

Maine Conservation Connection

Maine Conservation Corps



October 2011



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Fall Field Team Update

The MCC's Fall Field Teams departed for their first projects in late August. The six teams have already completed projects in Dover-Foxcroft, Lake St. George State Park, Lubec, Baxter State Park, Grafton Notch State Park, Mt. Blue State Park and on the Wright Trail and Cutler Coast Trail.

MCC Welcomes New Environmental Educators

In early October, the MCC welcomed two new Environmental Educators:

Marianne Cataldo of Commack, NY is serving 1700 hours at the Maine Energy Education Program in Augusta. Cataldo is a 2007 graduate of Muhlenberg College where she studied Biology.

Peter Patenaude of Augusta, ME is serving 1700 hours at the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Land & Water in Augusta. Patenaude is a 2011 graduate of the University of Maine where he studied Forest Ecosystem Science & Conservation.

Recent Events

In partnership with the Maine Commission for Community Service, MCC Environmental Educators participated in the nationwide 9/11 "I Will" Campaign. The campaign encouraged community members to pledge hours of volunteer service in honor of the

heroes and victims of September 11th, 2001. MCC Environmental Educators spent 130 hours handing out pledge cards at their host sites, out on the trail, and in communities around the state. Follow this link to learn more about the “I Will” Campaign in Maine: <http://www.volunteermaine.org/promo-1/>.

The MCC Field Team attended the **Common Ground Country Fair** (sponsored by the Maine Organic Farmers & Gardeners Association) in Unity on September 23rd for an education day. The annual fair is a celebration of rural living in Maine and members were able to explore the different booths, workshops and exhibits for the day.

Both Field Team members and Environmental Educators attended the **Blaine House Conference on Service & Volunteerism** in Orono on October 11th. The conference, which is hosted by the Maine Commission for Community Service, is an annual event featuring networking and workshop opportunities and is attended by all AmeriCorps members serving in Maine. This year’s conference featured keynote speakers Tammi DeVile, author of *Changing the World on a Tuesday Night*, and Kaira Esgate, Executive Director of Reimagining Service.

MCC Environmental Educators Finish Service

Joe Bailey of Standish, ME served 900 hours with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife (MDIF&W) on Swan Island in the Kennebec River. He previously served with the MCC in 2008 as a Field Team Member.

“My time on Swan Island with MDIF&W has been a very positive experience for me. I have had the opportunity to work on many different projects pertaining to the island, and the chance to develop many skills that will prove beneficial to my professional career, whatever that may turn out to be. The term with IF&W has put me in a professional setting where I was empowered to act as a responsible employee and trusted to represent the department in an appropriate manner during my interactions with the island visitors and the local town people. I have enjoyed my time on Swan Island immensely and would make a career out of it if I could!”

Immediately following the end of his MCC term, Bailey will start a 10 week contract with MDIF&W on the Chronic



Bailey on Swan Island

Wasting Disease Surveillance Crew. During that time he will be looking for his next step in life, and is currently exploring law enforcement, wildlife, and military careers.

Allison Christensen of Minot, ND served 900 hours at the Maine State Aquarium in West Boothbay.



Christensen (2nd from L) with volunteers after a beach clean-up

“My time of service with the Maine State Aquarium was packed full with research and education. At the aquarium, I was a Marine Educator and Volunteer Coordinator. Having grown up in North Dakota, my knowledge of Maine marine species was limited, so there were countless long days trying to learn all our Maine species and

fisheries. I enjoyed every minute of gaining this new knowledge to share with the public. Most days I worked at our shark and tide-pool touch tank informing visitors about our species. I also daily performed educational programs on sharks, lobsters, and sea stars. During the summer, the aquarium also does a summer science camp. For this camp, I created a geology program to be incorporated each year. This fall I will be starting up a Native American program that will be used by Unity College marine science majors to teach in public schools. Before this experience, I wasn't sure if I would enjoy giving presentations daily; but I found out that is something I really do enjoy!”

