



WCCN Architect

LOCATION: Eastern Washington – 60% Spokane, 40% field-based
FUNDED BY: Washington Climate Corps Network*
MENTORSHIP: Two Certified Energy Managers (CEM)
REPORTS TO: Director of Energy Programs
STIPEND: \$4700/mo (W-2 employee, no benefits)
DURATION: November 1, 2026 -to- June 30, 2027
POSITIONS: Two (2)

POSITION SUMMARY

Zero Emissions Northwest (ZEN) is seeking a **Washington Climate Corps Network** (WCCN) Architect to focus on rural energy resiliency expansion, extending ZEN's 'boots on the ground' in rural communities. This immersive service learning opportunity is a field-based paid internship. Architects will spend time learning and being mentored on how to build trust with producers, landowners, and local stakeholders while developing specialized expertise in rural energy systems. This role bridges clean energy skepticism, hesitation, and adoption using technical expertise and empathetic relationship building. Architects will develop a rare dual-competency skillset combining technical energy expertise with rural community fluency through immersive learning opportunities. Architects play a transformative role by being actively involved in designing more climate-resilient communities, career pathways, and connections for a sustainable career in the green economies of the future, building the linkages that drive climate action and professional growth. The work is rigorous, the distances are long, and the conversations are complex — but the impact is vast and meaningful.

"Architects build a resilient future for their community, career, and network of fellow climate leaders."

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES & LEARNING AREAS

Energy Assessments & Infrastructure

- Shadow and assist on-site energy audits across farms, small businesses, school districts, and municipalities. Gain specialized knowledge in irrigation VFDs, localized hydropower, and energy-intensive agricultural operations. Progress from supervised observation to managing energy audits under CEM guidance.

Financial & Transition Modeling

- Build financial models and EV Fleet Transition Analyses that give businesses and producers a clear ROI for reducing diesel consumption and adopting clean technology.

Community Education & Outreach

- Engage in renewable energy "myth-busting" through public speaking, small group sessions, and one-on-one conversations. Provide a consistent, visible presence to build trust-based partnerships and help communities understand their full range of clean energy options.

Grant Writing & Project Development

- Assist rural entities in accessing state and federal funding for energy efficiency upgrades including but not limited to insulation, heat pumps, VFDs, solar installations, and geothermal.

MENTORSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Certified Energy Managers will lead technical learning sessions and provide hands-on training in energy audits, efficiency analysis, and rural energy systems. This, accompanied by field immersion, will provide a dual-lens education: technical energy science paired with the sociology of rural trust-building. Architects will also engage in sponsored coursework in energy auditing and business sustainability. Architects will be fully integrated into ZEN's professional networks and accompany staff to all events and programs with partners including but not limited to Gonzaga Institute for Climate, Water, and the Environment, WSU Energy Program, AgClimate Network, Spark Northwest, Clean Energy Transition Institute, Greater Spokane Inc., Avista Foundation, Partners for Rural Washington, local Conservation Districts, and more. Ride-alongs and shadowing with partners and mentors will deepen comprehension about where energy meets rural. Toward the end of this service learning internship, Architects will be expected to

lead sections of audits and financial modeling under CEM supervision; lead, build and manage regional outreach independently and; manage a portfolio of energy projects and self sustaining project clusters.

THE RESULT

Architects emerge prepared for permanent roles in state agencies, utility companies, non-profits, or energy consulting, possessing both the technical know-how and the community trust to drive Washington's clean energy future. Key skills garnered include: **a technical foundation** in energy audits, financial modeling, and EV fleet analysis under CEM supervision; **sector-specific expertise** at the pioneering nexus of energy and agriculture; **a professional network** spanning WSU, Avista Foundation, PRWA, conservation districts, and more; **leadership experience** managing complex projects and building trust in skeptical communities; and last but not least, **rural fluency**: the rare ability to talk kilowatts and commodity prices in the same breath.

**"We meet people
where they are,
not where a policy
says they should be."**

QUALIFICATIONS

Preferred

- Associates or Bachelor's degree in a STEM or a related field with cross-sector interest in energy and agriculture
- Strong organizational and project management skills
- Comfortable public speaking
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Candidates from rural backgrounds

Required

- Coursework or Certificate(s) in STEM, Natural Resource Management, Agriculture, or related field
- General understanding of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies
- Comfort with field work: long drives, farm visits, and community meetings
- Ability to navigate the urban-rural divide with empathy, earning trust from skeptical communities
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Funding criteria require that Architects be: (1) between 17 – 31 years old; **OR** (2) a U.S. military veteran; **OR** (3) individuals with physical or sensory disabilities; **OR** (4) from a vulnerable population in an overburdened community; priority will be given to those from overburdened communities, including young adults, veterans, and other vulnerable populations

ABOUT US

ZEN is more than a technical assistance provider; we are a bridge. We recognize that for many in rural corridors climate policy can often feel like something happening to them, rather than with them. Our organization was founded on the belief that for a zero-emissions future to be successful, it must rely on practical energy solutions that work for real people in real ways – especially the people who feed our state. ZEN brings practical, affordable energy solutions directly to Eastern Washington's rural communities through community solar, energy consulting, and practical EV fleet transition solutions. We help agricultural producers and small businesses turn energy burdens into assets for resiliency, protecting multi-generational farmers and their communities. Our work aligns with Washington's Climate Commitment Act (HB 1176) and the WCCN mission of building climate-resilient communities. energynerdalert.com

TO APPLY

Email Lizzy Beachland at Lizzy.Beachland@zeroemissionsnorthwest.com

A complete application will include:

- 1) **Cover Letter:** Express your interest in this position, why you want it, and why you are the best fit for this role. Note any connection to rural communities. Cover letter may be an attachment or pasted into the body of the email. **Applications without a cover letter will not be considered.**
- 2) **2 Recent References:** Name, Relationship to you, and Phone Number, Email optional. If you are a qualified applicant, your references may receive a call before you. References may be added to the body of the email, to the cover letter, or at the end of your CV/Resume.
- 3) **CV or Resume** highlighting relevant courses, work, and/or volunteer experience.

**Final employment offer contingent on contract finalization with Washington Climate Corps Network*