



YEAR-ROUND CONSERVATION CREW LEADER

Date Posted: December 8, 2023

Team: Conservation

Position Status: Full-time

Position Start: March 4

Exemption Status/Reason: Exempt

Program Overview

VYCC's Conservation Program engages young people in hands-on projects that benefit Vermont's environment and communities. The work of a Conservation Crew may include trail construction and maintenance, carpentry and construction, water quality improvement, and/or forest management. Conservation Crew Leaders are essential to the success of any Conservation Crew and their efforts have a significant impact on habitat, water quality, and outdoor recreation in Vermont. Through engaging in these projects and experiencing the mentorship of their leader, Corps Members gain life-changing experiences, new skills, the opportunity to explore careers in conservation and the trades, and the chance to build community with new people.

Job Summary

The Crew Leader role is an opportunity to grow, refine, and advance leadership, facilitation, and interpersonal skills along with a variety of conservation technical skills in a professional environment. The year-round leader position is a unique opportunity to do this work in a full-time capacity, adding new skill-building capacity during the winter months to carry forward into the following year. The general flow of the position includes field projects from late March through November with winter engaged in a range of tasks involving logistics, recruitment, and/or administration.

During the field season (late March – November), Crew Leaders will complete conservation projects working with multiple crews throughout the state of Vermont. A typical season involves Crew Leaders working in a peer crew model during the spring season then shifting to leading a young adult or youth crew during the summer and fall seasons. Crews operate in both day-based and camping models with the majority of projects requiring camping. Projects requiring camping occur between mid-April and mid-November. Staff-led trainings occur throughout the year in preparation for fieldwork.

Camping crews work and live together. Crew Leaders are responsible for projects during the workday and assisting with chores and activities at camp. A successful Crew Leader can foster an inclusive and supportive crew community, help Crew Members navigate challenges and celebrate successes, and provide opportunities for personal and professional growth while staying organized and managing their time effectively. Creating and maintaining a healthy crew culture is a top priority for Crew Leaders.

The field season has a rhythmic schedule of more intensive field time followed by scheduled breaks. While on projects with crews, leaders average 45-55 hours/week. Intensive field time is followed by scheduled break time (time not counted towards annual PTO) to help create a sustainable schedule. Project schedules are varied and Crew Leaders might operate on several different schedules throughout the field season. There is occasional weekend work during the field season.

During the winter months (December – February), Crew Leaders have the opportunity for skill development in logistical support, vehicle fleet management, recruitment and hiring, and technical skills. Crew Leaders help support Conservation Team debrief and planning sessions after the field season concludes. There are potential winter projects (typically forest management projects) for leaders to complete. VYCC has a partnership with several local workforce development organizations in the area and there are opportunities to collaborate with those organizations during the winter months.

Essential Functions

Supervision, Culture, Leadership

- Follow and uphold VYCC Principles, Practices, and Policies
 - Create an inclusive crew culture that prioritizes physical and emotional safety
- Supervise Crew Members: conduct check-ins and feedback meetings that help Crew Members set goals, assess growth, and celebrate progress
- Instruct and support Crew Members on topics including proper tool use and care, camp living, and personal care while in the field
- Engage with VYCC staff on setting personal goals and charting personal and professional progress, demonstrate a growth mindset
- Effectively work with your co-leader to balance tasks and responsibilities

Risk Assessment and Safety Management, Logistics, Administrative

- Play a lead role in risk assessment and safety management in the field
- Help provide emergency response and communication during emergencies
- Complete administrative and reporting tasks
- Manage field logistics (vehicle maintenance checks, tool maintenance, camp set-up and tear-down, camp chores, and more)

Project Management

- Facilitate daily framing and debrief sessions with your crew
- Manage project sites efficiently with high quality while prioritizing safety and member growth and learning
- Effectively communicate with VYCC staff and project partner to ensure completion of project goals

Winter Months (typically December – February)

Tasks and Responsibilities

- Logistical support (gear and tool maintenance)
- Vehicle fleet management (routine vehicle and trailer maintenance)
- Recruitment and hiring support
- Professional technical skill development
- Supporting program season debriefs and planning sessions
- Potential winter project work (typically forest management projects) with VYCC and potentially with partnering organizations

Required Qualifications

- At least 21 years of age
- Prior experience in project areas (trails, carpentry, forestry, water quality), outdoor experience (camping), and/or leadership
- Ability to perform strenuous physical work safely in all weather conditions (heat, humidity, rain, cold, snow, etc.) and motivate others to do the same
- Ability to hike in steep or uneven terrain, lift and carry heavy tools, gear or materials
- Valid driver's license with good driving record for at least 3 years
- Offsite housing required; no housing provided
- Excellent time management, organizational, and communication skills
- Experience in risk assessment and being responsible for the health and safety of others
- Experience in providing and receiving feedback, and creating a culture of learning and growth
- Wilderness First Aid and CPR Certification (VYCC provides a WFA course pre-season)
- Willingness to undergo a criminal background check
- Ability to camp with crew for most of the field season, most positions require camping during projects
- Ability to work some evenings and weekends
- Desire and motivation to build a career in conservation

Preferred Qualifications (in one or more technical areas)

- Technical Trail Experience including constructing stone staircases and retaining walls, constructing rolling contour trails with full bench construction, maintaining trails using standards in the USFS Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook, and/or backcountry or primitive camping experience
- Proficiency with basic construction and building concepts and experience with all or multiple aspects of residential construction. High level of comfort with a variety of power tools and the ability to supervise and train others. Ability to maintain a safe worksite including appropriate use of ladders and staging. Ability to read and interpret architectural drawings and plans.
- Proficiency operating a chainsaw to fell, limb, and buck in a professional setting, proficiency maintaining chainsaws in the field including chain sharpening, troubleshooting, and other regular maintenance, prior experience in implementing forestry practices, such as timber stand improvement, invasive species management, timber harvest, fuels reduction, thinning, or other related work

Equal Opportunity at VYCC

VYCC is committed to being an organization that is inclusive and welcoming for all employees. VYCC is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Compensation & Benefits:

- Weekly stipend: \$770-800, dependent on experience
 - There are two options for Crew Leaders, a full-time 12-month position or a 10-month full-time position with 2 months off retaining benefits
- Reimbursement for health insurance
- Compensated time off and sick time with supervisor approval. During peak field season there are blackout dates where we cannot accommodate time away from field responsibilities
- On-going professional development
- Member of a mission-driven and dedicated team of professionals
- Member of a dynamic organization that impacts Vermont's communities and environment

How to Apply

Please complete the [VYCC Leader Application](#) to which you'll upload a cover letter, resume, and contact information for three professional references. No calls, please.