



NRCA’S CONSERVATION TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

This handbook will provide you with information about the NRCA’s Conservation Training Partnerships program. Please refer to the NRCA website (nrca.uconn.edu) or contact the program coordinator (laura.cisneros@uconn.edu or nrca@uconn.edu) if you have any questions about the program.

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A. NRCA's Conservation Training Partnerships Experience

The Conservation Training Partnerships (CTP) program partners teens and adult community volunteers, and supports their conservation efforts by providing training during a 2-day field workshop and guidance as they conduct a local conservation project of their choosing. A team of one teen and one adult are paired prior to the workshop. During the workshop, each team learns how they can apply innovative, user-friendly mapping and web technology to address local conservation issues through hands-on fieldwork. After the workshop, the team carries out a conservation project that addresses a local conservation issue in their hometown using their new toolset. The projects are developed by the team at the workshop and CTP instructors provide support to help the team along the way. Teams showcase their work at an event in March of the following year.

CTP is a new program formed under the partnership of faculty from UConn's Department of Natural Resources & the Environment, Center for Land Use Education & Research (CLEAR), and Neag School of Education. CTP is an outgrowth of the NRCA Conservation Ambassador Program (CAP), now in its 7th year of training high school students in natural resources science and pairing them with local conservation organizations to conduct community projects. In a nutshell, CTP is designed to be a "mini-CAP," extending our reach to more students and local partners, and jump-starting additional local conservation projects.

CTP is funded by a National Science Foundation Advancing Informal STEM Learning grant (AISL-1612650). As such, there is educational research associated with CTP, conducted by our partners at the UConn Neag School of Education. Participants may be asked to provide feedback through pre- and post-surveys or through interviews during their project.

B. Workshop Locations & Dates

CTP workshops are held around the state each year to bring the NRCA experience to your backyard. See the 2018 CTP workshop locations and dates below:

NEW FAIRFIELD WORKSHOP:

Great Hollow Nature Preserve & Ecological Research Center
225 State Route 37, New Fairfield, CT 06812
July 25-26, 2018 (Wednesday & Thursday)

HARTFORD WORKSHOP:

Two Rivers Magnet Middle School
337 East River Drive, East Hartford, CT 06108
July 30-31, 2018 (Monday & Tuesday)

KENT WORKSHOP:

South Kent School
40 Bulls Bridge Road, South Kent, CT 06785
September 22-23, 2018 (Saturday & Sunday)



C. Check-In Information

Check-in will take place from 8:30-8:45 a.m. A light breakfast will be provided during check-in. ***It is very important that you arrive early, as we will begin promptly.*** If you need to make special arrangements about your arrival or departure, please call the NRCA office at 860-486-4917 as soon as possible to make us aware.

Directions will be emailed to you closer to the date of the workshop. During check-in, signs will be posted near the workshop site directing you to the check-in location.

D. Schedule

Day 1

8:30 – 9:00 AM – Check-in
 9:00 – 9:15 AM – Program Overview & Objectives
 9:15 – 10:45 AM – Icebreakers & Team Building
 10:45 – 11:00 AM – Introduction to Conservation
 11:00 – 11:15 AM – Introduction to Geospatial Technology
 11:15 – 11:35 PM – Examples of Past Team Conservation Projects
 11:35 – 11:45 AM – Break
 11:45 – 11:55 AM – Data Collection & Management
 11:55 – 12:25 PM – Smartphone App for Field Data Forms (Epicollect)
 12:25 AM – 12:35 PM – Conservation Framing of Field Activity
 12:35 – 1:15 PM – LUNCH
 1:15 – 2:15 PM – Field Activity to Apply Epicollect
 2:15 – 2:45 PM – Visualizing Form Data in Google Maps
 2:45 – 2:55 PM – Break
 2:55 – 3:25 PM – Continue Visualizing Form Data in Google Maps
 3:25 – 3:55 PM – Working Together Activity & Discussion
 3:55 – 4:30 PM – Team Project Activity

Field Activities Lab/Computer Activities Logistics/Breaks

Day 2

8:30 – 9:00 AM – Check-in
 9:00 – 9:10 AM – Introduction to Day's Activities
 9:10 – 9:40 AM – Introduction to Track Kit GPS App
 9:40 – 9:55 AM – Conservation Framing of Field Activity
 9:55 – 10:05 AM – Break
 10:05 – 11:00 AM – Field Activity to Apply Track Kit GPS
 11:00 AM – 11:35 PM – Data Download & Visualizing Data in Google Maps
 11:35 AM – 12:05 PM – Team Project Activity
 12:05 – 12:30 PM – LUNCH
 12:30 – 1:15 PM – Choose Your Own Adventure & Apply Epicollect & Track Kit!
 1:15 – 1:45 PM – Field Project to Apply Both Epicollect & Track Kit
 1:45 – 1:55 PM – Break
 1:55 – 2:35 PM – Data Download & Visualizing Data in Google Maps
 2:35 – 4:00 PM – Team Project Pitches
 4:00 – 4:30 PM – Revisit Working Together & Review Post-Workshop Support & Schedule



E. Transportation & Parking

Participants should make their own travel arrangements to and from the workshop location. If you need assistance arranging transportation, we are more than happy to help arrange a carpool. Please contact the program coordinator as soon as possible, as we will not be able to help with last minute requests.

