# Maine Conservation Corps Community Tree Stewards

**Community Tree Stewards (CTS) are Maine Conservation Corps AmeriCorps members who are individually placed at a Host Site to focus on forestry projects in underserved communities.**

**Community Tree Stewards are funded by the U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program in partnership with the Maine Forest Service.**

*Organizations are encouraged to discuss placements and projects with MCC staff. PLEASE NOTE, SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION INDICATES YOU ARE PREPARED TO HOST THIS POSITION. SLOTS ARE LIMITED, ONCE WE ACCEPT SITES, WE MOVE QUICKLY TO BEGIN FILLING THE POSITIONS. IF WE ACCEPT YOUR APPLICATION, YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY INFORM US IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO CONTINUE.*

## General Guidance

* Applications must demonstrate that the CTS’s service activities will address a significant unmet forestry-related need, will directly benefit the communities served, and the project will involve the community.
* Applications must demonstrate that the CTS will develop professionally from attentive mentorship by the Host Site and through meaningful and relevant service activities.
* CTSs must be placed in a direct service position for the entire service term. The CTS’s projects may not include regular duties that support administrative tasks such as clerical work, janitorial responsibilities, and similar activities, except as they support the goals of the proposed project.
* Host Sites will not receive more than one CTS.
* There is an initial training period before the CTS will arrive for service at your Host Site, as well as additional trainings these positions will receive. We anticipate a one week initial orientation, and 14 days of additional trainings which will include chainsaw safety, WFA, member wellness and communication.
* CTS service activities must not displace employees or volunteers.
* Host Sites must have a Drug Free Workplace Policy and a Non-Discrimination Policy.
* Host Sites must be federal, municipal, state, or non-profit organizations.

## application and Selection process

**Host Site Applications Deadlines:**

**DUE: October 1, 2025**

MCC Staff will review and evaluate Host Site applications after the deadline.

Approval of CTS placements will likely include a scoring process for applications and is contingent upon the host site providing additional information, such as reviewing and editing a position description, recruitment ad, and other materials as requested.

After an application has been formally accepted, the Host Site will be required to sign a Cooperative Agreement specifying details of the service placement along with additional paperwork required by MCC.

MCC will recruit, screen, and initiate the Criminal History Check process for candidates. Host Site Supervisors will then receive the candidates’ materials, conduct their own interviews, and select a candidate. MCC will then begin the onboarding process.

All offers to CTSs are contingent upon confirmation of eligibility and successfully passing comprehensive criminal history checks including:

* State Criminal History Checks
* FBI Fingerprint Check
* National Sex Offender Public Website Check

## host site duties and responsibilities

* Host Sites must identify a Host Site Supervisor, who will attend Host Site Supervisor Training, provide regular supervision, and complete required paperwork, such as: reviewing member timesheets, evaluating the member’s performance, and a quarterly questionnaire. Both MCC and Volunteer Maine provide Host Site training, and both components are required.
* Upon receiving approval to host a CTS, the Host Site Supervisor will receive Host Site Supervisor training, materials, and ongoing support pertaining to Maine Conservation Corps and AmeriCorps policies and procedures. This will equip them to oversee the CTS project and provide a positive placement experience.
* CTSs will complete their own timesheets and quarterly reports. Timesheets must be reviewed and approved by the Host Site Supervisor weekly. Host Sites will also complete quarterly surveys, and conduct mid-term and end-of-term evaluations.
* Host Sites will provide a workstation, equipment, transportation, and personal protective equipment necessary to fulfill the duties of the position and ensure CTS safety.
* Host Site Supervisors are responsible for daily support to ensure a mutually beneficial placement for the Host Site and CTS.
* CTSs receive formal training at the beginning of their service term, including an orientation provided by MCC. The host site should be prepared to provide site-specific orientation and training.

**Please submit one copy of the completed application to:**

**MAILING ADDRESS HAND DELIVERY LOCATION**

Maine Conservation Corps Maine Conservation Corps

124 State House Station 54 Independence Drive

Augusta, Maine 04333-0124 Augusta, ME 04330

**FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION E-MAIL SUBMISSION**

Fax: (207) 287-3342 Deidrah.Stanchfield@maine.gov

Please include a signed PDF AND a Word copy for ease in transferring information to the recruitment documents and Position Description

# specific application instructions

## **Page 1**

This section collects host site contact information, provides service dates, and a statement regarding the importance of being ready to host a member upon submitting application materials.

