

New England Plant Conservation Volunteer Corps

Dear Plant Conservationist,

Thank you for expressing interest in our Plant Conservation Volunteer (PCV) Corps. The information below should give you an idea of how our program works. If you are interested in applying, we have enclosed an application for you to fill out and send back to us. We hold annual new volunteer training sessions in March and April, which new volunteers must attend to participate. The training sessions provide an overview of the volunteer program (and how this project contributes to conservation goals), a description of how to fill out the standardized rare plant survey forms, a presentation on the plant species to be surveyed, an introduction to other NEWFS conservation initiatives, and other special topics chosen for the year.

The New England Wild Flower Society (NEWFS) administers the New England Plant Conservation Program (NEPCoP), a voluntary alliance of organizations and individuals committed to the protection of the native flora of our region. A component of NEPCoP is a group called the Plant Conservation Volunteers (PCVs). The PCVs have been active in every New England state since 2001.

PCV's further plant conservation by participating in the following activities:

- **Rare plant monitoring** – the basic intent of the PCV Corps is to gain a more current assessment of the conservation status of rarest species in each state (i.e., those on the state's threatened and endangered species list). NEWFS staff and the state botanist in each state decide which species volunteers will monitor, and the Natural Heritage Program in each state then provides data on the specific populations. PCV's conduct site visits and fill out a rare plant survey form. Where volunteers note threats or population declines, the information is used to help determine the best strategies for protection. Filling out survey forms involves recording such information as the number of plants (if found), their condition (including whether they are reproductive, what species are associated with them, and any threats observed) and giving good directions to the site. While the information is not unduly scientific or complex, accuracy and thoroughness are necessary.
- **Field and group monitoring trips** – these are led by professional botanists and land managers, providing the opportunity for PCVs to learn more about identification, ecology and conservation in the field.
- **Habitat management** – a variety of habitat management projects are offered for volunteers to help protect rare plant populations from threats including natural succession and invasive species.
- **Botanical inventory** – we employ PCV's to conduct floristic and plant community inventories for municipal and private property owners to guide appropriate land management decisions.

What kind of qualifications do we seek in volunteers? We are looking for people who have some botanical knowledge, a commitment to conservation, good observation skills, a sense of adventure, and a few spare days over the course of the field season (roughly from May through October). Volunteers will also need to arrange their own transportation.

If you are interested in participating, please submit the attached application form. If you are accepted into the program, we will send you an invitation to the spring training session. We thank you very much for your interest in the PCV Corp and we look forward to receiving your application. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to give us a call.

Sincerely,

Christopher Mattrick
Senior Conservation Programs Manager
Ext. 3203
E-mail: mattrick@newfs.org

Ailene Kane
PCV Corps Administrative Coordinator
Ext. 3204
E-mail: akane@newfs.org

Plant Conservation Volunteers Application Form

Name:

Date:

Street Address:

Town, State, Zip:

Home County:

Phone #: (h) ----- (w) -----

E-mail:

Are you a member of NEWFS? Yes No

Are you a participant in the NEWFS certificate program? Yes No

How did you hear about our volunteer program?

Why are you interested in volunteering for this program?

What applicable experience do you have (i.e. courses, field trips, field work, etc.)?

In what other volunteer activities have you been involved?

(OVER please)

In what activities are you interested? Invasive species? Rare plant monitoring? Habitat management? Botanical inventory?

What distance are you willing to travel and/or what part of the state are you interested in?

What is your time availability? (Please be as specific and realistic as you can. This can be a set number of days per month or season, or just a maximum you think you can contribute. Also, it's helpful to know if you are available weekdays, weekends, or both).

Can you give us the name, address and **phone number** of at least one personal reference?

THANK YOU. We will use this application to review your qualifications. You will be notified of the date of our next training session upon acceptance into the Plant Conservation Volunteer Corps.

Send to:

Senior Conservation Programs Manager
New England Wild Flower Society
180 Hemenway Road
Framingham, MA 01701-2699