

Maine Conservation Connection

Maine Conservation Corps



December 2009



Maine Conservation Corps
124 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0124
1-800-245-JOBS (in Maine)
207-624-6085

corps.conservation@maine.gov
<http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc>

Mick Rogers To Oversee MCC Program

In August, the MCC became part of the Grants & Community Recreation Division. Supervisor of Outdoor Recreation Mick Rogers will now provide oversight to the MCC program. Rogers, who lives in West Bath with his wife and three daughters, has been



Mick Rogers (on L) with Field Team Managers Sara Knowles & Steven Gaffney on Monhegan Island this fall.

involved with parks since 1973, worked at Bradbury Mountain State Park for 13 years, and has been in charge of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) for almost two years.

Rogers has been involved with using the MCC for trails projects since the late 1980's, and he has administered MCC projects for many years. He also manages RTP, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the Land For Maine's Future Access grants, all of which provide funding for many of the MCC's trail

projects. “I can help promote the Maine Conservation Corps and all of the great work that they do through my interaction with many potential partners throughout the State. I can also see MCC helping the Bureau of Parks & Lands assess their trails and prioritize trail work over the next several years, benefiting the parks and the MCC,” says Rogers. “I am excited about now being a part of the Maine Conservation Corps and all of the great things that they do,” he adds.

Welcome to the MCC, Mick!

2009 Field Team Season Comes to a Close

The Maine Conservation Corps’ 2009 Field Team season ended on November 13th with the annual Fall Recognition Day. The Fall season was very successful, with 6 crews working on recreational trails across the state. The Fall crews completed 20.23 miles of trail, 123 rock stairs, cleared 96,200 ft of new trail, and built 1,325 ft of bog bridging, among numerous other accomplishments.

Here are some numbers for the 2009 Field Team season as a whole:

- 41.87 miles of trail
- 757 rock stairs
- 535 ft of stone retaining wall
- 337 stepping stones
- 216 water bars maintained
- 155 water bars installed
- 870 ft of ditch & drain
- 193,746 ft of trail cleared
- 4,769 ft of gravel spread
- 17 timber bridges
- 56 trail signs installed
- 2,472 ft of bog bridging
- 5,179 ft of side hill
- 892 ft of rip rap

Pretty impressive! (The list goes on and on, but the accomplishments are just too numerous to list in their entirety) Congratulations to the 2009 Field Team for a great season!

6 Team Leaders Complete Service

Andrea Bachynsky of Flemington, NJ is a 2009 graduate of the MCC's Trail Training Academy. She spent the summer season working on the Appalachian Trail, and the fall season across the state on the Wright Trail in western Maine, in Baxter State Park, and ending in Brunswick.



Bachynsky with her crew, volunteers, and project sponsor Paul Sannicandro in Baxter State Park.

“I came to MCC without any trail work experience. Not only did I learn to build trails in the past nine months, I discovered a physical and emotional strength I never knew I was capable of. I have made some wonderful friends and learned something different from each person I've encountered. I have also gained a great appreciation for my team, because they are the ones

who make it all happen. Their determination and continuous hard work

amazes me, along with their ability to entertain each other in the middle of nowhere. It may be part of our job, but who else can really say they camp out every night, commute to work via hiking, and eat dinner around a campfire- all as part of our job? Which also comes with the hardships of sleeping on the ground in freezing weather, working all day through rain and mud, and worst of all, having to get out of a warm sleeping bag to face the cold, dark mornings of fall. But our MCC teams bear these challenges each day and still accomplish impressive feats, building and improving trails all over the state,” says Bachynsky.

“A memorable time this fall was a snowball fight on the Wright Trail, in which every team member was pelted or ambushed by snowballs in an epic battle. Working on a 500 ft high line on the Hunt Trail was a unique and exciting experience, bringing together trail workers and volunteers of all ages to accomplish a huge task of transporting 100 rocks out of a ravine onto the trail. I will never forget participating in a "bear gang" with my team to scare away bears in Baxter State Park. And I will miss those mornings where we choreographed and perfected our dance stretch circles before work. Finally, I can still

hear the sound of the young boy's voice who told us, in his French accent, ‘the AT is very beautiful, and it is because of people like you.’”

With the end of the fall season, Bachynsky is headed back to New Jersey to visit family and celebrate Thanksgiving. She then plans to drive across the country and back to see more of the sights this country has to offer. After that, she might stay in Maine or wherever else the world takes her.

