



AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps Member Position Description

**Pontchartrain
Conservancy**



Member Position / Title: Coastal & Community Program (CCP) Tree Nursery Volunteer Coordinator

of Member Slots in this Position: 1

Member Immediate Supervisor: Michael Hopkins, Ph.D.

Days / Hours of Service: Business hours are Monday – Friday (8 hours a day, exact schedule can be of member’s choosing). Some Saturdays may be required. If this occurs, the member will be given a week day off prior or following the Saturday.

Member Immediate Supervisor Title: CCP Assistant Director

Partner Organization Name: Pontchartrain Conservancy - 3501 N. Causeway Blvd., Suite 220
Metairie, LA 70002

Website: www.scienceforourcoast.org

Organization/Agency Mission and/or Goals:

Pontchartrain Conservancy’s mission is to drive environmental sustainability and stewardship through scientific research, education, and advocacy.

The Pontchartrain Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization consisting of a 14-member board of directors representing Basin parishes and regulatory agencies.

The Lake Pontchartrain Basin is a 10,000 square mile watershed encompassing 16 Louisiana parishes. The land use of the region is both rural and urban and is the most densely populated region in Louisiana, including metro New Orleans and the state capital, Baton Rouge. It is one of the largest estuarine systems in the Gulf of Mexico containing over 22 essential habitats. The Basin’s topography ranges from rolling woodlands in the north to coastal marshes in the south, with the 630 square mile Lake Pontchartrain as its centerpiece.

Program Mission and/or Goals:

This AmeriCorps position falls within PC’s Coastal & Community Program (CCP). Within CCP, Swamp Restoration is an ongoing program that seeks to restore critical swamp habitat throughout the Pontchartrain Basin. Broadly stated, the mission of this program is to ensure a healthy and sustainable estuary that maximizes the ecological functions of the deltaic estuary and enhances environmental resilience without compromising critical economic functions.

Community Need:

This position will establish a needed connection between communities and PC’s swamp restoration program. Community members are typically not often in direct contact with the swamps and natural environment surrounding the Greater New Orleans area. Although volunteers do get the opportunity to engage through tree plantings, these events are only several times per year and require a full day

commitment. Trees that are grown in the nursery will be used in the swamp restoration plantings, thus nursery volunteers will have direct contact with and learn why trees and swamp habitats are important to the New Orleans region. Furthermore, through the nursery volunteer program, we will be able to directly engage and educate communities that are underserved or lack the ability to participate in our traditional tree plantings.

Member Position Summary:

The member would be a program coordinator for our swamp tree nursery and volunteer coordinator for our coastal restoration volunteer opportunities. This would include being involved in all aspects of the swamp tree nursery. This position is primarily focused on two aspects. First, the tree nursery has been established so focus will be placed on managing the operations of the existing nursery and an expansion that is being planned for 2021-2022. The second aspect is to manage volunteers to help maintain and expand the nursery. In addition this would also include helping manage volunteers at restoration events, including safety, logistics, and assistance. We typically have several volunteer plantings each season (October – March, weather contingent). These events usually have 15 – 40 volunteers, are time- and labor-intensive, and logistically challenging.

The member would work closely in a collaborative effort with our communications department and two of the AmeriCorps positions in the outreach and education departments to develop science communication, outreach, and volunteer recruitment pieces for the coastal department. The member in this position will have a variety of responsibilities that require an interest in science, data collection, field work, data management, outreach, formulation of print and online outreach or awareness materials and social media. The member may also be asked to make promotional materials for initiatives within the coastal program. The member would gain experience in developing print and electronic promotional items, the scientific data collection process and the scientific method. While these tasks seem numerous and varied, these tasks would be completed over the 11 months, and not all tasks listed here would be worked on every week.

Member Impact:

The member would meet the community need of environmental stewardship. By understanding the coastal science conducted at PC, the member will then be able to translate that science to materials that enhance environmental stewardship on the Greater New Orleans region and beyond. The member will also help recruit volunteers to coastal restoration events, which also creates stewardship. Coastal land loss issues are rampant in Louisiana and while many constituents agree that this is an issue that affects them, they do not really understand the land loss crisis that we are currently in and what that means for the future of individuals, families, business and culture of southeast Louisiana. There is a community need to increase understanding and involvement in this issue. PC uses science to guide our advocacy. The member would be involved with collecting scientific data for some of our restoration programs and other basin wide monitoring that we do. The data we collected guides how we advocate for environmental or policy changes, and therefore quality data collection is paramount to our mission. The member will also help to highlight to the community how science is our guide and promote our scientific activities and programs.

Essential Functions of Position:

- Lead operations of the existing tree nursery

- Lead development of tree nursery volunteer program
- Lead the expansion project of the existing nursery capacity
- Schedule, promote, recruit, and attend volunteer activities such as tree plantings or other nursery volunteer events
- Assist in field work and scientific data collection to understand and promote scientific activities to public including through the generation of print materials, such as fact sheets and blog posts

Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

The member can receive most of the training on the job. All scientific data collection techniques will be taught in situ by team members of the water quality program for these activities, learning in the field is best. All training for this position would be on the job training with close supervision by the mentor. The mentor would also be available for consultation, questions, and general advice.

While not all skills and abilities are required, the following skill sets are suggested for a competitive placement within this position:

- Experience with Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, Powerpoint);
- Experience building webpages and webforms;
- Experience with Adobe or other illustrator programs;
- Ability to code or program;
- Willingness and capability to conduct field work, where conditions may include inclement weather (high heat and humidity, possible exposure to insect bites and sun);
- Ability to lift 50 lbs;
- Suitable oral and written communication skills
- Communicate effectively with all parties
- Ability to stay organized, multitask and be efficient;
- Experience using social media;
- Willingness to be adaptable; and
- Ability to work effectively in a team environment.

Required Academic and Experience Qualifications:

Undergraduate degree in Science (Biology, Geology, or Environmental Science, Computer Science focus preferred)