After her term of service ends, Christensen and her husband will be moving back to North Dakota, where he got a job as a Petroleum Engineer and she will hopefully be working as an Interpretative Park Ranger at Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Clark Freeman of Natick, MA served 900 hours at the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance (BRCA) in Belgrade.

For my term of service I have been working with the BRCA as the 2011 Youth Conservation Corps Leader. Our Corps was made up of 12 individuals and myself, and we completed 91 erosion mitigation projects on 46 different properties throughout the Belgrade Lakes watershed. Projects this year included riprap, buffer gardens, rain gardens, rubber razor blades, box culverts, culvert armoring, drywells, infiltration

trenches and infiltration steps. The purpose of these projects is to reduce runoff entering the lakes from lakeside properties and development, improving overall water quality. Highlights of this year's service included 15 infiltration steps on Long Pond, cleaning out and re-arming a 200' culvert-fed stream with a series of 6 plunge pools on Great Pond to contain high volume flows of water in springtime, and completing the Miller Island riprap project hauling out 19 yd³ of rock by boat and sinking our largest boat full of rock in the process.



Freeman working on an infiltration steps project

Freeman will be staying on with the BRCA working on Stewardship and Education in the winter, then as the 2012 Conservation Corps Director starting in April. "It is exciting that I get to stay in Maine and see what the winter holds in store for me and I am also excited to see how many projects I can set up for the 2012 season now that I am comfortable in how to handle the position," says Freeman.

Lindsay Kelly of Rochester, NY served 900 hours at Vaughan Woods State Park in So. Berwick.



Kelly instructing kids at Vaughan Woods State Park

"I had a great time serving as the Environmental Educator at Vaughan Woods Memorial State Park. The best thing about working at Vaughan Woods is working in a beautiful environment with people who look forward to going to work everyday. I also loved visiting summer recreational

camps and seeing the interest and enthusiasm kids have for the environment. An important lesson I learned while serving is to take advantage of local resources. For

instance, while making the historical panel I worked with a local historian and the volunteer who helped write the park trail guides lived right down the street. I will miss all the staff and volunteers I have come to know over these past 6 months.”

After completing her term at Vaughan Woods, Kelly will serve another term with the Maine Conservation Corps from January to November at the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge.

Caitlyn Lajoie of Saint Albans, ME served 900 hours at the Medomak Valley Land Trust in Waldoboro.

“For my term of service with the Medomak Valley Land Trust I worked intensively with the communities of the Medomak Valley. With the help of incredibly dedicated volunteers, we worked tirelessly through a drizzly summer to build bridges on preserves, construct a new trail system, and clean up existing preserves. We explored new ways to navigate the watershed



Lajoie (on L) during the annual alewife count

through kayaking and hiking, and when it wasn't raining, experienced some incredible views of some really special places. I helped organize the Waldoboro Day Parade, the Annual Picnic, the River Festival, and a Survival Skills workshop with a master guide, over 10 kayak trips, many hikes, and a community talks on coyotes. During my term of service I worked with over 60 volunteers, many returning again and again and giving me their time and consideration. I will definitely miss my volunteers and fellow MCC members. I appreciated all their help, their laughter and their guidance over the past 6 months. Thank you.”

In January, Lajoie is moving to Bozeman, Montana to gain valuable experience in the field of conservation biology, which she hopes to pursue a Masters Degree in later at the University of Oregon, specializing in large carnivore ecology and the reformation of conservation corridors to preserve species' genetic integrity. Currently, she is working on gaining opportunities to volunteer with several Montana-based organizations, including the American Prairie Foundation (working with biologists and creating a field guide for their reserve), Keystone Conservation (working on the protection and understanding of large carnivores), WWF (tracking and studying cougars), and the Montana Audubon (working on their Climate Change Initiative). “I am very excited about this new chapter in my life and can't wait to get started,” says Lajoie.

