

Maine Conservation Connection

Maine Conservation Corps



June 2011



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>

Summer Field Team

The MCC's Field Team season is off to a great start! Nine teams are in the field serving on projects for state parks and local land trusts, on public lands, and on the Appalachian Trail.



MCC Summer Orientation at Kingsley Pines Camp in Raymond, ME

Here are the crews! (names are listed L to R, unless otherwise indicated)
(TL= Team Leader, ATL=Assistant Team Leader, TM=Team Member)



TM Erin Simoneau, TM Matthew Stone, TM Katherine Jumper, ATL Carl Keicher, TM Christopher Veazie, TL Johanna Stacy



TL Aaron Mathias, TM Kenneth Parrotte, TM Thomas Lechner



TM Anthony Resti, ATL Jack Coleman, TM Christopher Whiting, TL Elise Giasson, TM Maggie Hankins, TM Amelia Box (not pictured)



In back: TM Christopher Howell, TM Ariel Lewis, ATL Taylor Cochran,
In front: TM Maxwell Martin, TL Timothy St. Thomas), TM James Mauro (not pictured)



In back: TL Alex Bradley, TM Sonia Bergmann, TM Kevin Kirby, ATL Jake Hansen
In front: TM Eliza Perry, TM Katie Nemmer



TL Joseph O'Brien, TM Vanessa Novicka, TM Zach Monroe, TM Emilie Rigby, ATL Marisa Marquardt, TM Gary MacAllister (not pictured)



TL Neal Watercutter, TM Jacob Atkins, TM Jon Hulburt (on top of sign),
ATL Dustin Geurts (beneath sign), TM Max Miller, TM Julien Morton



TM Tyler Kenniston, TL Lindsey May, ATL Andrew Cooper, TM Christy Hull,
TM Alan Button, TM Cara Werner, TM Nicole Evers (not pictured)



TM Roy Kresge, TL Matt Spinner, ATL Allegra Torres, TM Sibyl Weise,
TM Nikolai Logan (in back), TM Larsen Wilkinson

Environmental Educators Start Service

The MCC recently welcomed 10 new Environmental Educators.

Joseph Bailey of Standish, ME is serving 900 hours at Swan Island in the Kennebec River. Bailey is a 2011 graduate of the University of Maine where he studied Wildlife Ecology & Fisheries. He previously served with the MCC in 2008 as a Field Team Member during the summer season.

Allison Christensen of Minot, ND is serving 900 hours at the Maine State Aquarium in Boothbay. Christensen is a 2010 graduate of Minot State University where she studied Geology.

Clark Freeman of Natick, MA is serving 900 hours at the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance (BRCA) in Belgrade. Freeman is a 2010 graduate of Westfield State University where he studied Environmental Science, Geography & Regional Planning & GIS.

Lindsay Kelly of Rochester, NY is serving 900 hours at Vaughan Woods State Park in South Berwick. Kelly is a 2011 graduate of the University of New England where she

studied Environmental Science. She previously served in AmeriCorps with the Student Conservation Association in 2009.

Caitlyn Lajoie of Saint Albans, ME is serving 900 hours at the Medomak Valley Land Trust in Waldoboro. Lajoie is a graduate of the University of Maine where she studied Environmental Management & Policy.

Molly Miller of Medway, MA is serving 900 hours at the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory in Salisbury Cove. Miller is a 2010 graduate of Vassar College where she studied Biology & French.

Timothy Perez of Saratoga Springs, NY is also serving 900 hours at the BRCA in Belgrade. Perez is a 2010 graduate of the University of Vermont where he studied Botany.

Harold (Rob) Read of Orono, ME is serving 900 hours at the Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands' (BP&L) Bigelow Preserve. Read is a 2001 graduate of the University of Maine where he studied Forestry. He previously served with the MCC as part of the Trail Training Academy and as a Team Leader in 2009. He has also previously served in AmeriCorps as an Intern with the MA Department of Conservation and a Field Tech with the Maine Forest Service.

