

AMERICORPS PROJECT CONSERVE MEMBER SERVICE DESCRIPTION

September 1, 2010 – July 31, 2011 Service Year

Position Title: AmeriCorps Land Protection Member, 40 hours/week, Monday-Friday, typically 9am-5pm (daily schedule will vary with field work)

Host Site's Name: Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC),
34 Wall Street, Suite 502, Asheville, NC 28801, www.appalachian.org

Site Supervisor: Michelle Pugliese, Land Protection Director, michelle@appalachian.org,
phone 828-253-0095 x 207 fax 828-253-1248

Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy's Mission Statement:

Conserving the unique plant and animal habitat, farmland, clean water, and scenic beauty of the mountains of North Carolina and east Tennessee for the benefit of present and future generations. We achieve this by forging and maintaining conservation relationships with landowners and public agencies, owning and managing land, and working with communities to accomplish their conservation objectives. The AmeriCorps Land Protection member will help SAHC achieve this mission through landowner outreach and pursuing the steps of a land transaction from start to finish.

Main purpose of this position:

SAHC is overwhelmed with requests from landowners to learn about their conservation options and pursue conservation easements or land acquisitions with SAHC. This position will provide support to the Land Protection Director to respond to new landowner inquiries, analyze land projects and pursue those that satisfy SAHC's criteria. This position will also provide the member with experience in strategic planning and conducting land conservation transactions.

General Summary:

The AmeriCorps Land Protection Member will:

- Develop, revise and distribute landowner outreach documents that educate landowners about their conservation options and the steps required to complete a land transaction with SAHC;
- Prepare for and accompany SAHC staff on property site visits to evaluate their conservation values;
- Analyze new land projects against SAHC's project selection criteria based on information collected in the field and from available data sources, including a brand new GIS-based evaluation tool being developed for SAHC's work in the Highlands of Roan;
- Participate in strategic planning meetings with conservation partners to pursue landscape-scale conservation efforts;
- Assist in drafting of conservation easements, option agreements, project proposals and other documents required to complete a land transaction; coordinate due diligence activities required for land transactions, including surveys, appraisals, environmental site assessments and more;
- Utilize interactive GIS tools to analyze evaluate project priorities and prepare planning maps;
- Work systematically to maintain the organization's land project files;
- Help prepare materials for review by SAHC's Land Protection Committee and Board;
- Gain knowledge about techniques for talking with landowners and the general public about land conservation in this region and by helping prepare materials for community outreach and presentations;
- Have the opportunity to network with a variety of conservation partners including other land trusts, local, state, and federal governmental agencies, and other for-profit and non-profit groups working in the conservation field;
- Work & collaborate with other staff, interns, members, and Land Protection Committee in performing variety of above
- Assist in other Lands Program and Conservancy activities as assigned.

Special conditions of service (if any): All members will participate in AmeriCorps Project Conserve sponsored events, service days, and training days. Training days will require a minimum of two overnight stays.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities & Qualifications:

- Degree or background in natural resource management, or environmental or natural sciences
- Willingness to work in the field in sometimes adverse conditions and potentially steep terrain
- Good written and verbal communication skills; and comfort working on a PC.
- Field experience and familiarity with ArcView 9 GIS mapping software, GPS, Microsoft Excel/Microsoft Access a plus. Land Protection Director will train the right candidate.
- Must be willing and capable of physical work throughout the year.
- An eligible member must be 18 years of age and have documentation of citizenship / naturalization / resident alien status. Driver's license required.