

## CAP Environmental Action Project

### Goals of the Environmental Action Projects

After an action-packed Conservation Ambassador Program summer field experience at UConn, students have gained new skills and knowledge used by environmental professionals. **Now it's time for each CAP student to apply those skills and become a changemaker in their community!**

The goal of the CAP environmental action project is to address a local environmental issue that is important to each student and their community. We aim to tailor each project to the CAP student's schedule and interests, as well as co-create these projects with community partners so that the project is both manageable for the CAP student and meaningful to the student and their community.

### Support During the Environmental Action Projects

Throughout the CAP project, students will not be alone! Each student receives support from one NRCA mentor (e.g., Difference Maker Mentor, Grad Mentor or NRCA faculty) and a community partner. All support personnel have already received, or will receive, [UConn's Minor Protection](#) training.

The **NRCA mentor** will **check-in with their CAP students every two weeks (bi-weekly)** from August to March, either virtually through web call or in person, depending on what the group would like to do. This is a great way to learn what other CAP students are doing for their projects as well! The NRCA mentor will also **assist the student via additional communications, one-on-one meetings or site visits to help the student with project brainstorming, connecting with community partners, project implementation, and developing a conference poster** to showcase the student's CAP project.



**Support Team:**  
Community Partner  
NRCA Mentor  
NRCA Director

*\*See [NRCA mentor](#) contact info in table at the end of this document\**

The primary role of the **community partner** is to **facilitate the student's project through guidance and access to resources** that the student may not be able to obtain on their own, such as access to public or private land, previously collected data or equipment, etc. Generally, community partners **assist with the development of the project idea, provide some guidance on methods or approaches used for the project, and review the student's conference poster** to ensure the content is accurate. The exact role varies based on their expertise, amount of time they can commit to the project and project difficulty.

### What Types of Projects Can CAP Students Undertake?

CAP projects should address local environmental issues or topics. We encourage creativity and projects that benefit community partner organizations. Visit [nrca.uconn.edu/projects](http://nrca.uconn.edu/projects) to see past projects.

### Who Manages the Project?

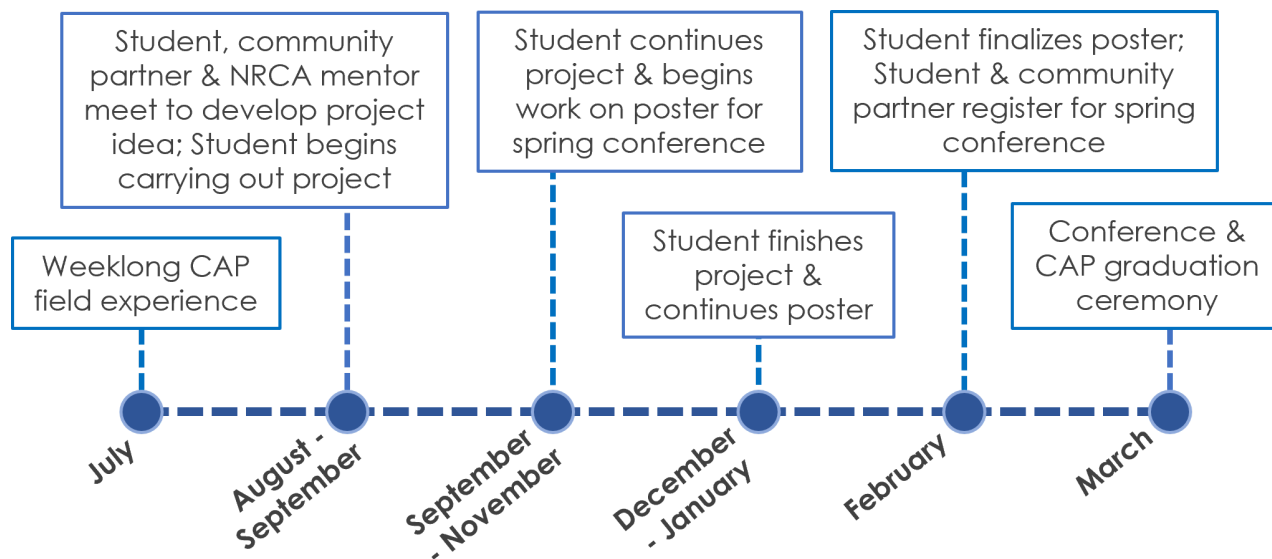
Overall, this is the student’s project, and they should be excited to take ownership of it. At the beginning, the NRCA mentor will help the student and community partner develop a project that complements the goals of the community partner organization and is manageable for the student to complete under minimal guidance. The NRCA mentor will assist significantly with the development of the conference poster; however, community partners will be asked to review content for accuracy.