## **Qualifications for Host Sites**

Section 1A: These CTS positions are made possible through a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) grant. To be able to receive a member, the project must benefit a disadvantaged community. One of the tools identified by the grant application to determine eligibility is the [**this**](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/policy_management/project_canopy/grants/grant_applications.html#ira) map**.** Please use this tool and describe how this community is disadvantaged. Application question 3C will further the concept of this question, asking how the community was involved in the decision to host a CTS, and how the community will be involved in the project.

Section 1B: Projects must be focused on urban and community forestry initiatives. What are the specific actions and outcomes that this position will carry out? This list is not all-inclusive, but these are areas identified within application materials as acceptable projects. Having clear outcomes and goals identified will ensure success is measurable.

Section 1C: These projects are not limited by the list in section 1B, this space is an opportunity to describe other urban and community forest projects this position would focus on. Additional thoughts may include answers to this question, “How is this project going to benefit trees in the community?”

## **Housing**

Section 2A: Many Maine Conservation Corps members come from outside of Maine. Having housing available onsite can increase the applicant pool, as it is difficult to manage housing costs on a living allowance. Please describe what you can provide if anything. Examples include a tent site, a cabin with or without running water, an efficiency apartment, a room within a dorm-like environment, or other accommodations.

Section 2B: While we encourage housing to be made available at no charge, having options with a modest rental fee is also encouraged. If you charge rent for the space, please indicate that here and the amount so we can appropriately describe this to applicants.

## **Host Site Needs and Position Description Components**

Section 3A: Briefly describe your organization and mission. Are you a State agency? Non-Profit? Municipality or other? MCC members may not provide service to for-profit entities. **3A and 3B will be utilized to create recruitment ads, this is a chance to sell your site to candidates and enable them to know how their service will promote tree health and meet community needs.**

Section 3B: Provide a brief description here that summarizes the overall concept of the position and projects the CTS will be completing. Here are some examples:

*The CTS will collaborate with the Town of XYZ to train community volunteers to promote and enhance a healthy urban forest. The CTS will develop a hands-on curriculum to address knowledge gaps identified by the community in the planning process, including:*

* *Tree identification*
* *Tree anatomy*
* *Observing tree health and wellness*
* *Watering*

*The CTS will use their forestry background and education to engage the community in learning how to recognize what trees need and deliver much-needed care and stewardship.*

Section 3C: The section should clearly identify a need or problem in the community that is related to tree wellness. Has this need been identified only by the person writing this application? Or is there a larger group identifying this as an issue? How does this problem impact the community and/or how does it affect the environment? How has the community been a part of the decision to host a CTS, and how will the community be involved in the project itself? While these examples focus on water quality, the format would be the same addressing a community forestry need:

*Mounting evidence shows that we are much closer to losing the traditional water quality of our Maine lakes than people realize. Water clarity is on a general downward trend and more and more lakes are experiencing loss of oxygen in their deepest waters. If this trend continues, more lakes will experience significant algal blooms that kill fish populations, reduce property values, and spoil outdoor recreation. Stewardship of the lakes and ponds in this watershed is critical for the protection of natural habitat and the sustainability and well-being of these communities. To protect our lakes, we must know them well and be prepared to institute in-lake and watershed-based initiatives if faced with deteriorating water quality, before it’s too late. Because lakes and ponds are such dynamic systems and they are heavily influenced by both weather and climate patterns, we need years’ worth of data to understand them. With the data collected through our water quality monitoring program, we will better be able to identify trends and at-risk areas, allowing for more holistic assessment and ultimately better protection of these natural resources. Human development is the biggest threat to water quality, and with the direct protection efforts of our YCC, we will reduce erosion and polluted that leads to water quality degradation. Articles supporting the need for this work:* [*https://umaine.edu/mitchellcenter/road-to-solutions/projects-a-z/engaging-citizen-scientists-to-evaluate-water-quality-decline/*](https://umaine.edu/mitchellcenter/road-to-solutions/projects-a-z/engaging-citizen-scientists-to-evaluate-water-quality-decline/)[*http://www.mainelakes.org/mlsc-4/averting-tipping-points/*](http://www.mainelakes.org/mlsc-4/averting-tipping-points/)

*While the City of South Portland has beautiful, well-maintained parks, we do have some deficiencies, such as lack of educational programs, nuisance waterfowl and invasive species control (to include both weeds and Winter Moth). This need was determined by talking to residents of the City, attending City meetings and through research. Link for Winter Moth issues:* [*https://www.pressherald.com/2017/11/29/south-portland-joins-the-battle-against-winter-moths-in-maine/*](https://www.pressherald.com/2017/11/29/south-portland-joins-the-battle-against-winter-moths-in-maine/)

Section 3D: MCC members enter an organization, focus on a particular goal/set of objectives, and leave the organization with a structure to carry on this focus after they leave. This may take 2-3 placements, but these positions should not be used to fill ongoing, year-to-year needs. How is this position going to help build infrastructure or systems that will be used after they are gone?

