Siri Vlasic – BLF Reflection Piece

This past summer I was awarded the Bill Levitt Fellowship, which provided an opportunity to combine my love for Alta with my passion for environmental stewardship. This was a meaningful experience, reinforcing my love for this wonderful place, but also helping me to understand  the fragile balance that exists in special places like Alta. I worked with the Alta Environmental Center and Tracy Aviary in conducting vegetation surveys, learned about conservation easements by assisting Jen in the annual inspections, and engaged with the public as one of the Alta Summer Hosts, in addition to discovering the evil of invasive weeds and the challenge of managing them after spending numerous hours of surveying and pulling weeds. I also represented Friends of Alta at several events, including the Wasatch Wildflower Festival, the Town of Alta Restoration Day and the Memorial Tree Planting Event.

Not only did this fellowship provide an opportunity to learn more about the Alta environment and ongoing projects, it also helped clarify the direction I would like to head and how I want to expand my environmental science interests. It is reassuring to know that there are so many passionate organizations and individuals working to preserve the area, and I feel lucky to have been provided the opportunity to work alongside them, if only for a summer.