



Leelanau Conservancy Huron Pines AmeriCorps Position Description

POSITION TITLE: Volunteer and Engagement Specialist
PRIMARY SERVICE LOCATION: Leelanau County, Michigan
RESPONSIBLE TO: Claire Wood, Communications Director

The Leelanau Conservancy is one of the nation’s top accredited land trusts. For 35 years, our mission has been to conserve the land, water and scenic character of Leelanau County. We have protected approximately 10,700 acres through private conservation easements, and 3,600 acres of natural areas, preserves, and forest reserves which are open to the public.

Through the Huron Pines AmeriCorps program, the Leelanau Conservancy is offering an opportunity for a half-term AmeriCorps member who will be responsible for volunteer engagement, conducting various land management and natural resource conservation projects to serve on our 28 natural areas, preserves, and forest reserves. The Volunteer and Engagement Specialist will serve an integral role in Stewardship team planning and implementing invasive species monitoring and control work, lead volunteer work projects, restoration projects, and trail maintenance and construction on our 28 natural areas. Additionally, they will contribute to creating media & newsletter content focusing on natural land stewardship that will connect our supporters, volunteers, and donors to the work of the Leelanau Conservancy.

Collaborating with volunteers from multiple programs including trail stewards, workbees, and citizen science monitoring, the AmeriCorps member will serve as a liaison between stewardship and outreach, helping to tell stewardship stories as the eyes and ears “in the field.” The Volunteer and Engagement Specialist may also create and manage a variety of conservation projects including trail restoration and rerouting, sampling for our water quality program, tree pest and disease monitoring, and others.

Our ideal candidates will have a strong interest in natural resources, knowledge of invasive species identification and/or management techniques and be comfortable working collaboratively with people. The candidate will be friendly and enjoy engaging with the community and volunteers. They will have a knack for storytelling and a passion to share the importance of environmental conservation with the public in a variety of ways. Experience in writing, photography, and/or social media is a plus. We are seeking an individual who is organized, detail-oriented, and has excellent communication skills. The Volunteer and Engagement Specialist should be able to prioritize and manage multiple projects simultaneously and serve independently. The member may be required to

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complete tasks alone in the field in a variety of adverse weather and terrain conditions. Preference will be given to candidates with excellent verbal and written communication skills and firsthand experience with on-the-ground conservation projects.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF SERVICE: SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF SERVICE:

The Volunteer and Engagement Specialist will be involved in a diverse set of projects to improve the ecology and sustainability of our 28 natural areas. The AmeriCorps member will gain experience in nearly all aspects of natural area management, including implementing on-the-ground invasive plant control and restoration projects, field data collection, botanical surveys, native seed collection and improving our infrastructure including signs, boardwalks, and sustainable trails. Invasive plant control methods will include manual removal by hand and tools as well as application of herbicide and use of propane torches. Members will assist with the planning and coordination of projects associated with the accessibility and expansion of natural areas, including trail scouting, design and construction, and sign and map creation for kiosks.

The Volunteer and Engagement Specialist will support our volunteer coordination efforts to increase community stewardship of Conservancy Natural Areas. We have an increasing need for volunteers and trail stewards and would like to engage with new members and create a robust trail steward volunteer group to help maintain our 40 miles of hike, ski, and mountain bike trails. The members will serve in a leadership role for coordinating and implementing trail projects to improve and maintain the trails on our natural areas as well as design and build new sections of trail. This position will develop strategies to improve community participation and awareness in our stewardship opportunities. In addition, the member will participate in outreach activities including leading conservation and restoration events with our 300+ volunteer base and working to expand that program. As the Volunteer and Engagement Specialist member of our stewardship crew, this position will be the eyes and ears on the ground to tell the stories of stewardship and environmental conservation out in the field and will coordinate with our communications team to create stories that appear in the Conservancy's publications, social media, and the press.

Some experience dealing with the public and conducting scientific surveys is preferred. Onsite training will also be provided. The member will design and develop outreach materials and use GIS technology to create maps. Most of the work will be in our service area of Leelanau County with some minor travel to meetings and workshops. Most travel will be day travel around the County and strenuous physical activity will be required.

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POSITION DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Program: Invasive Plant and Habitat Restoration

- Assist with planning, coordinating, and implementing invasive species monitoring and control program throughout our 28 properties on over 3,600 acres
- Conduct on-the-ground restoration projects
- Collect field data including GPS points and detailed records of stewardship activities and report into database
- Potential to create maps using ArcGIS for invasive plant and restoration work
- Engage in proper use and maintenance of stewardship tools and equipment, including vehicles, herbicide equipment, hand tools, power tools, GPS units and iPad tablets
- Participate in training and safety workshops and Stewardship staff meetings

Program: Volunteer Engagement and Outreach

- Train volunteers and coordinate workbees for our stewardship program
- Coordinate, support and report on volunteer activities and events
- Lead school groups on hikes and educational workbees to help students learn new skills on our natural areas and preserves
- Be the outreach eyes and ears on the stewardship field crew, creating content for digital and print media, including written (social media captions, blog posts, articles) and visual (photos, videos, story maps)
- Develop informational and interpretive materials on our protected land
- Create stewardship materials relating to our natural areas and preserves including developing trail signs, updating maps and information on our kiosks
- Participate in digital asset management organization

Program: Conducting Monitoring Programs

- Conduct water quality monitoring including stream sampling and data entry
- Participate in migratory bird surveys including mist netting and banding
- Monitor natural areas and private conservation easements in compliance with Land Trust Alliance standards
- Survey areas of hemlock trees in natural areas to assist with statewide initiative for hemlock woolly adelgid rapid monitoring inventory
- Monitor preserves for oak wilt in areas of known oak wilt outbreaks
- Monitor for vernal pools in early spring to incorporate in Michigan Natural Features Inventory state database
- Serve on a project to implement and train volunteers in oak wilt monitoring
- Monitor trail conditions and coordinate with volunteer trail stewards to maintain and restore trails where erosion or wet conditions are a concern
- Design and implement wildlife corridor study within designated natural areas

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PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

- Prepare and submit 2-week schedules, timesheets and mileage reimbursement forms
- Conduct at least 2 presentations to community groups about Huron Pines AmeriCorps
- Engage at least 30 volunteers in conservation activities
- Submit monthly detailed reports of service and 3 “Great Stories”
- Provide regular project updates and photos for the website
- Represent yourself as a Huron Pines AmeriCorps member at all times
- Attend required trainings provided by the AmeriCorps Coordinator

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Computer efficiency (typing, email, word processing, excel)
- Ability to pass a background check*
- U.S. citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien
- Commitment to conserving the forests, lakes, and streams of Northeast Michigan
- ArcGIS experience preferred
- Has, or is willing to obtain a Commercial Pesticide Applicator’s license
- Experience in photography preferred

On occasion, service will be required at an off-site location. Use of a personal vehicle may be required to perform duties (mileage will be reimbursed). This is a 40-hour-per-week position and runs from May 14 - November 1, 2024. Benefits include a \$9,315 living stipend, a \$3,447.50 education award, and student loan deferment.

Applications and directions are available at www.huronpines.org/ameriCorps and will be accepted until April 12th.

Please see the Huron Pines AmeriCorps website linked above for possible deadline extensions.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: If you need to make a request for a reasonable accommodation, due to a disability, such as obtain materials in a format that works for you or to fully participate in the application process, please contact Amanda Vanaman, AmeriCorps Coordinator at (989) 448-2293 x30 or amanda@huronpines.org.

*Registered sex offenders are not eligible for AmeriCorps positions.

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