Dave Hammes of Port St. Lucie, FL is a long-time MCC veteran. He started as a Team Member in 2005, served as an Assistant Team Leader in 2007, a Team Leader in 2008, and returned this year as a Team Leader for the summer and fall seasons. Hammes spent much of the summer on Tumbledown Mountain, as well as in Portland and at Quoddy Head State Park. This fall, he finished up with a mini crew at Tumbledown, returned to Quoddy Head State Park, and then ended the season in Freeport.

Hammes says, “This fall season has been crazy to say the least. We are the “Rogue Squadron”, small but deadly; we are three strong and mighty, and together we accomplished our goals and beat the odds of cold, rain, trials, and tribulations. Working with Smity and Brian at Quoddy was awesome, and we really enjoyed hiking in and working in such a beautiful place. The crew and I spent much of our spare time hiking and enjoying the scenery and each other’s company.” He added that, “Taylor Flynn (an MCC alum) was the best volunteer and we really enjoyed his help and dedication to the MCC.”



Hammes and his crew at the eastern most point in the United States

Hammes’ plans are to head down to Florida to get back to work as a Stage Technician at the Sunrise Theatre in Fort Pierce, FL.

Carri Jagger of Mt. Gilead, OH is a 2009 graduate of the MCC’s Trail Training Academy. She is the only 2009 Team Leader to work on only one project per season.

Jagger spent the summer season working in the Deboullie Public Unit in northern Maine and the fall season working on trails in Acadia National Park (ANP) on Mount Desert Island in downeast Maine.

Jagger says, “We worked in ANP on the Jordan Cliffs trail rebuilding crib steps that were built 30 years ago by our project sponsor, Gary Stellphlug. I hope when I’m 60 I can



Jagger and her crew with MCC Volunteer of the Month Brad Van Hook in Acadia National Park.

come back to Jordan Cliffs and show my kids the work my team did. The steps and retaining walls were constructed of cedar logs that ranged from 3-13 ft and had to be carried about a mile up the mountain along a cliff face. The hike was long and hard, and my crew was rough and tough. They conquered the project in less time than was anticipated, giving us more time to work in other areas of the park. Next we moved to the Orange and Black trail where we built more crib steps and check steps in an area that was damaged by an earthquake 4 years prior. We are

very proud of this project as our work was key in helping reopen the trail. Once this project was completed, we moved to the Great Head trail where we constructed a 56 ft bog bridge and assisted the ANP trail crew in finishing a 70 ft stretch of stone check steps.”

“I would like to thank my crew for all their hard work and dedication in seeing that all of our projects were a success,” Jagger adds. “Without each and every one of you this fall season would not have been the same and you all played a key part in each and every project. Thank you and best of luck to you all.”

Jagger’s post-service plans are to head back to her family’s farm in central Ohio to work, play, and relax for two months.

Katherine Kelley of Belmont, ME is a 2009 graduate of the MCC’s Trail Training Academy, and in 2008, she served 6 months with the MCC as a Team Member and Assistant Team Leader. Kelley worked on projects all over the state during the 2009 season. She spent the summer at Vaughn Woods State Park and Burnt Island, as well as in Perham and Bath. She spent the fall season on Monhegan Island, at Androscoggin Riverlands State Park and Two Lights State Park, as well as with the Bangor Land Trust.

“What an incredible adventure!” Kelley says. “So many great people, beautiful places and amazing times. Sometimes work was hard, but it’s worth all the sweat and struggle for the sweet memories I have taken away from the time I spent with the MCC. The fall funkadelic freaks were truly a wonderful group of people that I won’t soon forget.”



Kelley and her crew on Monhegan Island.

Kelley’s post-season plans include working on her art and building stuff, including a yurt that she is going to live in this winter. She will also be once again spending the winter working with Liz Como being a dog handler, racing sled dogs, and taking folks out on day-long dog sledding trips.



Mehlman and his crew before heading out on the trail.

Nate Mehlman of Delmer, NY is a 2009 graduate of the MCC’s Trail Training Academy. Mehlman worked on a variety of projects this season, including ones at Pike Lands, Vaughn Woods in Hallowell, Orris Falls, and with Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust, Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association, and at Safford Notch in the summer. In the fall his projects included

Bradbury Mountain State Park, Wolfe’s Neck Woods State Park, and Portland Trails.

Mehlman says, “I had a great time at the MCC, and I would not have changed the experience for the world. Throughout my time there I did what I thought was the best for my crew and the projects we were working on. We got the job done, and done pretty darn well.” “Best-o-luck to all I worked with,” he adds.

For his post-MCC plans, Mehlman plans to work in the Catskills as a metal roofer this winter, and then he plans to pursue future ventures in destruction and creation.

Remy Henry of Rutland, VT is a veteran MCC member who served as a Team Member with the MCC in 2007. The 2009 season took him to Safford Notch and West Baldpate



on the Appalachian Trail during the summer and had him working with Western Foothills Land Trust, and at Nahmakanta, East Branch campsites, and Quoddy Head State Park this fall.