**Responses from 3E-3K will be assembled into a position description, which will be the definitive guide to what the member will be completing during their term of service. Once drafted, the position description will be sent to the Host Site for approval and then submitted to Volunteer Maine for review and approval. Volunteer Maine provides oversight to the MCC AmeriCorps grant. Several of the following sections will also be included in recruitment ads.**

Section 3E: Provide a brief summary (2-3 sentences) on the purpose of the position by outlining broad goals, objectives, and/or activities of the member and how this role connects to your organization. Think about why the position will exist.

Section 3F: Many positions do not focus on the same tasks for the entire term. This section can highlight the differences within the position by season or month and note projects that are ongoing. Examples follow:

***Timeline:*** *Spring and Fall: volunteer recruitment, site evaluations, planning, and landowner communication; July-August: project implementation. Additional projects: The CTS will support other projects, including invasive pest surveys and a street tree inventory.*

***Timeline:*** *The CTS’s first weeks will focus on orienting themselves to the current condition of trees in the east side neighborhood. This orientation is necessary for establishing a benchmark and setting up a timeframe for project completion with the project supervisor. Following is a broad timetable for the project: Mid-May: the CTS will orient themselves to the neighborhood, community volunteer hubs, and trees in the community. June: Equipment and tool training. CTS begins to research interpretative programs focused on building buy-in from volunteers and collaborates with the supervisor to identify specific goals for landmark trees. July, August: Ongoing interpretive program development/implementation; ongoing tree stewardship involving community volunteers. September: Ongoing tree projects. CTS will coordinate with the supervisor to implement a long-term plan for volunteer management. Assessment of needs of street trees and priority trees in proximity to project limits. October: Ongoing projects. Final assessment of interpretive and tree projects.*

Section 3G: The duties of a member position description should provide meaningful service activities and performance criteria that are appropriate to the skill level of members. Keep in mind that this section should thoroughly define the member service activities in specific terms including projected accomplishments and quantifiable goals where applicable. Here are some examples:

* Collaborate with and provide technical support to volunteers/local staff to accomplish monitoring objectives
* Transport field equipment, supplies, and program materials to volunteers as needed
* Conduct and support education/outreach initiatives
* Process samples in a laboratory setting following established protocols
* Maintain detailed logs of activities at each site, keeping logs up to date and providing sufficient information to ensure continuity
* Assist with projects such as invasive plant training and outreach and forest inventory plots
* Conduct rigorous data collection on recreational trail systems in Maine parks and lands, including cataloging environmental conditions and trail qualities (e.g. erosion, wet areas, grade, slope, corridor width, structures, safety issues, etc.) utilizing iPads, Survey 123, Motion X, clinometer, and other measurement tools.
* Assist with meeting reporting requirements to program partners and funding organizations
* Maintain and inventory field and laboratory equipment, supplies, and program materials
* Participate in MCC orientation, trainings, events, and conferences
* Assist with pre-approved and allowable fundraising activities
* Engage in volunteer management activities including:
	+ Recruiting volunteers
	+ Promoting and leading volunteer events
	+ Collecting and submitting Volunteer Assignment Agreements to MCC
	+ Implementing the Essential Volunteer Management Practices and Volunteer Management Action Plan
* Complete ongoing assignments and required tasks, including: job readiness training, construction of member portfolio, weekly timesheets, and quarterly reports.
* Participate in a Site Visit with MCC staff
* Maintain regular communication with MCC, including checking email no less than weekly
* Participate in mid-term and end-of-term evaluations with Host Site Supervisor
* Adhere to the MCC code of conduct, safety rules and guidelines, and drug-free workplace, and other policies outlined in MCC Handbook and Member Agreement
* Represent MCC and host site in a professional and supportive manner to the public and media

***The highlighted portions are added by MCC to every position description related to the requirements of MCC and AmeriCorps.***

Section 3H: This section should be bulleted as well. These items should describe the skills, knowledge, and abilities a member **must** possess to achieve the duties outlined above. Items will be used to outline the essential functions of the position description. Examples:

