



## 2019-2020 Position Description

The New Jersey Watershed Ambassadors Program (NJWAP) is an environmental stewardship-oriented AmeriCorps program designed to raise awareness about water concerns. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has hosted NJWAP since 2000, and while the Program has evolved over the last 19 years, its main goals have remained the same: promote watershed stewardship through education and direct community involvement and monitor the health of our waterways through conducting stream assessments.

Twenty (20) Watershed Ambassadors serve from partner host agency locations, with one located in each of New Jersey's Watershed Management Areas (WMAs). From Sussex to Cape May counties, Ambassadors provide direct service to their local communities. NJWAP serves with all sectors of society to improve the quality of New Jersey's waterways, nurturing community-based environmental activities and empowering residents to make responsible and informed decisions regarding their watershed by: **Educating** the public on watershed science and encouraging them to get involved in local stewardship actions; **Implementing community green infrastructure and stewardship projects through partnering with local organizations and community volunteers**; and **Conducting** habitat and biological assessments following DEP monitoring protocol to monitor the health of their WMA's streams.

Throughout the Program, Members grow professionally and interpersonally. Extensive training in highly sought-after skills in the environmental field is provided, including ArcGIS, fieldwork experience, grant writing, project management, and science communication. Members exit prepared to further their career in the environmental field. A driver's license and reliable vehicle for field assignments are required. Interested applicants for the 2019-2020 Program should apply by Aug. 16, 2019 with 2 preferred WMAs. Please note: This is a rolling admission. Admission contingent on the DEP receiving the grant award.

Member Duties: Over the course of this 1700-hour term of service (Sept. 2019 – Jul. 2020), Members will perform the following Environmental Stewardship services for their watershed communities:

### **Educational Presentations and Trainings (Subject to Change per grant year)**

- **50 presentations**
- **2 Environmental Stewardship Trainings** that have an educational or hands on component that allows volunteers to leave able to implement a best management practice (BMP)

### **Partnership Projects**

- Minimum of **4 Partnership Projects** geared towards implementing BMPs to manage storm water runoff (ex: rain garden installations, rain barrel building workshops, native species plantings, other green based restoration techniques)
- **2 cleanups** with a focus on reducing marine debris and single-use plastics
- **1 Host Agency Project** mutually chosen to best suit the Member's interests and the Host Agency's needs

**Stream Monitoring**

- **35 biological and visual assessments** conducted to monitor local freshwater streams.
- Members will enter assessment data into DEP ArcGIS Database

**Member Development/Community Outreach**

- Attend 3 Meetings to learn about local environmental concerns, and partner with community groups to address them
- Conduct 1 Career/Profession of Interest Interview with professional of choice
- Conduct 1 Elected or Appointed Official interview with official of choice

**Program Benefits:** Childcare assistance if eligible, Education award upon successful completion of service, Health Coverage, Stipend.

**Terms:** Permits working at another job during off hours, Car required, permits attendance at school during off hours, Uniforms provided and required.

**Service Areas:** Community Outreach, Environment, Education.

**Skills:** Team Work, Environment, General Skills, Computers/Technology, Community Organization, Leadership, Writing/Editing, Teaching/Tutoring, Public Speaking.

## AmeriCorps NJ Watershed Ambassadors

### **Position Summary:**

#### **(Contingent upon receiving grant funding)**

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection seeks 20 Watershed Ambassadors to promote watershed stewardship in each of New Jersey's 20 watershed management areas through education, partnership projects, community engagement and stream assessments.

**Service Hours:** Members serve full-time (40 hours per week) from September through mid-July, to complete the required 1700 hours of service.

**Living Stipend:** The standard living allowance for all full-time AmeriCorps members during the 2019-2020 term is \$13,992 and is taxable. The program also provides mileage reimbursement.

**Housing:** The Program does not provide housing. Members are assigned to serve at a Host Agency located within reasonable commuting distance of their residence (See Host Agency Locations link on the Homepage). Non-NJ residents are encouraged to research housing options for affordability (or make arrangements to live with family) and email the program manager at [Amanda.Lotto@dep.nj.gov](mailto:Amanda.Lotto@dep.nj.gov) to make their location preference known for watershed assignment. Qualified candidates are placed at Host Agencies at a first come, first serve basis.

**Segal Education Award:** AmeriCorps members are eligible for a Segal Education Award after successful completion of their service. The award for the 2019-2020 term is \$5,920. For more information, search the AmeriCorps website at: Segal Education Award [here](#).

**Loan Forbearance:** Applied to qualified (public) loans. Interest accrued is paid for by the National Service Trust.

**Health Insurance:** The program offers a limited Health Benefit Insurance Plan, including dental and child care benefits.

**Professional Development:** Members of the NJ Watershed Ambassadors Program are supported by NJDEP staff and Host Agency staff. In addition, other non-profit organizations, and Rutgers University are resources for training. You will leave the NJWAP with strong, transferable skills in scientific data collection and analysis (ArcGIS training, macro ID and visual/biological assessment protocol); education and outreach (principles of environmental education, PROJECT WET certification); presentation and networking (conferences/workshops); and project management. You will also develop skills in relationship building and professionalism in the workplace, while developing confidence for "Life After AmeriCorps."

**Community:** The NJ Watershed Ambassadors Program provides a great opportunity for its members to grow in a supportive community of peers who are passionate about the environment. Serving a term is challenging, but the comradery developed with fellow Ambassadors as well as relationships formed within each watershed community will support and

enrich your overall experience! Becoming part of the “AmeriCorps Family” will also inspire you to become a more engaged citizen.

**Responsibilities:** Members will be responsible for working closely with communities to promote watershed stewardship. The position includes field work (conducting stream assessments); community projects (ex. cleanups, tree plantings, rain barrel workshops); and education outreach (presentations given to students, scout and community groups, etc.)

**Requirements:**

Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident of the U.S., have a bachelor's degree (any field of study), a valid driver’s license, and reliable transportation for field work and meetings. Candidates must be motivated by a genuine interest in the environmental field and a strong desire to serve.

**Orientation:**

Following DEP On-boarding Day in Trenton, NJ on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019, Ambassadors are required to attend 8 days of intensive (9 am – 9 pm) training at the beginning of the Program to prepare for their term of service (food/ lodging provided).

- 4 days at **Stokes State Forest- September 10th - 13th, 2019**
- 4 days at **Parvin State Park- September 23<sup>rd</sup> -26th, 2019**