Jillian Sanders of Montrose, CO is serving 900 hours at the Maine BP&L Donnell Pond Unit. Sanders is a 2009 graduate of Colorado State University where she studied Landscape Horticulture, Construction Management & Spanish.

Emily Thornton of Millington, NJ is serving 900 hours at the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve in Wells. Thornton is a 2010 graduate of Allegheny College where she studied Biology, Environmental Science & Studio Art.

Environmental Educators Finish Service

Stewart DesMeules of Newcastle, ME served 900 hours with the Medomak Valley Land Trust (MVLT) in Waldoboro. He previously served 900 hours with the MVLT in 2010.

“My second 900 hour term with the Medomak Valley Land Trust allowed me to delve deeper into some of the projects I had started last June. I worked to organize a number of winter events on our preserves including a survival skills workshop, birds of prey guest speaker, and more. The winter was a time to get ready for the busier spring and summer. I spent time with the Lloyd Davis Anadromous Fish Trust preparing for the spring alewife count, and working on river barrier removal. I worked on continuing a water quality monitoring program created through a partnership between the land trust, the town, and the Waldoboro Shellfish Committee. With DMR involvement this year, the project will have greater potential to give a full picture of Waldoboro’s water quality



issues. Much of my time this spring has been spent organizing the 2011 alewife count, which requires lots of volunteer involvement. In addition to the count, I've toured an alewife presentation to a number of local organizations, in an attempt to educate more people about the decline, and hopeful recovery of the alewife. In addition to these projects, I've facilitated trail work, boundary marking, youth involvement in land trust activities, event planning, online outreach, press, and more. I established, and created content for an MVLT YouTube page, and created and maintained a Facebook page for the Lloyd Davis Anadromous Fish Trust (including logo design)."

At the conclusion of his term, DesMeules will start at a position with the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) in Boston working on their fisheries program. He'll interrupt this position briefly with a trip to Europe (anybody going to be between London and Italy in August?), and then head back to Boston. DesMeules then plans to enroll in a graduate program once he finishes with EDF.

Laura Keating of Wilkes-Barre, PA served 900 hours at the Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands' Androscoggin Riverlands and Mt. Blue State Parks. She previously served 900 hours at Androscoggin Riverlands State Park in 2010.

"Serving with the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands at the ever-loved Androscoggin Riverlands State Park and Mount Blue State Park has enhanced my skills and experiences both professionally and personally. Some of my projects were: assisting with interpretive work, completing the Androscoggin Riverlands Guide and Map, and developing a new park program.

My favorite part of working under the supervision of Gary Best was that he allowed me to get involved with projects that were both challenging and life changing. I coordinated the first Snowshoe Program at the Androscoggin Riverlands State Park. Facing the developmental hardships was minute in comparison to the smiling faces of the participating kids who soaked up every word about



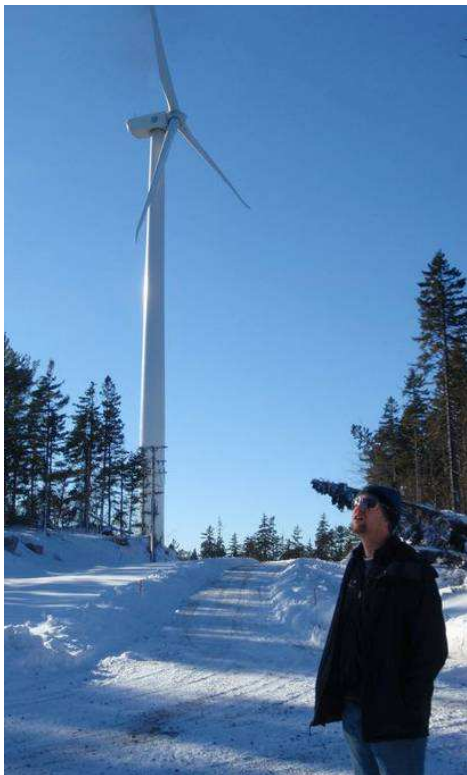
the park history, plants, and animals. It was a rewarding experience, and highlighted teaching abilities I didn't know I had.

