



## **VT Community Forest Demonstration Project Intern**

**Summer 2020**

**Position Title:** VT Community Forest Demonstration Project Intern

**Location:** Most of the duties can be fulfilled off-site as they involve computer research, writing, and phone interviews. The intern will be able to work out of VLT's Woodstock, Brattleboro, or Richmond office periodically for a change of scenery and to use the printer. There will be some travel to visit town forests in different parts of the state to interview county foresters, local forest stewardship/conservation committee members, and other community advocates.

**Name and description of organization:** Vermont Land Trust is a statewide conservation organization with 50 staff who work to conserve productive farmland, forestland, and community lands, such as town forests. We are governed by a Board of Directors and have offices around the state.

**Description (duties and responsibilities):** Community forests are uniquely valuable for what they provide to their surrounding communities in the form of recreational opportunities, connection to the land, environmental services, biodiversity, and more. In Vermont, town forests are the most common examples of community forests, but community forests can also include accessible conserved land, owned by non-profits that engage the local communities in aspects of stewardship. While forest landowners highly value protection of nature, water quality, and wildlife, decreasing connection to the land reduces landowner exposure to forestry and familiarity with the range of strategies that can be applied to promote these values. Furthermore, lack of exposure to high-quality stewardship makes it difficult for landowners, loggers, and foresters to be discerning about what constitutes high-quality management and what does not.

Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Vermont Land Trust, and University of Vermont Extension are partnering to highlight community forests as models of stewardship, reduce barriers to implementation of sound stewardship practices on community forests, and increase the number of demonstration sites accessible to forest landowners, forest managers and surrounding communities. The intern will help to lay the groundwork for the creation of tools and guidance for communities to support responsible stewardship of community forests and an online tool to map and summarize demonstration sites across the state.

The intern will conduct online research, key informant interviews, and site visits to select community forests. Project deliverables include (as time allows):

- Case studies of public engagement around active forest management
- Demonstration site documentation checklist and toolkit
- Public engagement checklist and resources for foresters and land managers.

There will also be opportunities to tour an active timber harvest, learn about Audubon's bird habitat assessment method and VLT's ecological assessment method, and set up deer browse monitoring plots.

**Desired qualifications/skills/coursework:**

- Bachelor's degree
- Course work and strong skills in communication (writing and interviewing), GIS, forest management planning, and developing outreach and education tools
- Ability to work independently
- Good time and project management skills
- Enthusiasm for conservation and forest resource management
- Access to a car, phone, and computer

**Supervision:** Caitlin Cusack, Forester, Vermont Land Trust; manages VLT properties, stewards conservation easements, and supports conserved landowners and staff with forest management.

**Start and End Dates:** Mid-May – mid-August 2020 (exact start/end dates are negotiable).

**Total Hours:** 225 (22.5 hours/week for 10 weeks). Weekday work schedule is negotiable.

**Remuneration:** \$2,500 stipend (\$11.11/hour) with up to \$1,000 for mileage reimbursement. This compensation includes use of the intern's personal vehicle, computer, and cell phone.

**For more information or to apply please send a cover letter and resume to:** Caitlin Cusack, [caitlin@vlt.org](mailto:caitlin@vlt.org), 802-861-6504 by March 27, 2020.