



Partnership Spotlight: SEEDS

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“We believe that maintaining access to public lands through trail maintenance and development is critical to supporting individual and community health,” wrote Jennifer Flynn, EcoCorps Program Director with SEEDS Ecology & Education Centers.

SEEDS work on the North Country Trail in Michigan has been paired with other public lands projects. For example, according to Jennifer, “In 2019 an EcoCorps crew from Saginaw traveled to work with the Manistee National Forest staff to construct a boardwalk outside of White Cloud. We worked in 2020 to complete that project.”

This year, SEEDS worked with the NCTA [Spirit of the Woods Chapter](#) to improve Trail in both the Manistee National Forest and on private land. Jennifer described that as a unique opportunity for their crews to understand federal-level planning (U.S. Forest Service), mapping tools and systems, and “the unique techniques to support the trail maintenance in that area as it is a popular mountain biking section, as well as heavily traveled by foot.” This work will continue into next spring. SEEDS also had a crew work on the NCT in the UP, from [the mouth of the Two Hearted River to Muskallonge Lake](#).

“Our work on the North Country Trail and collaboration with the NCTA has significant meaning for our EcoCorps staff who complete the work and the community-based volunteer groups receiving the additional support,” wrote Jennifer. “The work supports a national treasure that can be appreciated from so many local communities and so many trail and outdoor enthusiasts who visit from afar. We’ve found, particularly this year, that trail use is high and the demand on volunteer groups was also high. We were happy to be able to support their efforts. The more our staff are able to experience these treasures and meet the committed local volunteers, the more we see care for public lands exponentiating!”

We deeply thank all SEEDS staff and volunteers for their partnership and support of the Trail and the mission of the NCTA. We also thank the [National Forest Foundation](#) and [National Park Foundation](#), as EcoCorps work and collaboration with the NCTA is currently funded through them.