### How Much Time are Students Expected to Work on Their Projects?

***There is no requirement for the amount of time students must spend on their community project.*** Students should work with their mentor and community partner to determine the time needed to successfully complete the project. The project should never feel overwhelming. We understand that schedules get busy and kindly ask students to communicate with their mentor as soon as possible if they need to scale back or temporarily pause their project.

### Timeline of CAP Environmental Action Projects

Under the guidance of the **community partner and NRCA mentor**, the student will design, develop, and implement their environmental action project between August and March of the following year. Summer and fall months are primarily spent planning, conducting field work or collecting data, whereas winter months are mostly used to complete analyses and prepare the conference poster. The program culminates when students present their work at a state-wide conference in the spring.



### Do CAP Students Need Community Partner Supervision During Their Work?

After students have learned the skills needed and can work independently, community partner supervision of the students in the field is not always necessary (although always welcomed). Nevertheless, students should be accompanied by an adult (e.g., parent or NRCA mentor) for safety. NRCA mentors will attempt to join students when needed; however, this may not always be possible.

## Have Additional Questions?

Given that community projects are tailored to individual student interests and community partner needs, there is no exact answer to all the questions above. The NRCA Director would be happy to discuss how a community project may be tailored to each students' time commitments, interests, and community needs. Please contact Dr. Laura Cisneros at [laura.cisneros@uconn.edu](mailto:laura.cisneros@uconn.edu) or 860-486-4917.

### NRCA Mentor Contact Info & NRCA Mentor-CAP Student Teams

Fairfield Team				
<b>NRCA Mentor</b>	Sydney Seldon	Difference Maker Mentor	sydney.seldon@uconn.edu	
<b>CAP Students</b>	Clementine	Janae	Sam	Ny'ela
New Haven/Fairfield Team				
<b>NRCA Mentor</b>	Chris Cane	Grad Mentor	christopher.cane@uconn.edu	
<b>CAP Students</b>	Avery	Keller	Ash	Janeylis/Jane
New Haven Team				
<b>NRCA Mentor</b>	Erin Mckeehan	Difference Maker Mentor	erin.mckeehan@uconn.edu	
<b>CAP Students</b>	Sierra	Angela	Sophia	Talia
Upper New Haven Team				
<b>NRCA Mentor</b>	Leah Gichuru	Difference Maker Mentor	leah.gichuru@uconn.edu	
<b>CAP Students</b>	Emily	Noah		
Hartford Team				
<b>NRCA Mentor</b>	Ilana Goldner	Difference Maker Mentor	ilana.goldner@uconn.edu	
<b>NRCA Co-Mentor</b>	Leah Gichuru	Difference Maker Mentor	leah.gichuru@uconn.edu	
<b>CAP Students</b>	Alia	Molly	Himani	
Upper Hartford Team				
<b>NRCA Mentor</b>	Laura Cisneros	NRCA Director	laura.cisneros@uconn.edu	
<b>CAP Students</b>	Gautham	Keila		
Tolland/Windham Team				
<b>NRCA Mentor</b>	Nicole Freidenfelds	NRCA Prgram Lead	nicole.freidenfelds@uconn.edu	
<b>CAP Students</b>	Brianna	Justice		
Windham Team				
<b>NRCA Mentor</b>	Leilani Duarte	Difference Maker Mentor	leilani.duarte@uconn.edu	
<b>CAP Students</b>	Wendy	Kayla	Sandi	Karla