Henry’s post-MCC plans include working this winter as the Lodge Manager at the Killington Ski Resort in Killington, VT.

Henry and his crew at Western Foothills Land Trust with project sponsor Lee Dassler.

7 Environmental Educators Complete Service

Hannah Wilhelm of Ithaca, NY served 10 months at the Maine Department of Environmental Protection in Portland with the Biological Monitoring program and she finished her term of service in late November.

Wilhelm spent much of her service assisting with field work and working on data entry and database and GIS (Geographic Information Systems) updates. She also collected nearly 100 wetland plants and started an herbarium to be housed right in Portland.

“My highlights of the year included traveling to Aroostook County for field work, getting trapped inside a giant light-up globe at the University of Southern Maine and having my students from the Bowdoin Elementary School still recognize me, calculating dozens of stream orders by hand with tracing paper, presenting at the Maine Congress of Lake Associations conference, conducting an in-depth study of the aerodynamics of cattail fluff with 2nd graders at the China School Forest Day, digging deep into the world of plant taxonomy, ‘mucking’, geocaching and fishing with kids at the Friends of Cobbossee Watershed Spring Break Camp, and joining the MCC Field Team Trail Training Academy for a Wilderness First Responder course,” says Wilhelm.



Wilhelm on Linsday Lake in Aroostook County, calibrating a pH meter.

With her term of service having come to a close, Wilhelm will be returning to the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve (where she was an intern in the Research department in 2008) to work on an interpretive exhibit about the history and ecology of Laudholm Farm.

Jacob Aman of Brooklin, ME served for 10 months at the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve (Wells NERR) in Wells and completed his service in mid-November. This was Aman’s second term of service at the Wells NERR; he served there for 10 months in 2008 as well.

Some of Aman’s projects included coordinating 14 teams of volunteers to monitor sand erosion on the beaches of York County and developing a River Restoration plan to

reestablish migratory fish species in parts of southern Maine, which included numerous fish surveys.

Aman says, “Serving with the MCC has opened my eyes to the vast amount of work that is accomplished by volunteers. So much of the environmental work we do depends on people that care about the ecology of their own town. I am very thankful to have served alongside every one of them.”

Aman is headed to west to travel around southern California and Mexico for a month and then he will be returning to Wells NERR for a full-time position in the Research & Stewardship departments to work on projects similar to those he worked on during his term of service.



Aman (on R; with intern Dan McCune & MCC EE Molly Meserve) at the Mousam River Estuary in Kennebunk.

Rachel Potter of Old Town, ME served for 10 months at the Merryspring Nature Center in Camden and finished her service in mid-November. This is Potter’s second AmeriCorps term of service. She previously served as an AmeriCorps volunteer through the Community Resource Corps at Aldermere Farm in Rockport, ME.



Potter with 6th & 7th graders about to play “Beetle Invasion!”, a game that demonstrates the impact of invasive species.

During her term of service at Merryspring, Potter primarily focused on developing education and volunteer programs focusing on the Center’s arboretum, vernal pool, and gardens. A large part of her service included organizing family workshops with themes like Trees, Bug Safari, and Geocaching Festival. These workshops were designed to introduce children and their families to a wide range of healthy, active outdoor activities and to spark interest in new hobbies and pastimes that children and adults can do together.

Potter says, “As an AmeriCorps volunteer at Merryspring Nature Center, I was able to

work with visiting experts from many different fields through our lecture series and workshops. I also partnered with local schools and youth organizations to bring nature programs to children in the community. Working with the Maine Conservation Corps as an environmental educator has been a wonderful experience. I have enjoyed working in the Midcoast and I am looking forward to logging some volunteer hours with MCC in the future.”

Her post-service plans are to continue working on a Master’s degree in science education at the University of Maine Orono.

Sara Rademaker of Fort Wayne, IN served 10 months with the Herring Gut Learning Center in Port Clyde and she completed her term of service in mid-November.

The focus of Rademaker’s term of service was primarily organizing marine science summer programs and outreach in the community, as well as helping with classes that teach science to kids through aquaculture such as raising oysters, tilapia, and trout.

Rademaker says, “What an amazing opportunity this has been! I was lucky to have found a great host site that allowed me to use my aquaculture degree but also exposed to me to a new

world of teaching k-12 marine science. I learned an immeasurable amount of tricks and tips for teaching kids hands-on materials and keeping them actively learning in a classroom. I can easily say that I learned several new things every day at work.” She adds, “I also worked on some great aquaculture projects. My favorite most challenging project has been redesigning Herring Gut’s greenhouse and aquaponics system. It has really put my knowledge and abilities to the test, but as a wrap up to my Americorps position, I have my first crop of vegetables and tilapia ready for harvest!”

