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## Blue Elements Watershed Stewards

### AMERICORPS SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

**Position Title:** PFAS Program Assistant

**Field of Service:** Environmental Stewardship & Education

**Service Site:** Blue Elements & Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

**Address:** 800 Harrison Ave, Leadville CO 80461 &  
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South, Denver CO 80246

**Site Supervisor's Name:** Sheena O'Hara & Sierra Mitchell

**Service Dates:** July 15, 2024 - December 31, 2024

**Average Hours per Week:** 40

**Days/Hours of Service:** Mon-Fri, 8:00am-5:00pm flexible

**Minimum # of Hours to Complete Term:** 900 Hours minimum

**Program Overview:** Blue Elements Watershed Stewards is committed to increasing community resilience in the face of changing water conditions by supporting sustainable, equitable access to one of Colorado's most valuable natural resources. AmeriCorps members will support organizations serving the water conservation, restoration, education and monitoring sectors in the Arkansas River Valley and beyond. Members may provide water education to youth and adults, complete water restoration projects, and support water quality monitoring projects. Members will work with diverse, traditionally underrepresented community members.

**Organization Overview:** Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's (CDPHE) mission is advancing Colorado's health and protecting the places we live, learn, work and play. Their vision is for a healthy and sustainable Colorado where current and future generations thrive. Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of synthetic chemicals that have been used in consumer products and industrial processes since the 1940's. These chemicals exist throughout our environment and are associated with certain health impacts. CDPHE's PFAS program provides opportunities for sampling efforts to test groundwater and surface water, water treatment infrastructure, and emergency assistance for communities and water systems affected by these chemicals.

**Service Description:** The PFAS Program Assistant is a shared position supporting Blue Elements and CDPHE's PFAS monitoring programs. Serving with Blue Elements will support the PFAS monitoring program through programmatic development, fieldwork sampling and educational outreach. Serving with CDPHE will support private well sampling efforts, Public Water Systems communications, PFAS takeback program expansion, and educational outreach.

## **AmeriCorps Member Responsibilities:**

### **Blue Elements Specific Duties:**

- Support PFAS monitoring program. This will include programmatic development and outreach as well as data management.
- Support fieldwork sampling program, collecting and submitting samples for analysis.
- Support communicating results with sample sites.
- Support educational outreach to environmental sciences students at Colorado Mountain College, providing PFAS education and field monitoring experience opportunities.

### **CDPHE Specific Duties:**

- Support private well testing efforts- Expand PFAS private well sampling program and use reduced-cost test kits to test in other areas of the state. This involves targeted outreach, identifying community partners, evaluation/follow-up on results and supporting general administration of the program. The benefit of expanding the program is the ability to test private wells statewide at a much lower cost, targeting specific areas based on vulnerability (e.g., disproportionately impacted communities), investigation around potential PFAS sources (e.g., oil and gas fires) to better understand the landscape of PFAS contamination across Colorado, and providing general private well education throughout the state.
- Support emailing Public Water Systems with reminders on SB20-218 program reporting timelines, invoices, etc.
- Support note taking and follow up emails for Public Water Systems dealing with consumer notifications, pursuit of funding for emergency assistance, treatment discussions, etc.
- Support PFAS takeback program expansion and coordination on disposal
- Management and review of drinking water data.

### **Shared Duties for both Blue Elements & CDPHE will include:**

- Support developing webpage content about PFAS in consumer products, per the PFAS Action Plan
- Support developing content to include: FAQ for PFAS product bans, product types that contain PFAS, risk of exposure from those products (indirect vs. direct exposure), how to choose alternative products, resources for PFAS free products, and how to dispose of old products containing PFAS.

**Location and Service Conditions:** This position will be located in Leadville, CO with potential for remote service. The position will involve frequent days of service indoors, at a computer or on the phone. Service will also include days of fieldwork service outdoors, in temperatures ranging from below zero to near 100 in sometimes inclement weather conditions. The position may involve working with youth and community members. The position will involve interacting with community college students.

### **Qualifications:**

- Passionate about engaging communities in watershed stewardship
- Strong professional communication skills
- Basic computer skills necessary, Arc/GIS or mapping preferred but not required

- Data Analysis experience
- Organizational skills
- Project Planning experience helpful
- Teaching or leadership experience helpful
- Commitment to ethics of diversity, equity, and inclusion

**AmeriCorps Required Qualifications:**

- At least 18 years old at start of service
- Must be a high school graduate, GED recipient, or working toward attaining a high school diploma or GED during the term of service.
- Be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident of the United States
- Ability to pass a National Service Criminal History Check (state, FBI, and National Sex Offender Public Website checks) per 45 CFR 2540.202

**Watershed Stewards AmeriCorps Program Benefits:**

- \$8,800.00 Living allowance- AmeriCorps member(s) will receive total stipend paid bi-monthly at \$800.00 per pay period over the course of the term. Taxes are deducted and the living allowance is distributed by direct deposit to the member.
- \$3,447.50 Education Award / Tuition Assistance- AmeriCorps member(s) can receive an Education Award upon successful completion of service. This can be used to pay back student loans or further your education.
- All members receive professional development and training, plus covered travel costs for attendance at regional or state conferences.
- All members may be eligible for the Federal Assistance Program (SNAP, Medicaid, etc.)
- All members may qualify for student loan forbearance while in service.
- Alumni benefits may include priority hiring with organizations that are part of Employers of National Service and the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program to eliminate educational debt.

**Diversity and Equal Opportunity Statement:**

We believe that equity, diversity, and inclusion drive our success, and we encourage candidates from all identities, backgrounds and abilities to apply. We are committed to building inclusive, innovative work environments with employees who reflect our communities and enthusiastically serve them.

**For Further Information and to Apply:**

Email [sheena@blueelements.org](mailto:sheena@blueelements.org) for more information, or send a cover letter and resume to apply. In your cover letter, explain your relevant experience and your commitment to the mission of the Watershed Stewards program. Applicants will be reviewed as they are received.