Molly Miller of Medway, MA served 900 hours at the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory in Salisbury Cove.



Miller with her dedicated volunteer, Trillium

“I have had a wonderful service experience with AmeriCorps/ Maine Conservation Corps during the past 6 months at the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory (MDIBL). I have been involved in conservation biology/ environmental restoration work through the eelgrass restoration project here at the lab. I have also done a great deal of public outreach working with local schools on environmental education and through our young environmental leaders program here at the lab. I had a great time working with the summer interns and volunteers in our lab and had so much fun getting into my wetsuit and jumping into the freezing cold water each week for our field work projects. I will miss being out on the boat each week seeing seals, porpoises, and the beautiful Frenchman Bay. The MDIBL is an incredible and unique place that is hard to find anywhere else. The sense of

community is overwhelming and I have had the opportunity to meet so many inspiring people and make so many incredible friends. Luckily I am staying for another 6 month term so I won't have to say good-bye just yet!”

After finishing this term of service, Miller will be heading home for the holiday season and then returning to the MDIBL in January for a second term of service. In the meantime she will be applying to graduate schools to hopefully begin in the fall of 2012.

Tim Perez of Saratoga Springs, NY served 900 hours at the BRCA in Belgrade.

“My term of service can be described in two words: eclectic and experiential. I'm sure other Environmental Educators can identify with this selection. The BRCA, my host site for 900-hrs, is a small conservation organization; a land and lake trust focused on preserving the natural landscapes and heritage within our watershed.

The Belgrade watershed consists of six lakes slowly flowing into the Kennebec River. Within the watershed's boundaries conservation issues ranging from conservation easement monitoring to stewardship of trail networks and invasive plant monitoring to education, can be described as eclectic. My duties addressing these concerns, was nothing short of experiential.

The hands-on conservation work I performed in an array of areas definitely honed my interests as a naturalist and provided valuable career experience. Despite some frustrations and long hours, which come with the territory, my term has been a period of growth for the BRCA and myself. I'm confident that this position has had a lasting affect on me and I hope I've contributed to the success to the BRCA."

After his term ends, Perez hopes to apply and get into a graduate school to study plant systematics, ecology or mycology, preferably someplace tropical. In the interim time between the MCC and seasonal summer employment, Perez hopes to ski, hunt and celebrate good times, C'mon!



Perez teaching campers how to start a fire during a survival skills camp

Rob Read of Orono, ME served 900 hours at the Bigelow Public Reserved Land in western Maine. 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 as a Field Tech with the Maine Forest Service.



Read in the Bigelow Preserve

“One of the most interesting things about Bigelow is the history of the area. Flagstaff Lake was created in 1949 as a storage basin for power generating facilities downstream. Two towns, Flagstaff and Dead River, were erased in the process. At the Round Barn site

one can still see the foundation hole of the old round barn, as well as the foundation and sawdust pile from an old mill. The Bigelow Lodge, where I stayed for the summer, also has an interesting history all its own. As for the job itself, one meets many interesting people at these campsites. If you have no problem talking to people, as I certainly don't,

then the most important thing is not to say too much. For example, if you tell people that sites were trashed and you cleaned them, they expect someone is going to follow behind them and clean, and will be less likely to take care of their mess. If they say they always find these sites clean, simply say, 'Yes, the public generally keeps them that way (not entirely true), which is the way it should be, and what we expect.' Then they are more likely to take ownership of their site and leave it nice."

As for post-MCC plans, Read is hoping to have a part-time job for the winter at the Bigelow Lodge keeping it open as a warming house for the snowmobilers on the weekends. In addition to that, Read may be shoveling snow, substitute teaching, or any number of other things to get through the winter months until it is time to find another field position of some kind in the spring.

Jillian Sanders of Montrose, CO served 900 hours at the Donnell Pond Public Reserved Land in downeast Maine.

