



Host Application: 2024 The Richard G. Rockefeller Conservation Internship Program *Due: December 1, 2023*

This program was previously known as the Maine Land Conservation Internship Program, coordinated by Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Program Purpose

To engage Maine college-aged people in the land conservation world and develop their skills and knowledge of land conservation in Maine (especially stewardship of the land). The interns will also help the participating land trusts with their workload.

Program Description

This program, previously named the Maine Land Conservation Summer Internship Program, is a paid summer internship program that provides opportunities to underserved Maine college-age people pursuing undergraduate, certificate, or associate degrees. We define “underserved” as students who don’t have opportunities equivalent to those offered students at more highly resourced colleges. Eliza Stinneford is the interim program coordinator for the beginning of the 2024 program year.

MCHT works with various Maine colleges to identify and recruit interested students, and with Maine land conservation organizations who are prepared to host these students. Each student will be placed with a Maine land conservation organization for nine weeks, following one week of training at the beginning of the program, starting June 3rd. The host organizations will be prepared to meet basic requirements regarding the work and educational experience provided to the students. Throughout the nine weeks, the program coordinator will be in contact with both host and student and provide support if needed. The program is intended to be mutually beneficial; the interns receive an education in conservation work and the hosting organizations receive assistance with their stewardship work.

In 2024 we hope to place 11 interns with 11 conservation organizations. We recognize that things may be subject to change or deeply impacted by unforeseen circumstances such as a global pandemic. However, we will make every effort to find an intern for all participating host organizations. Each intern will work 40 hours per week, for 10 weeks (including the training week), earning \$14.00 per hour. **Participating organizations are required to contribute \$1,000 of the \$5,600 intern payment and provide housing if the intern does not live in the area of placement and requires it.**

2023/2024 Timeline

December 1 – Host conservation organization application forms due.

December/January – Intern program advertised through MCHT at local colleges and universities and through the Maine Land Trust Network. Host applications will be reviewed, and hosts will be selected and informed of their selection by early December.

February 16 – Student internship application deadline.

February 26 (week of) – MCHT will match applicants with host land trusts and provide hosts with several applicants to consider. Hosts will select the interns that they would like to interview and MCHT staff will connect hosts and intern applicants through e-mail. Hosting organizations set-up interviews with a list of candidates provided by MCHT.

Early to Mid-March (or as soon as possible!)– Interviews wrap up. *Note: please do not delay the interview process. There is a risk of losing applicants to other jobs the longer the process takes.*

Mid-March – Students notified of placement offers. *Please inform the program coordinator if you offer a position.*

April 1 – Student acceptances due.

June 3-6 - Training week TBD based on pandemic. The training held during the first week of the program will help develop needed skills (such as easement monitoring, baseline documentation, chainsaw safety, etc.) and provide a common base of land conservation knowledge. Trainers will be staff of MCHT and participating land trusts (if needed). Location TBD.

June 14 - Intern and host agreement forms due.

June 10 –August 9 – Nine weeks spent working with hosting organizations.

Mid July – Mid-summer intern gathering giving interns the time to reconnect and reflect on their experience so far. Location TBD, we will try and find a central location however based on host organization location, some travel will be required. Interns only.

August 9 – End of season celebration lunch, attendance required for interns and hosts. Location TBD but likely to be in Southern Maine. Feedback forms due.

Expectations of Host Land Trusts:

- Housing - Hosts are expected to provide housing for their intern if the intern does not live in the area of placement and needs housing.

- Supervision - Hosts should plan to allocate time to adequately supervise their intern. Many students will need regular guidance and oversight.
- Provide a positive, varied learning experience - The hope is that this program should be a learning experience for the interns in addition to a positive experience for the participating organizations. The intern should receive varied stewardship and land conservation experiences so they have the opportunity to learn about all facets of land conservation.
- Hiring - After student applications are due on February 16th, MCHT will send each host roughly three to four student applications (to start) and the host will be responsible for interviewing and vetting the applicants. They will decide on their top choices for interviews and notify MCHT. MCHT will connect you to those students so that you can arrange interviews. This process must take place as quickly as possible after receiving the applications in the interest of moving the program along and not losing applicants to other summer job opportunities.
- Training - Hosts will teach their intern land trust procedures, goals and mission. Hosts will help them develop new skills (examples include monitoring easements, supervising volunteers, GPS, trail maintenance and planning, etc.) and expose them to the realities of land conservation.
- Intern and Host Agreement Form - Hosts must carve out time to sit down with their student and complete the Intern and Host Agreement Form in the first week of the program. These forms are due to MCHT by June 14th.
- Mileage - Hosts should be prepared to pay their interns the current federal reimbursement rate for mileage if the intern is required to travel to do their work. This also includes mileage reimbursement for group meetings, trainings, and the end of the program celebration.
- Participation in the luncheon on the final day of the internship program on August 9th is required.
- Evaluation - host land trusts should be prepared to complete and submit feedback forms by the last day of the program, August 9th.
- **Hosting organizations are responsible for contributing \$1,000 of the \$5,600 intern payment.**

Questions? Please contact Eliza Stinneford – interns@mcht.org