications module called Gov Delivery, as well as InDesign, Photoshop and Illustrator.

- Write brief ads, articles, or press releases for use in non-DNR publications.
- Assist in the development and presentation of materials specifically designed to provide education and training to Corps crews throughout the state.
- Work with Corps leaders and/or crewmembers and division staff to collect and compile information from the division database and other sources.
- Plan and implement training days with other Conservation Corps programs.
- Administration
 - Submit timesheets and SAW reports to Site Supervisor.
 - Submit timesheets & SAW, expense reports, receipts and monthly credit card log to Program Manager for coding and signature (NOTE: lunch time does not count toward total service hours).
 - Review and submit all vehicle/employee accident reports to appropriate departments in cooperation with the Program Manager.
- Public Relations
 - Represent the Corps at local job fairs, county fairs, CCC events, etc.
 - Assist in developing new display materials by taking pictures, creating PowerPoint slideshows, submitting e-news articles, etc.
 - Maintain program websites, write newsletters and articles and attend trade shows/conferences.

Hours & Schedule

- 40 hours/week, Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM (typical, occasional weekends), including a mandatory 30 minute lunch break which does not count towards service hours.

Qualifications:

- Minimum Qualifications:
 - 4-year college degree in planning, outdoor recreation/parks planning/administration, landscape architecture, geography, natural resources management or relevant field; AND/OR a combination of college-level coursework and professional experience in related fields.
 - Strong written and oral communication skills.
 - Familiarity with Microsoft Office (Excel, Word, PowerPoint).
 - Strong planning, organizational and creative thinking skills.
 - Training will be provided in these areas as needed; No more than 20% of the service term is dedicated to technical and personal skills training.
 - Ability to work in an indoor/outdoor setting for a minimum of 40 hours/week.
 - Desire to work with diverse youth, adults and other volunteers in conservation, education and recreation settings.
 - Positive attitude, interest in community service and desire to make a difference.
 - Must be a US Citizen, US National, or Lawful Permanent Resident Alien of the US
 - Must pass a criminal history check consisting of a National Sex Offender Public Website check, a state criminal history check, and a fingerprint-based FBI check. Passing the criminal history check is defined as no positive hits on the NSOPW and no history of violent offenses on the state or FBI checks.
 - Member will certify that they have or will obtain the diploma/GED to be in accordance with program requirements

- Preferred Qualifications:
 - Knowledge of state and federal planning policies and regulations.
 - Technical skills in geographic information systems (ArcGIS).
 - Technical skills in database management, social science research, and statistical analysis.
 - Experience working with local land use management programs.

Other Information

In accordance with 45CFR 2520.65, AmeriCorps members may not perform prohibited service activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in the activities. Prohibited service activities are outlined in the Service Agreement section VII and AmeriCorps member manual.

Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to creating an inclusive environment that values the diversity of its staff and members and does not discriminate against anyone. Employment/placement decisions with Conservation Corps will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. Conservation Corps does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, military service, union membership, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity, status with regards to public assistance, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law. Conservation Corps engages AmeriCorps members, ages 18-25, as defined under the American Conservation and Youth Service Corps Act, a subtitle of the National and Community Service Act of 1990. Reasonable accommodations available upon request.

Minorities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Women, BIPOC, LGBTQ people, and people with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa requires all employees and AmeriCorps members to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 OR provide a weekly COVID-19 test.

I _____ have read and fully understand the above position description that reflects the service activities that I will perform during the AmeriCorps term.

AmeriCorps member Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approval Signature: _____ Date: _____