Working with Bruce at Mt Blue, and developing seven interpretive panels proved to be challenging but one of the most exciting projects to be a part of. I began the initial stages for the text, layout design, and even art work. This project allowed me to reveal an artsy environmental side, from sketching to story line creation, and further enhancing my knowledge of Maine's many ecosystems.

And of course, I was provided with plenty of opportunities to travel! I had no idea how beautiful Maine was until projects put me on places like Warren Island, or Wolfe's Neck Woods. All the thanks in the world to: MCC for placing me in the perfect position, Gary Best who taught me so much, the State Parks, and Maine Department of Conservation staff. I feel very lucky for the countless and fun opportunities bestowed upon me. I will forever remember my experience as an AmeriCorps volunteer."

After her term of service, Keating will be spending the summer working at beautiful Mt. Blue State Park in Weld, ME.

Michael McGlenn of Conshohocken, PA served 900 hours at the Maine Energy Education Program (MEEP) in Augusta. He previously served 1700 hours at MEEP in 2010.



"In my time with MEEP, I have increased the environmental awareness of over 5,000 energy users from k-12. Energy use is something which connects us all. Even the young video gamer from Nature Deficiency Disorder can relate to the concept. Energy use is also the biggest driver in environmental degradation. So, it's great to intertwine fun learning activities with learning that expands social consciousness. The variety of activities MEEP offers has allowed me to teach everything from the simple physics of electricity to the advanced science behind global warming/climate change. MEEP has allowed me the freedom to develop my own curriculum and buttressed my position with the structure to mold me from a novice to an experienced and successful educator. It's the first job I've felt that I'm actually doing something to benefit the world as a whole."

After his term, McGlenn will be embarking on a bike journey from New Jersey to Washington State (or until he finds meaningful employment). He would like to chronicle

environmental problems and solutions as he experiences them across the country. He will be sharing pictures and stories via Facebook and Twitter, if you'd like to follow. He also knows he wants to stay in the business of bridging this supposed human-nature gap; it's what the Earth and the future of humanity need.

AmeriCorps Week

The Maine Conservation Corps once again had an incredibly successful National AmeriCorps Week (May 14-21, 2011). Members participated in outreach at local farmer's markets, maintaining and building trails for the upcoming busy season, planting native shrubs to create habitat, and many other projects across the state of Maine.

MCC Environmental Educator Becky Kolak (serving at the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust in Bath) hosted two trail work projects despite the pouring rain. Morse High School freshmen volunteered by cleaning up trash, removing invasive plants, mapping trail erosion, repairing trail signs and blocking off spider trails.



MCC Environmental Educators & Morse High School students

Upcoming Events & Volunteer Opportunities

Here is a sampling of the volunteer opportunities the MCC has this month. (Many of the Field Team opportunities continue into July). As usual, the complete selection of the MCC's volunteer opportunities can be found on our website Volunteer Calendar: www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/volunteer.html. There are also tons of opportunities coming up in July and August—check them out! For questions regarding volunteering

with the Field Team, please contact MCC Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Gaffney at (207) 624-6092 or sarah.gaffney@maine.gov.

June Field Team Opportunities

Androscoggin Riverlands State Park

When: Jun 21-23, Jun 28-30

Where: Turner, ME

Project details: Extensive work in this new Maine State Park including hiking and mountain biking trails.

Tunk Mountain

When: Jun 21 – 23, Jun 28-30

Where: Donnell Pond Public Land Unit

Project details: Upgrading Tunk Mtn Trail and technical rock work.

Vaughan Woods State Park

When: Jun 21 – 23

Where: South Berwick, ME

Project details: Bridge repairs, new bridge construction, building an observation station, tread and stairway repair.

Swan's Island

When: Jun 23 – 27, 2011

Where: Swan's Island, ME

Project details: Trail definition and restoration on a coastal island trail.

Blue Hill Mountain

When: Jun 28 – 30

Where: Blue Hill, ME

Project details: Rock/tread work.