"I worked in the Bureau of Parks and Lands, primarily at the Donnell Pond Public Reserved Land. A considerable amount of time was spent talking with visitors. I loved answering questions about where to hike or general information about the area. However, dealing with some visitors created challenges. I had to learn quickly and think on my feet when it came to rule enforcement. Another challenge was the daily battle against litter. I became very sympathetic to Oscar the Grouch. Visitors' positive comments about the litter were greatly appreciated. One woman who had been regularly visiting the area for the past twenty years said it had never looked better! Feedback about the trails was great too. A few hikers said the trails were some of the best maintained in the DownEast, right up there with Acadia! The ranger duties of constructing and maintaining campsites, outhouses, and miles of trail was hard and dirty work. I certainly received an education in what it's like to be a ranger in public lands. As my term is winding down, I've been able to touch up the trails and enjoy the mountain views, clear water, and quiet beaches."



Sanders in the Donnell Pond
Public Reserved Land

For future plans, Sanders thinks she will be going with the flow but, maybe against it some too. Either way, there should be fun and adventures.

Emily Thornton of Millington, NJ served 900 hours at the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve in Wells.



Thornton (in stream) taking water velocity measurements

“When searching for this position, I knew that I wanted it to involve two things: electrofishing and eels. An odd pair of requirements, I’ll admit, but I had a suspicion that I would enjoy fisheries work and wanted experience in the field before graduate school. Wells NERR was the perfect place to gain this experience. Not only are we regularly electrofishing and catching eels, but I’ve learned to perform numerous fisheries sampling and habitat monitoring techniques. I even had the opportunity to lead a habitat surveying crew on a watershed monitoring project. The volunteers who helped on the

project were incredible. Through rainy, chilly or sweltering days they persevered with high spirits. This position has taught me the great value of volunteers; the project could not have been done without them. I’ve also learned a lot about what I’m interested in, what I enjoy, and what I’d like to do next, and I’m happy to have volunteered at a place that could help me realize so much. While I will be sad to leave the Reserve, the MCC and the people I have met, my experience here has prepared me with the skills and direction to take my next steps.”

After her term with the MCC, Thornton is going to take a few months to prepare graduate school applications and revise her undergraduate thesis for publication. Then, she’ll find a temporary/volunteer position to pass the months before (hopefully) beginning a Masters program in Fisheries Science in Fall 2012. Her position at the Wells NERR has helped her realize that she is ready to go back to school and she is really looking forward to starting graduate research.

Alumni

Jesse Minor, Environmental Educator 2002-2003

I was raised in North Carolina among the blackwater rivers and estuaries of the eastern part of the state. Eager to see what winter was like, I enrolled at Bates College, where I majored in Geology and minored in Philosophy. Bates College’s location in Lewiston provided the perfect setting for easy access to Casco Bay and the midcoast areas, to the White Mountains, and to a tremendous amount of recreational amenities in the state.

After graduation from Bates, I worked for the Maine Conservation Corps for a year and for the Island Institute for two years on Islesford, one of two inhabited islands in the Town of Cranberry Isles just south of Acadia National Park. After my MCC and Island



Minor in the Chiricahua Mountains in southeast Arizona collecting fire-scarred tree-ring samples

Institute service ended, my wife Rebecca and I stayed on Islesford for an additional two years to work as crew on lobsterboats and to continue to be a part of Islesford's incredible community. Two summers ago, we expanded our interest in commercial fisheries by working for a friend on his salmon boat in Bristol Bay, Alaska.

In 2006, Rebecca and I went on a 3-month bike tour through New Zealand, and then started graduate school in Tucson, Arizona, where Rebecca received a MS in Wildlife Biology and now works for the Biosphere 2, and where I received a MA in Geography and am currently working towards a PhD in Geography. My particular research uses tree-ring methods to reconstruct fire regimes in montane southwestern forests, and social-science methods to help land managers communicate with various stakeholders in fire-prone settings. Tree-ring fieldwork has taken me all over the southwestern US and into northern Mexico. While Tucson may never feel quite like home, there is fantastic hiking, road biking, and fantastic

desert ecology all around the city.