Now that her service has come to an end, Rademaker is thrilled to report she will be staying on at the Herring Gut Learning Center as a full-time Aquaculture & Marine Science Educator.



Rademaker teaching local students about brook trout

Margaret “Molly” Meserve of Kennebunk, ME served for 10 months with the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge in Wells, ME. In 2008 she also served for 6 months as an MCC Environmental Educator in Baxter State Park.

Throughout her term of service, Meserve worked on numerous projects including surveying New England Cottontails, and working on outreach projects involving Least Terns and Piping Plovers. As Meserve puts it, “Winter came and went and the summer flew by in a humid whirlwind of nekton sampling, nest searching, plover monitoring and ditched whales.”



Meserve (on R) with Zack Hunt and Jordan Kramer doing nekton sampling in Moody Marsh.

She adds, “I have made so many friends during my term of service, and I have certainly grown both personally and professionally. This marks the end of my second term of service as a Maine Conservation Corps Environmental Educator, and I am a bit sad. I feel so lucky to have had two very different yet rewarding jobs, and I’ve met many extremely bright, funny and interesting folks along the way. I only hope that the work I have

done will have benefited others, whether they be human or animal. I will miss the refuge and the kind-hearted people I worked with every day and I cannot thank them enough for their interest in my development as a biologist, as well as their compassion for me as a person.” And, lastly, “Oh, whatever that your days may bring, no use hiding in a corner, cause that won’t change a thing.” –Led Zeppelin.

Meserve will continue to focus on her passion for the environment as she moves to North Conway, NH to take up a position as the Destinations Volunteer Coordinator for the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Michele Windsor of Sweden, ME served 10 months with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) Stream Team and Volunteer River Monitoring programs in Portland, ME. In December, she started her second term of service in the same capacity as an MCC member with the DEP.

During her term of service Windsor worked with volunteer groups throughout the state monitoring their local streams and rivers. She oriented these groups to the new Volunteer River Monitoring program by helping them write Sampling and Analysis Plans for their

monitoring projects, and training them in VRMP stream sampling methods. Windsor also did environmental education activities related to water quality and watershed management, and worked closely with community and school groups on stream stewardship activities such as stream corridor surveys, storm drain stenciling and buffer plantings.

“The best part about my service was that working at the DEP I had the opportunity to work with great people on a wide variety of projects, many of them involving field work and sampling.” Michele adds, “I really like working outdoors and working with the team of great people at the DEP”.



Windsor teaching the No Name Brook Volunteer Monitoring group how to use their water quality monitoring equipment.

Meribeth Ratzel served for 10 months with the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve in Wells, ME.

Volunteers of the Month

October

Taylor Flynn: Flynn is an MCC alum from Windsor, ME, who was nominated by Team Leader Dave Hammes and his crew for all his hard work with them at Quoddy Head State Park. Flynn joined the crew there several times during the 2009 season and volunteered 103 hours.

Will Powers: Will Powers, who is from Watkinsonville, GA, was nominated by Team Leader Andrea Bachynsky and her crew. Powers spent over a month volunteering with their crew on the Wright Trail in western Maine, and he logged 160 hours on the trail with them.

December

Greg Carter: Carter, who is from East Waterboro, ME, was nominated by Environmental Educator Rebecca Martin. Carter is a middle school teacher at Mahoney in South Portland who started an outdoor science group there. As Martin put it, “Greg is patient, kind, and clearly loves being outdoors and teaching science. He is opening doors to outdoor learning for his students and I think that is great!”

2010 Trail Training Academy

The MCC is currently accepting applications for its 2010 Trail Training Academy, which will start on February 22, 2010. The MCC’s Trail Training Academy is a 10-week program that was established to provide an intensive learning experience designed to train individuals for placement as MCC Team Leaders starting in the spring. Trail Training Academy participants will learn numerous trail skills such as stone work, chainsaw safety & use, and Wilderness First Responder certification, among many others.

Erin Amadon, a veteran MCC member and MCC Trail Training Academy Instructor with 13 years of trails experience, will be teaching and overseeing the 2010 Trail Training Academy again this year. Amadon lives in Troy, ME, is a graduate of Unity College, and also maintains a position at the privately contracted trail company Peter S. Jensen Associates, LLC.

The application deadline is January 8, 2010. For more information and an application, please visit our website at www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc or contact our Recruitment Associate, Brenda Webber, at Brenda.L.Webber@maine.gov or (207) 624-6085.