



GREENWICH LAND TRUST



“When I was reading through the Land Trust preserve management plans and saw that every property was to be protected *forever*, the land trust concept really hit home for me.”

Ben Hein, 2017 EcoPath Intern

“For a lot of people, it is more important to exploit a piece of land than preserve it. My mission will be to show the upside of protecting the environment to companies or people that might not see it. I hope to learn about incentives and tools that I could use to advocate for environmental policies that can benefit all parties,” says Ben Hein.

Ben is the Greenwich Land Trust’s first EcoPath Intern, a position created to offer deeper opportunities to former teen Youth Corps employees. As an Environmental and Sustainability Sciences major at Cornell’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, he aims to pursue a career in environmental policy law.

This summer, his work includes stewardship projects, helping supervise Youth Corps activities, and collecting and entering data into the American Chestnut Foundation database.

“I helped plant the trees in the Land Trust’s American Chestnut Sanctuary. I think it would be pretty cool to bring my family there in 10 or even 20 years and show them what I did as teenager and how the trees have grown,” says Ben. “Both the vegetable garden and Chestnut Sanctuary serve a great purpose. The garden serves an immediate need and the chestnuts will have great impact in the future.”

Greenwich Land Trust has a long tradition of offering summer internships. College and high school students have participated in projects ranging from documenting local land conservation history and calculating the carbon-sequestering value of forested preserves to mapping the invasive species presence and analyzing data collected from its American Chestnut Sanctuary. While many young volunteers participate in all aspects of GLT activities, its EcoPath Interns work directly with senior staff and take on more complex conservation projects.

“I’ve lived in Greenwich for about eight years. I really enjoy it and would love to raise a family here because it is one of the best towns to do that. Knowing that land that is beautiful and protected will still be here when I am older is a really exciting idea,” says Ben.

“We are so thankful to grow long-term relationships with many of our young volunteers, interns, and Youth Corps teens. Our sustainability as an organization is dependent on the next generation of conservationists. We are excited to watch previous interns advancing into environmental related majors and careers. They will be well equipped to face the conservation challenges of the future,” says Steve Conaway, Greenwich Land Trust’s Conservation and Outreach Director.

To learn more about the EcoPath or Youth Corps programs, contact Steve Conaway at steve@gltrust.org.