What initially drew you to the MCC?

Having gone to college in Maine, I was eager to stay and work in-state. A few friends had been MCC volunteers over the previous several years in a variety of settings ranging from trail crew team leadership to working for environmental nonprofits, and they had uniformly positive things to say about their experiences.

What was your favorite part about serving with the MCC?

At the same time I was a MCC volunteer, I was also a Fellow for the Island Institute. MCC meetings, trainings, and volunteer opportunities gave me a much-valued opportunity to interact with interesting people who were engaged in a variety of projects that helped me think of ways I could broaden my Island Institute fellowship. Having just

graduated from college, being a part of the peer groups of the MCC and Island Institute really enriched the social and intellectual experience of AmeriCorps service.

What was your favorite project/favorite place you served?

I spent 4 years on Islesford, also known as Little Cranberry Island. Even though my MCC service was only 1 year and my Island Institute Fellowship 2 years, I fell in love with Islesford and stayed out there and went lobster fishing for 2 additional years. Living in an island community like Islesford's means that your community service never really ends, because basically everyone has to pitch in for things to function. Volunteer fire departments, EMT services, school activities, and any number of arts and community events require volunteer effort to be a success.

My favorite project was Sea Sampling, which is a lobster demography project run through the Maine Department of Marine Resources. Sea Sampling entailed going out on a lobsterboat once or twice a week to count and measure every single lobster that the traps brought up, regardless of whether it was legal to keep or not. This sampling effort kept track of breeding females, undersized, and oversized lobsters, and bycatch in addition to the legal lobster harvest.

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

I could not have gone directly from undergraduate to graduate school- I needed time to really become involved in some projects and in non-school employment for a few years before I could contemplate being a student again. The time management skills necessary for an individual Environmental Educator position have transferred well to grad school. I am in a Geography program at present, and the demands of such an all-encompassing discipline are well-met by some additional skills that MCC service stresses: working as part of a team, listening to divergent viewpoints, balancing information from various sources, and a commitment to environmental and social justice issues.

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

Enjoy your time in Maine! Being out in Arizona, I miss New England tremendously. Also, take the opportunity to gain as many skills and competencies as you can through trainings and other events.

Kari Enke, Field Team 2009

I was born and raised in the suburbs of St. Louis, Missouri. After graduating from high school in 2006, I attended college and in December 2010 earned my degree in Mathematics Education from the University of Central Missouri.

Since the summer of 2005 (with the exception of 2009 which I spent with MCC), my summer job has been working as a wrangler on a guest cattle ranch called Focus Ranch. During the school year, I am high school math teacher in a small town called Rangely,

Colorado. Teaching high school is a wonderful challenge that offers me the opportunity to teach the students not only math, but also important life skills.



Enke

What initially drew you to the MCC?

I was looking on Coolworks.com and stumbled across MCC. I immediately loved the idea that I could camp, hike, and work outside all summer long while doing something good for the environment.

What was your favorite part about serving with the MCC?

Each site we worked at was a completely new environment and challenge.

What was your favorite project/favorite place you served?

My favorite project was at Moody Mountain where we were relocating the trail around a rockslide.

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

MCC taught me to appreciate what you have, enjoy the small wonders in your life, and never take things for granted.

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

Don't let the black flies get the best of you, work hard, have a great time, and always KEEP AN OPEN MIND!

Volunteers of the Month

August

Sabin Gilman of Biddeford, ME was nominated by Team Leader Neal Watercutter and his crew. Gilman hiked in 3 miles to the crew's Wright Trail project, worked all day with the crew, and even brought along doughnuts and sunshine!

Hal Harren of Greenwood, ME was nominated by Team Leader Elise Giasson and her crew. Harren volunteered 69 hours on their Androscoggin Riverlands State Park project and was an enormous help to their effort.