Free parking is located right next to the buildings at each location. Specific parking instructions will be emailed to you closer to the date of the workshop.

E. List of Items to Bring

Each day will be packed with fun, hands-on activities in the field as well as in the classroom. ***You should expect to spend half of the day outdoors, including walking and hiking in nearby forest and water bodies, and half of the day in the classroom.*** Also, keep in mind the potential for variable weather. We suggest you bring the following items:

Clothing:

- Sneakers/hiking shoes that are comfortable for walking and can get dirty
- Comfortable field clothes (e.g. t-shirt, long sleeved shirt, field pants)
- Hat and/or sunglasses
- Rain coat
- Sweatshirt for air conditioned classrooms

Other Field Supplies:

- Water bottle
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray
- Backpack
- Writing utensil

Technology (*note: it is okay if you do not have these items; if you need to borrow these items, please indicate so in the Program Forms Packet*):

- Laptop
- Smartphone/mobile device (e.g. iPhone, Cellular-ready iPad, Android phone, Android tablet)

Extra Equipment (*note: we will supply the following below, but if you have your own that you'd prefer to use, feel free to bring it!*):

- Binoculars
- Rubber boots or waders
- Head lamp



F. UConn's Minor Protection Policy

The University of Connecticut is proud to serve the broader community through a wide range of educational and enriching opportunities, and is committed to promoting a welcoming and secure experience for the youth who participate in activities at UConn.

Per UConn's Minor Protection Policy, all adults participating in NRCA programs that involve youth must become Authorized Adults before working with NRCA high school students. This includes our staff as well as NRCA community partners/adult participants.

To become an Authorized Adult, adult participants will have to complete two steps:

- UConn's Minor Protection Training by viewing a 25-minute online training video. You will receive a link in an email from UConn's Minor Protection Coordinator.
- Submit forms for a background check to UConn's HR department. You will receive an email with background check forms from UConn's HR department; but you can also access the forms at http://web2.uconn.edu/hrnew/docs/cbc_packet.pdf. You can mail or fax the completed forms directly to UConn's HR department at (860) 486-6773. Please do not e-mail these forms as they contain sensitive information. Forms should be hand signed, as they cannot accept electronic signatures.

G. Discrimination Clause

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex (gender, sexual harassment), age, national origin, ethnicity, physical or mental disabilities, learning disability, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, status as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam Era, or any other group protected by civil rights laws. Participants seeking an accommodation should contact the NRCA office at 860-486-4917.

H. Program Expectations

NRCA's Conservation Training Partnerships program has capacity only for a small group of participants. Accordingly, our primary expectation is that all participants come with a positive attitude and fully engage in the entire program. Please keep in mind the following program expectations:

1. Complete the NRCA's Conservation Training Partnerships program in its entirety, which includes attending each day of the workshop and carrying out a conservation project with your assigned partner.
2. Be on time for all program activities, including (a) morning and afternoon meetings; (b) site activities; and (c) field trip departures.
3. Respect university or workshop site property and the personal property of others.
4. Treat all program staff with respect, including following directions, being on time, and paying attention during activities.
5. Restrict use of cell phones to only before or after workshop hours.





I. Conservation Projects & Post-Workshop Support

After you have completed the workshop and have returned home, the fun is just beginning; you and your partner will carry out a conservation project of your choosing in your hometown! From our experience, when energized, tech-savvy high school students team up with dedicated, knowledgeable local conservation leaders, good things happen. These local projects are a “win” in all directions – for the students, for the local conservation advocates, for the community, and for the environment.

As a team, you and your partner will apply new knowledge and tools gained during the workshop to address a local environmental issue. The project topic, duration and intensity may be tailored to your individual interests and circumstances. During the project, you will not be alone; the program coordinator and other CTP instructors will be able to assist throughout the process via in-person visits and web or email check-ins. You will learn more about the ways to connect with CTP staff during your project at the CTP workshop.

Support will also be provided through website resources. Check our website (<http://nrca.uconn.edu/students-adults/index.htm>) or NRCA Google Forum page (<https://plus.google.com/communities/109639866607399645209>) for regular updates on resources, including informational tutorial videos and webinars that the CTP staff will create and hold for CTP participants.

Participants will have the opportunity to showcase their work at the Connecticut Conference on Natural Resources or Connecticut Land Conservation Conference.

Select participant teams may be interviewed during multiple periods of the project by UConn Neag School of Education researchers to study the importance of intergenerational learning in informal STEM programs.

J. Program Coordinator Contact Information

Laura Cisneros, Ph.D.

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Phone: 860-486-4917 (office)

Natural Resource Conservation Academy Website:

www.nrca.uconn.edu

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