



## *The Massachusetts Land Initiative for Tomorrow*

### **2015 Land Stewardship Coordinator Position Opening with Hilltown Land Trust**

The Massachusetts Land Initiative for Tomorrow (MassLIFT) AmeriCorps program was initiated and is managed by Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust as a collaborative effort of regional conservation organizations seeking to increase the pace of land protection across the Commonwealth. This year, 22 AmeriCorps members will serve in the MassLIFT program, helping their hosting organizations meet critical community needs for land protection, stewardship of protected lands, outreach to the broader community, and service learning opportunities to engage young people in conservation. To learn more about MassLIFT AmeriCorps visit [masslift.org](http://masslift.org).

**AmeriCorps** engages more than 75,000 men and women in intensive service each year through more than 15,000 nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country. AmeriCorps members help communities tackle pressing problems and also leverage their service by mobilizing volunteers to help address community needs for environmental stewardship, health, education, economic opportunity, disaster services, and support to veterans and military families. To learn more about AmeriCorps visit [americorps.gov](http://americorps.gov).

MassLIFT-AmeriCorps is a grant program contingent upon renewal of federal funding from the Corporation of National and Community Service (CNCS). CNCS grants to AmeriCorps programs in Massachusetts are administered by the Massachusetts Service Alliance.

**The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA, [mass-service.org](http://mass-service.org))** is a private, nonprofit organization that serves as the state commission on community service and volunteerism. MSA's mission is to catalyze the innovation and growth of service and volunteerism by creating partnerships that maximize resources, expertise, capacity, and impact. MassLIFT is one of 22 AmeriCorps programs for which MSA currently administers funding and supports program implementation.

### **AmeriCorps Member Eligibility Requirements**

This year's MassLIFT program will run from September 8, 2015 through August 5, 2016. All MassLIFT-AmeriCorps members are expected to serve full-time, commit to serve for the entire eleven month term, and complete 1,700 hours of service. The 1,700 hours includes time spent in trainings and service with the full MassLIFT team. Weekly service averages 35 hours and commonly includes some night and/or weekend activities.

Applicants must also meet the following AmeriCorps requirements:

- a US citizen, US national, or Lawful Permanent Resident Alien of the U.S.
- at least 18-years-of-age

- a minimum of a high school diploma or GED
- no more than three previous terms as an AmeriCorps member
- pass a criminal history background check
- if serving primarily with vulnerable populations such as youth and the elderly, also pass an FBI check. (This requirement applies to MassLIFT Service Learning Coordinators.)

AmeriCorps programs provide equal employment opportunities. MassLIFT will recruit and select persons in all positions to ensure a diverse and inclusive climate without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, color, political affiliation, creed, national origin, marital status, or any other status as protected by federal, state, and local laws. We encourage applications from individuals with disabilities and will provide reasonable accommodations for interviews and service upon request.

### **Member Compensation and Benefits:**

- MassLIFT-AmeriCorps members will receive a living allowance of \$12,530 over the 11 month term of service, or \$501.20 per 25 biweekly pay period.
- MassLIFT assists members in obtaining health insurance coverage through [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov). Reimbursement of costs may be available.
- Childcare assistance may be provided in cases of financial need.
- Upon successful completion of the term of service, AmeriCorps members will receive a \$5,730 education award, which can be used for future education or to pay off existing school loans. See [edaward.org](http://edaward.org) for more info and restrictions.
- Individuals in approved AmeriCorps positions are eligible for forbearance of most federally-guaranteed student loans.
- MassLIFT-AmeriCorps members gain skills in land conservation, attend a statewide conference, and participate in team trainings and other professional development opportunities.
- AmeriCorps members experience the personal rewards of national service and community engagement.

Note: MassLIFT-AmeriCorps members are responsible for their own housing and must have access to reliable transportation.

### **Positions**

The 2015 MassLIFT AmeriCorps program will support twenty-two full-time AmeriCorps members, serving in one of four positions: seven Land Stewardship Coordinators (LSC), five Regional Conservation Coordinators (RCC), six Community Engagement Coordinators (CEC), and four Service Learning Coordinators (SLC). The positions differ in their emphasis on land protection, stewardship, community outreach, and youth or adult education. All positions involve recruiting, teaching, and training community volunteers, conservation staff, and others to participate in and implement AmeriCorps members' projects.

For the 2015-2016 service year, Hilltown Land Trust will be hosting a Land Stewardship Coordinator and sharing a Community Engagement Coordinator with Kestrel Land Trust. Information about the stewardship position is detailed below. Information about MassLIFT positions hosted by other organizations is available on the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust's "Join MassLIFT" website: [masslift.org](http://masslift.org).