Sadie James of Avon, ME was nominated by MCC Environmental Educator Ben Godsoe. James was an enormous help this summer as a volunteer intern with the Sandy River Land Trust. She volunteered 68 hours and helped write a business plan for a “Fly Rod Crosby Trail” exhibit in Phillips.

September

Trillium Cserr of Orford, NH was nominated by Environmental Educator Molly Miller who is serving at the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory. Cserr, who is 11, volunteered 58.5 hours over the summer and fall, helping with various projects like phytoplankton monitoring, eelgrass mapping and restoration, and water quality/healthy beaches monitoring.

Laura Mangan of County Kildare, Ireland was nominated by Environmental Educator David Hammes. Mangan has volunteered over 700 hours at Bradbury Mountain State Park since January.

Linda Murray of Jefferson, ME was nominated by Team Leader Michelle DiMeglio and her crew for her hard work, yoga and photography skills, and the salmon, cider and other goodies she brought along, as well as the fantastic dinner that was the result.

Brandon Roukey of Saco, ME was nominated by Team Leader Neal Watercutter and his crew for all of his hard work, as well as his calm and willingness to help when a crew member was injured.

Upcoming Events & Volunteer Opportunities

October & November

Environmental Educators

Fly Rod Crosby Trail, (western Maine), October 29th

There is ongoing work happening on the Fly Rod Crosby Trail on Mondays and Thursdays through October. There will also be a scheduled work day on Saturday, October 29th.

October 29th (rain day October 30th) meet at Saddleback Mountain Resort at the end of the Rock Pond Condos road at 9:30. To get there just follow the access road past the lodge and take your first left up hill, proceed to the end of the road and park. We will be brushing out an old foot path and hiking in to Eddy Pond for Lunch.

What to bring:

- 1) Sturdy boots, work gloves and clothing (long pants)
- 2) Lunch and plenty of water
- 3) Loppers/Clippers if you have them (if not we will provide)
- 4) A smile!

If interested in helping out, please contact MCC Environmental Educator Ben Godsoe at 578-0306 or bgodsoe.srlt@gmail.com.

To learn more about the Fly Rod Crosby Trail:
<http://highpeaksalliance.wordpress.com/fly-rod-crosby-trail/>

Field Team

Bradbury Mountain State Park, Pownal

Project details: Resurfacing trails, rebuilding turnpike, water diversion and bridge repair.
Dates: October 25-27, November 1-3, November 8

Dodge Point Public Reserved Land, Newcastle

Project details: Basic trail maintenance to entire trail system.
Dates: October 25-27

Kennebec Estuary Land Trust, Bath

Project details: Rehabilitate the Narrows trail and build a trail along the headland cliff to safely connect the headland to the waterfront.
Dates: October 25-27, November 1-3, November 8

Tunk, Donnell Pond Public Reserved Land (between Franklin & Cherryfield)

Project details: work on Tunk Mtn Trail and Hidden Pond Trail.
Dates: October 25-27, November 1-3, November 8

Portland Trails, Portland

Project details: Work on the Sebago to the Sea trail.
Dates: November 2-3, November 8

Stockton Springs

Project details: Lots of bog bridging (**This project would greatly benefit from some volunteer help!**)

Dates: November 2-3

Recruitment

The MCC is currently recruiting for several 900 hour Environmental Educator positions which will start in late May. Host sites include the Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands, Georges River Land Trust, the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences at Good-Will Hinckley, and more. The application deadline is February 11, 2012 and position descriptions can be found here:

http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/EEO_000.htm.

The MCC Field Team is also currently recruiting for the 2012 Trail Training Academy, which is an 11-week intensive training for potential MCC Team Leaders. Participants receive extensive training in trails skills including timber work, chainsaw safety & operation, rigging &

GripHoist operation, rock work, and crew management, among others. In addition, all participants receive Wilderness First Responder certification. The deadline is December 30th, 2011 and the academy will start in February. Learn more about the MCC's Field Team here: <http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/fieldteam.html>.

