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## **AmeriCorps Partnership with the ESLT**

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Photos Attached.**

BISHOP, CA— The Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT) is proud to announce their fourth year partnering with the Sierra Nevada Alliance AmeriCorps program. For the past three years, the ESLT along with nineteen other non-profit community groups or natural resource agencies in 11 towns working throughout the Sierra Nevada hosted AmeriCorps members. In 2009, twenty-seven AmeriCorps members volunteered for a year of national service doing work throughout the Sierra Nevada for a small monthly stipend.

In December, Serena Dennis completed her year of service with the Eastern Sierra Land Trust and graduated from the program. Serena along with the 26 other members in her graduating class served 40 hours a week for their year of service which together added up to 700 acres of high priority lands and rivers restored, ecological monitoring on 200 sites, educating over 17,400 individuals, and engaging over 2000 volunteers. "My year of AmeriCorps service gave me the skills and opportunities to advance my career and give back to my community", says Serena.

This year, Sarah Spano joins the AmeriCorps team, serving at the ESLT as the Education Coordinator. "I am thrilled to be working with people who care about preserving the region for future generations" says Sarah. "I look forward to fostering the connection between our community and our wonderful lands, which sustain the economy and inspire those who live here". Sarah has a background in social sciences and is committed to making a difference in the Eastern Sierra.

This valuable work in our community is possible through the collaboration of many different organizations. ESLT is a local non-profit organization based in Bishop that works with private landowners and the public to preserve working farms and ranches, natural areas and historical and biological resources in the Eastern Sierra. To learn more visit their website [www.easternsierralandtrust.org](http://www.easternsierralandtrust.org), or call 760-873-4554. The Sierra Nevada Alliance is a non-profit organization that works to protect and restore Sierra lands, water, wildlife and rural communities. AmeriCorps is a part of the Corporation for National and Community Service, whose mission is to build lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. For more information, visit <http://www.nationalservice.gov>.

"The AmeriCorps program is an excellent opportunity for both the member and the host organization. It not only gets important projects done in our community, but it provides the

member an amazing experience they can build on for the rest of their life.” said Mary McGurke, Development and Outreach Director at the Eastern Sierra Land Trust. “Our member’s service working with volunteers conducting restoration, coordinating community events and providing education programs would not have happened without their commitment and dedication to service. We are so grateful to be a part of this important program.”

Photo: Serena Dennis, former Education and Outreach Coordinator, Conducting monitoring on a conservation easement.

Photo: Sarah Spano, current Education Coordinator