### **2015 Land Stewardship Coordinator Position Opening with Hilltown Land Trust**

**Hilltown Land Trust**  
**332 Bullitt Road**  
**Ashfield, MA 01330**  
**Hilltown-land-trust.org**

Hilltown Land Trust (HLT) serves thirteen rural towns in western Massachusetts (Ashfield, Chester, Chesterfield, Conway, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, Windsor and Worthington). HLT's mission is to maintain the area's working farms and forest as vital part of Hilltown life, and to protect the area's rich ecological resources, species diversity, native habitats, water quality, and unique scenic landscapes. Since our founding in 1986, HLT has acquired 31 conservation restrictions (CRs) and eight fee properties protecting 3,200 acres. HLT maintains three active hiking trails with plans to develop and additional trail in the coming year. In 2010, HLT and The Trustees of Reservations (The Trustees), one of America's oldest statewide conservation organizations, launched a new partnership that combines the efforts and resources of these two non-profit land conservation organizations in the Hilltowns. HLT and The Trustees continue to function as independent entities, but are now pooling resources in order to increase the pace of land conservation in the Hilltowns.

#### **Land Stewardship Coordinator**

MassLIFT Land Stewardship Coordinators (LSCs) help communities improve their stewardship of conservation lands by building the capacity of regional land trusts and partnered organizations to: 1) develop community outreach and volunteer programs for conservation properties; 2) improve existing conservation properties to better serve public access, recreational, or nature educational goals; and 3) improve the long term land stewardship practices of conservation organizations, volunteer land trusts, and town boards. Typical LSC activities include (1) developing baseline reports for conservation properties that document boundaries, vegetation, soils, wetlands, streams, wildlife, and teaching these skills to others (2) assessing biological threats to conservation properties from non-native invasive species and working with volunteers to address those threats; (3) conducting natural resource inventories to inform sustainable management of conservation properties; and (4) recruiting, training, and managing volunteers to perform basic stewardship responsibilities such as trail maintenance or monitoring properties protected through conservation restrictions.

MassLIFT AmeriCorps members work with their supervisors to develop and carryout six or more capacity building projects over the course of the service year. Many of these projects will involve recruiting, training, and/or managing community volunteers. Hilltown Land Trust has proposed the following projects for their Land Stewardship Coordinator:

- 1) Train new and existing volunteers in monitoring properties owned or protected by HLT.

- 2) Implement management plans for properties owned by HLT, including boundary marking, trail improvement, and new trail development.
- 3) Prepare baseline documentation reports for lands conserved by HLT.
- 4) Train HLT board and committee members in land assessment, mapping skills, and technology to help evaluate potential land conservation projects.

Development of these and other projects will occur during the first two months of service and consider the member's interests and skills.

#### Essential Qualifications:

- BA/BS in natural resources, forestry, land use planning or other related field (experience may be substituted for education.)
- Knowledge and direct experience in ARC GIS
- Ability to navigate independently in the field using map, compass, and GPS units
- Ability to read and interpret various maps such as surveys, aerial photos, and USGS topos
- Demonstrated skills in organizing and filing materials and documents
- Ability to communicate effectively and sensitively with members of the public
- Experience working with natural systems and identifying plant and wildlife species
- Comfort working independently in both an office and field setting
- Able to walk 3-4 miles a day over uneven terrain in a range of weather conditions
- Comfort using computer programs such as Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook, Powerpoint) and ability to quickly learn new programs

#### Desired Qualifications:

- Ability to write detailed technical reports
- Knowledge of the principles of natural lands management and MA forestry laws
- Experience with the flora and fauna of New England
- Experience giving presentations and/or trainings to a diverse audience
- Experience recruiting, training, and managing volunteers
- Experience developing and completing projects both independently and with others

For questions about Hilltown Land Trust's service positions, contact Sally Loomis at [sloomis@ttor.org](mailto:sloomis@ttor.org).

#### **How to Apply**

Hosting organizations, service positions, and application procedures are described in the *Join MassLIFT* section of the MassLIFT-AmeriCorps website: [masslift.org](http://masslift.org).

The member application includes a completed application form, the names of three references, a resume, and a 1- 2 page cover letter. Download the application form from the *Join MassLIFT*

website. Scan the completed form, resume, and cover letter into one PDF file and email this file to [admin@masslift.org](mailto:admin@masslift.org).

Member applications will be available for viewing by all of our host sites. Do not send applications directly to a host site.

We strongly encourage applications to be submitted before interviews begin in late May. Position offers and acceptances will begin in early June. The program aims to fill all positions by late July, but host sites may continue interviews as needed until all positions are filled.

For questions about Mass*LIFT*-AmeriCorps, contact Sean Pollock, Program Director, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, Athol, MA. w: 978-248-2043 x16; c: 413-522-3996 or email [admin@masslift.org](mailto:admin@masslift.org).