* Ability to communicate effectively electronically, telephonically, and in person
* Capability to plan and organize tasks in an effective and efficient manner
* Must possess mobility to function in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer
* Ability to serve in the field including traversing uneven terrain, operating a motor vehicle, and use of tools and equipment
* Vision to inspect assigned areas, read printed materials, and a computer screen
* Walk and/or hike 10 miles or more per day to conduct assessments, often over rugged terrain with tools and gear
* Ability to bend, stoop, and kneel. Must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects weighing up to 35 pounds
* Ability to learn new computer applications as necessary
* Ability to communicate clearly and effectively
* Demonstrates good judgment and professionalism
* Demonstrates initiative, reliability, and flexibility
* Ability to serve both independently and as part of a team
* Ability to manage time effectively and produce quality results with attention to detail
* Demonstrates a desire to learn, serve others, and make a difference

***Again, the highlighted bullets are included by MCC in the position descriptions and represent general attributes desired by all CTSs.***

Section 3I: Now, revisit the essential functions you outlined and identify any elements and/or add skills and abilities that are not crucial to performing the duties of this position (aka [marginal functions](https://askjan.org/solutions/Marginal-Functions.cfm?csSearch=2655381_1)). What skills or abilities could be accommodated? For example, is it necessary to move equipment between vehicles and sites? Must the person be able to drive? Can physical aspects be modified? Other examples that have been identified in the past include:

*Convene meetings of staff to review ecological data and discuss program needs including implementation and monitoring.*

*Presenting data results and process for collecting data to partners, stakeholders, and the public*

The above examples come from positions that were more physical in nature and didn’t require the cognitive/organizational abilities needed to accomplish the tasks listed above.

Section 3J: What are the environmental conditions the CTS will be serving in? What do their day-to-day activities will look like? Will they change throughout the term? This section will also be used in the recruitment ad, allowing prospective members to think about a “day in the life” of the position. Here are some examples:

* Service time is estimated to be approximately 2/3 field-based and 1/3 office-based, but this will vary from week to week and be somewhat weather-dependent. Schedules need to be flexible to accommodate last-minute field trips.
* Service involves indoor primarily computer-oriented tasks in cubicle space. Tasks include data entry in direct support of the project, map-making, photo management, recordkeeping (logs of the site visit details), and report writing.
* Service involves field surveys and treatments in all kinds of weather conditions including but not limited to: hot, humid, bugs, rain, cold, and long days hiking over rough terrain carrying heavy equipment.
* Service will occur primarily outdoors as soon as weather permits (approximately April) until the end of the service term. Field assessment will include exposure to cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather, road hazards, and other environmental challenges (poisonous plants, allergens, insects). While in the field, camping (in a tent), hiking, and preparing meals outdoors will be daily activities. Running water, cellular service, and internet access should not be expected. This position should be viewed not as a 9-5 job, but as an experience where long hours and extended time away from home, often in remote locations, are to be expected.
* Service involves travel to other locations within the state.

Section 3K: In addition to the basic qualifications listed below, what are the main qualifications you would like a member to possess? One year of tree inventory experience? Be a Certified Interpretive Guide? Should they have experience with specific software? What does your ideal candidate do with minimal supervision?

MCC qualifications for CTS applicants include the following:

* Forestry degree, or equivalent experience in the forestry and natural resource conservation field
* Must agree to a criminal history check
* All positions at State sites require a valid driver’s license with a good 5-year driving record
* Passion for community service and the environment
* Commitment to complete the full term of service
* Must be at least 18 years old
* Must be a US Citizen or permanent resident

## **Member Experience**

Section 4A: MCC aims to provide members with the opportunity to grow their resume, job skills, and experience. How does your position provide these opportunities, and how will you support their growth beyond everyday tasks and responsibilities?

Section 4B: Please identify the primary supervisor for this position and a secondary individual who will be available if the primary supervisor is away, on vacation, or becomes unavailable for any reason. Both will be entered into OnCorps (the timekeeping and reporting platform) to approve timesheets from the members.

Section 4C: MCC must evaluate supervisors to ensure they are qualified to oversee members. If the placement is accepted, we will also require a position description for all individuals identified as supervisors.

## **Operational Needs**

Section 5A: The box on the left identifies items and access the host site must provide to the CTS. Please be sure to check the box and acknowledge your site can provide these things. The box on the right indicates what kind of housing and transportation your site will provide. We ask these questions to gain a better understanding of what the placement will look like for the member, to answer general questions during the application process.

Section 5B: Describe other support, supplies, and/or equipment your organization will provide to use during the service term. Examples include a canoe, a full-day conference on community tree stewardship, an ID card necessary to enter facilities, waders, an ATV, other field gear, etc.