Cobscook Bay State Park

When: Jun 28 – Jul 1

Where: Edmunds TWP., ME

Project details: New trail construction: clearing trail, installing bog bridging, ditching and water bars.

Augusta Greenway

When: Jun 29 – 30

Where: Augusta, ME

Project details: Surfacing trail with reclaim.

June Environmental Educator Opportunities

Trail work with the Sandy River Land Trust!

When: Thursday, Jun 23, 2011

Where: Madrid TWP, ME

Description: The Sandy River Land Trust & High Peaks Alliance will host the Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) Environmental Educators Celebration of Service in Madrid TWP and Phillips ME on Thursday June 23rd. Come out and join MCC members and volunteers from ATV Maine to work on the new Fly Rod Crosby Trail; a proposed trail that will eventually stretch from Strong to Oquossoc and feature the life and times of Cornelia "Fly Rod" Crosby, Maine's first registered guide. FMI contact MCC EE Ben Godsoe at bgodsoe.srlt@gmail.com. Volunteers will meet at 9am in the field below the Star Barn B&B. The StarBarn is located on Reeds Mills Road, approximately 5 miles off of route 4 in Madrid TWP. We will break into groups and go out to the job sites from there. We are going to clear trail corridor and do some sidehilling. This means lots of clipping, moving brush, digging and moving a few rocks! However, we also need to take a lot of pictures, help with logistics like water, coffee, donuts and tool transport, and help with trail assessment on finished portions. So hopefully there will be something for everyone! Please bring sturdy boots and work clothing: long pants, gloves, etc, (things that can get dirty!), a bag lunch, hand tools if you have them (loppers, hand saws, picks, shovels). If not don't worry, we will have extras on hand!

Recruitment

The MCC is currently recruiting for Field Team Members for the 2011 Fall Season (August 16-November 10, 2011). The application deadline is July 1, 2011.

The MCC will also have three 1700 hour Environmental Educator positions starting in early October.

For more information about the positions, benefits, and application materials, please visit the MCC website: www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc.

Alumni

Rex Turner

Rex Turner is the Outdoor Recreation Planner for the Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands. He has previously worked as a researcher, National Park Service park ranger, historic interpreter, environmental educator, teacher, guide, and writer. He is active in conservation and recreation efforts at local and statewide levels in Maine, both professionally and as a volunteer/board member. Rex lives in Augusta with his wife, Erika, and daughter, Reve.

What initially drew you to the MCC?

I wanted to stay in Maine and work with the environment. At the time, my biggest interest related to interpreting the natural world and a position as an Environmental Educator was an attractive way to gain experience and put my education to work.

What was your favorite part about serving with the MCC?

Though I was right out of college, I was given a lot of latitude and independence to create my own programs and projects. I worked with some fun people at the school district I worked with and I got to interact with a lot of kids. I recall one little guy (a Kindergartener) who, when I gave a program about beavers, told me that he had climbed into a beaver lodge with the "baby beavers". This seemed a little far-fetched, but you never know as this little Mohawk-haircut fella wasn't much bigger than a beaver and had a wild streak a mile-wide!

What was your favorite project/favorite place you served?

Three come to mind. I helped create a small nature trail behind one of the schools I worked with. I really enjoyed the creative aspect of this project. I also helped mentor a group of high school students who designed and led their own field studies and natural history outreach. Third, I led an afterschool outdoors program at a middle school. I most remember one day taking a group of students, including a special needs young man, into a local bog. The aforementioned young man had such a great spirit slogging around in waders in a wild bog. He could not speak much, but his smiles and laughter spoke immensely.

How did your time with the MCC affect your career/life path?

I got rich - just kidding! In all seriousness, I think my time with MCC reaffirmed my desire to be involved with the outdoors in a meaningful, productive way. It also reinforced my wanting to serve a large, important cause. I think the notion of working with/on something larger than one's self is an attractive concept.



Rex with his daughter at Mt. Blue State Park

If you could give any advice to current or future MCC members, what would it be?

