

# Frequently Asked Questions

## CONSERVATION FELLOWS



"Inspiring young people through hands-on conservation service to be leaders, stewards of the land, and engaged citizens who improve their communities."

Please contact us with any questions!

Mitch Lassa  
Program Manager—  
Individual  
Placement  
406.587.4475  
mitch@mtcorps.org

Bryan Wilson  
Director—Individual  
Placement  
406.587.4475  
bryan@mtcorps.org



The Conservation Fellows (CF) program offered through Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) provides young adults (typically recent college graduates) with a professional experience in the conservation field while helping partners meet their goals in service activities.

Conservation Fellow work supports the mission of MCC to inspire young people through hands-on conservation service to be leaders, stewards of the land, and engaged citizens who improve their communities.

As an AmeriCorps program offered through the Montana Conservation Corps, MCC staff will recruit, train and support members selected by qualified host site organizations to participate in the CF program.

### **BENEFITS**

#### **What are the benefits of being a host site?**

Host sites will gain the assistance of a highly motivated young adult to assist with project implementation and program capacity building.

#### **What are the benefits of being a Conservation Fellow?**

While in service, a member will receive student loan forbearance (for qualified loans), health insurance, a \$1,120 biweekly living stipend, eligibility for SNAP benefits and access to the Member Assistance Program. Fellows will also receive an education award of \$2,817.14 upon successful completion of the program.

### **PROGRAM LOGISTICS**

#### **Who is administering the Conservation Fellow Program?**

MCC will disburse member stipends, health insurance and benefits, conduct programmatic monitoring and evaluation, and is responsible for workers' compensation. MCC will also help identify and develop potential host sites and member projects.

#### **When will the member start and end their term of service with the host site?**

Conservation Fellows service begin in May and wrap up in October.

#### **What is the frequency and duration of mandatory trainings during a member's service?**

Each member is required to attend a two day orientation training at the start of the service term and a two day end of term training at the end of the service term.

#### **Who covers the cost of the trainings?**

Member transportation, food and lodging will be provided by MCC for mandatory trainings.

# CONSERVATION FELLOW FAQ

## PROGRAM LOGISTICS CONTINUED

### **How many hours a week should the members be working and is vacation and sick leave included in the member's term of service?**

It is preferred that Conservation Fellows are kept on a roughly 40 hour per week schedule in order to ensure the completion of their hours and avoid burnout. As long as the member is meeting their hour requirements, vacation/sick days are allowed at the discretion of the host site supervisor and the MCC staff. Hosts determine the timing of vacation/sick leave/holidays.

### **Who will recruit corps members?**

MCC will recruit interested, eligible members for host review and selection. Host sites are encouraged to recommend local individuals for consideration in the interview process.

### **Will the host site be involved in the interview process?**

Yes. Host sites are responsible to contact and interview candidates that have passed an initial screening by MCC, and make all final decisions. If requested, MCC may place members without host site review.

## REQUIREMENTS

### **How much does it cost to host a Conservation Fellow?**

Host sites are responsible for a cash cost share of \$16,000/Fellow. In addition, hosts will provide a vehicle with gas or reimburse members at the current IRS rate per mile for work-related travel. Host sites are also encouraged to add additional cost share that can be utilized to provide a housing stipend directly to the Fellow.

### **Does the entire cost share need to be paid up front?**

We prefer that cost shares are paid in full prior to the start of a member's term. However, exceptions may be made on a case by case basis. Please ask an MCC staff member for more information.

### **How much supervisory support needs to be provided to a member?**

We ask that site supervisors check in with the member regularly - daily in the beginning of the program, and at least 1-2 times weekly throughout the rest. Supervisors will also review and approve member term hours, participate in site visits and complete all necessary program reporting.

### **What equipment needs to be provided to a member?**

We ask that host sites provide a computer/internet or allocate time during business hours for the member to go to a public library, school, etc. to submit biweekly paperwork. Additionally, host sites should provide any necessary equipment needed for the member's job duties.

### **Am I required to provide housing for the member?**

It is not a requirement for a host site to provide housing. However, if you are able to provide housing for the member or an additional housing stipend, we would strongly encourage you to do so.

## OBJECTIVES

### **Can a member be used strictly for daily office tasks?**

Activities such as answering the phone, making copies, typing and filing may be necessary but should not form the focus of a corps member's work.

### **What are some examples of previous work done by Conservation Fellows?**

Our members have served on a variety of projects including ArcGIS data collection and mapping projects, river ranger patrols, wildlife inventory, data analysis, public outreach and education, trails projects, research, and invasive weeds management.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

**Bryan Wilson - Director**  
**bryan@mtcorps.org 406.587.4475**