Section 5C: What type of personal gear should this member come prepared with? Do you expect that the member will have gear or equipment beyond regular work wear, sturdy boots, etc.? Are there special boots (steel toe/no toe/waders etc.) required for the tasks they will be asked to perform? Do you recommend other items, such as a large-capacity backpack, water bottles, bug net, etc.?

## **Host Site Roles and Responsibilities**

These checkboxes are indicative of the requirements of becoming a Host Site Supervisor. In return for an CTS placement, we require a commitment on the part of the host site to meet MCC and AmeriCorps expectations and remain in compliance.

Section 6A: Can you orient the member to your organization and its operations? Will you outline the tasks, provide guidance to new tasks, and clearly define expectations?

Section 6B: Supervision is required to happen on a regular basis, weekly at minimum. Meetings should address the progress on goals, outline tasks, and discuss how the member is finding fulfillment and meaning in their position.

Section 6C: Can you ensure the member is on task daily?

Section 6D: **Host Site Supervisor Training is mandatory.** A calendar invite will be sent upon acceptance of the Host Site Application, please note the expected training timeline on the application. **This requirement applies to all Host Site Supervisors, both new and returning.**

Section 6E: MCC requires quarterly reports indicating the scope of tasks that are being completed at the organization, and reports indicating that the member is finding satisfaction and meaning. Directions for these reports will be delivered during Host Site Supervisor training.

Section 6F: MCC is required to train Host Site Supervisors. When someone leaves without enough time for MCC to train the replacement, it can cause issues. Please affirm that you will notify MCC as promptly as possible in the event the Host Site Supervisor is changing.

Section 6G: Infrequently, we receive additional requests from AmeriCorps, Volunteer Maine (VM), The Corps Network (TCN), and possibly the State of Maine which may result in additional reporting requirements. We will inform the organization as soon as possible in these cases. Helping MCC meet unexpected requests is a part of being a Host Site Supervisor. Additionally, with CTS positions specifically, the USFS has additional reporting requirements.

Section 6H: At no time may a member engage in AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities during service. This policy is reviewed in detail during Host Site Supervisor training. The most up-to-date version will be provided at training and must be posted at the host site. Please review the current AmeriCorps prohibited activities policy below.

Section 6I: CTSs are MCC members, and as such there are several mandatory training days and ongoing learning objectives. These dates and activities are shared in advance. A detailed training and event schedule is provided at the Host Site Supervisor training.

## **Signatures and delivery**

Please send a PDF with signature AND a Word copy if possible to the Program Manager’s email address. The PDF with the signature is for our records, but having a Word copy is more workable for generating the follow up documents.

**DUE October 1, 2025**

**Please submit one copy of the completed project proposal to:**

**MAILING ADDRESS HAND DELIVERY LOCATION**

Maine Conservation Corps Maine Conservation Corps

124 State House Station 54 Independence Drive

Augusta, Maine 04333-0124 Augusta, ME 04330

**FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION E-MAIL SUBMISSION (Preferred)**

Fax: (207) 287-3342 Deidrah.Stanchfield@maine.gov

Please include a signed PDF AND a Word copy for ease in transferring information to the recruitment documents and Position Description

# Prohibited program activities

The MCC is an AmeriCorps program supporting the ethic of the National Service movement and the guidelines of the AmeriCorps program. While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and members may not engage in the following activities (see 45 CFR § 2520.65):

(1) Attempting to influence legislation;

(2) Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;

(3) Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;

(4) Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;

(5) Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;

(6) Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;

(7) Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;

(8) Providing a direct benefit to -

(i) A business organized for profit;

(ii) A labor union;

(iii) A partisan political organization;

(iv) A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative;

(v) An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities; and

(9) Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;

(10) Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and

(11) Any activity prohibited by applicable Executive Order/Memorandum; and,

(12) Such other activities as AmeriCorps may prohibit.

In addition to the above activities, the below activities are additionally prohibited:

**Census Activities**. AmeriCorps members and volunteers associated with AmeriCorps grants may not engage in census activities during service hours. Being a census taker during service hours is categorically prohibited. Census-related activities (e.g., promotion of the Census, education about the importance of the Census) do not align with AmeriCorps State and National objectives. What members and volunteers do on their own time is up to them, consistent with program policies about outside employment and activities.

**Election and Polling Activities**. AmeriCorps member may not provide services for election or polling locations or in support of such activities.

AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-CNCS funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing engaging in any of the above activities on their personal time.

All locations where members serve should post a list of the prohibited activities, when possible.