I would suggest MCC members take advantage of the opportunity to interact with natural resource professionals. I think most people from agencies, etc, who work with MCC members value them and are very willing to share insight into what different career paths involve. A season or more of MCC service can be a good window into what different types of jobs entail and can give you an idea of where you might want to try and make a career.

Pratikshya Patil

If you ask her parents, they will tell you that Dr. Patil has wanted to be a veterinarian all her life. At an early age, she volunteered much of her free time to animal hospitals and humane shelters, cleaning kennels and bathing dogs. At the University of Illinois, Urbana she received a BS in Animal Sciences (1999) and worked at the Wildlife Medical Center, treating everything from common tree squirrels to a majestic bald eagle. After earning her undergraduate degree, Pratikshya took some time off from her primary passion and spent a summer as an AmeriCorps volunteer with the Maine Conservation Corps. She spent days at a time in the Maine wilderness, stumping, building cairns, and marking difficult trails. A year later, she was on a plane to Poland, fulfilling a lifelong dream to pursue her veterinary degree. She did a portion of her veterinary schooling in Wroclaw, a beautiful city tucked into the southwest corner of Poland, and later returned to the US to complete her training and earn her degree from Purdue University's School of Veterinary Medicine (2005).

Dr. Patil is also privileged to be a member of the National Veterinary Response Team, a federal group deployed in the event of a natural or man made emergency, whose aim is to help both domestic and wild animals adversely affected.

Dr. Patil is married, has a human daughter just now beginning to walk, and a Rottweiler chow mix who wants to walk too much.

What initially drew you to the MCC?

I was specifically looking to experience life in a different way, different from the way I was brought up (as an Asian Indian in the northwest suburbs of Chicago), different from the jobs I had held (the only time I held a tool was in my family's vegetable and flower



Dr. Patil with her family

garden) and different from the difficult and highly scheduled academic prerequisites for veterinary school (courses that you were forced to take, scholarship applications, admissions testing, essays, multiple rejections).

I sat looking at the AmeriCorps openings for the summer of 2000 and the Maine Conservation Corps embodied everything I wanted.

What was your favorite part about serving with the MCC?

There were options of various sites to work on the trails. They ranged from, in my view, very easy (little hiking, no isolation, trail maintenance) to 'You've got to be insane to even want to do THAT!' (hiking a 30 pound pack a few miles, setting up bear lines, making new trails).

I applied for the most difficult assignment because I would most likely never have an experience like it again. Thinking back to that time, there were swarms of insects to deal with while chopping trees down or while placing large stones in just the right way to create steps over marshy areas. There was the sun beating down while clearing berry bushes from a peak or hiking to find the perfect rock for a well balanced cairn. There were also people on the team who come from lives so different from yours that you can feel yourself snap to as you strain to understand their views, ideals and lives and defend your own.

By far, though, my favorite part of serving with the MCC was the learned ability to be by myself. I found that before the MCC, I needed to be around people all the time--talking, laughing, communicating. I never spent any appreciable deal of time by myself. Suddenly, it was me with me out there and I did not like it. It's a funny situation when you aren't even comfortable by yourself and, compounding that, you are surrounded by people questioning everything about you. It was a time to reflect and understand motivations.

On a lighter note, I was able to get rid of my watch about half way through my service as the calls of the loons became my alarm and my body was in accord with nature.

What was your favorite project/favorite place you served?

My group was in Baxter State Park-beautiful and rugged backwoods area the entire time. I especially like to build cairns.

How did your time with the MCC affect your career/life path?

I joined at one of the most unstable moments in my life-I did not get into veterinary school for the second time and had an opportunity to go to Poland on an exchange program with a US veterinary school. My life's dream was not going as planned and I was about to embark on a potentially crazy journey that would may be fruitless in the end. I had a strong support network here, but in Poland?!

It was me with me everyday that got me through three years in Poland (I did adopt a wonderful German shepherd dog my second year there), then another two at Purdue Veterinary School, then I finally got my DVM.

If you could give any advice to current or future MCC members, what would it be?

The scars from the horse flies and black flies eventually go away.