

VOLUNTEER MANUAL

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources



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Dear Natural Resources Volunteer,

Welcome!

On behalf of the Department of Natural Resources, thank you for your interest and desire to contribute your time, energy, enthusiasm, and talents for the benefit of outdoor recreation, natural resource management, and the citizens of Larimer County.

We recognize that your time is important and worthwhile. With over a million visitors to our properties each year, we could not do what we do without the help of volunteers. Our goal is to provide you with an environment where you can find volunteer work that is rewarding and meaningful to you, build relationships with staff and other volunteers, and gain knowledge about natural resource and outdoor recreation management.

This volunteer manual is designed to introduce you to our agency and to explain our policies and procedures. We suggest that you use this manual as you begin your volunteer service and continue to refer to it thereafter. Please note that the contents of this manual will be updated and revisited periodically. The most up-to-date version will be maintained at larimer.org/nrvolunteer.

Sincerely,

Angela Borland & Julie Enderby
Education and Volunteer Program Team

SECTION I: ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The Department of Natural Resources manages Larimer County's great outdoor places, including magnificent open spaces and water-based recreation areas, and fosters responsible land stewardship through weed management and healthy forest practices.

DEPARTMENT MISSION

To establish, protect and manage significant regional parks and open lands providing quality outdoor recreational opportunities and stewardship of natural resource values. We are committed to fostering a sense of community and appreciation for the natural and agricultural heritage of Larimer County for present and future generations.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM VISION STATEMENT

To create and sustain meaningful volunteer opportunities in order to meet the needs of the Department of Natural Resources, its visitors, and the resources it protects.

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

The Department of Natural Resources was established in 1954. It provides key services to Larimer County citizens through three major programs. Due to the wide range of volunteer and educational opportunities offered by the Department, our volunteers may become involved with and contribute towards the great work being accomplished within all three programs:

Land Stewardship Program: Assists private landowners and agencies with vegetation management including weed control, native plant restoration, forestry practices, and enforcing the state noxious weed and pest control acts. Weed management is funded by a mill levy and forestry is funded through county general funds. A seven citizen Land Stewardship Board advises these programs.

Parks Program: Manages the County's four reservoir parks for recreational activities such as camping, boating, fishing, swimming, and picnicking. These reservoir parks are on Bureau of Reclamation owned property and are jointly operated by the Bureau of Reclamation and the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District as part of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project. The Colorado-Big Thompson Project diverts water from the west slope to the east slope for drinking water, irrigation, and hydropower. The County's management of recreation at these parks is funded primarily through park entrance fees, Colorado Lottery dollars, and concessionaire proceeds. The voluntary citizen Parks Advisory Board advises on the management of the parks.

Open Lands Program: Acquires and manages open space properties and holds conservation easements. The lands managed by this program are stewarded for their natural and agricultural resource values. Open spaces offer recreation opportunities such as hiking, biking and equestrian trails. This program is funded entirely through the ¼-cent Help Preserve Open Spaces sales and use tax, which was initiated in 1995 and has since been extended through 2043 with the overwhelming

support of Larimer County voters. The Open Lands Advisory Board advises the expenditure of open space tax dollars and is comprised of citizens that represent a geographic balance in the county.

LAND CONSERVATION

Larimer County has some of the most intact and diverse landscapes within the Front Range of Colorado, including native grasslands, the foothills, farms and ranches, reservoirs and rivers, and prominent geologic landmarks. The Department of Natural Resources works to conserve significant open space, natural areas and wildlife habitat and develop parks and trails for present and future generations. These open lands provide opportunities for leisure, human renewal, and protection of our natural and cultural resources. Since the initial passage of the Help Preserve Open Spaces tax in 1995, Larimer County has successfully conserved over 55,000 acres of land throughout the county.

MANAGED PUBLIC PROPERTIES

Hermit Park Open Space: The 1,362-acre open space offers camping, hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking activities near Estes Park. Ponderosa pine forests and wetland meadows characterize this beautiful property and its abundant habitat for an impressive variety of mountain wildlife.

Horsetooth Reservoir & Horsetooth Mountain Open Space: The popular 6.5-mile reservoir offers fishing, boating, camping, picnicking, swimming, scuba diving, and rock climbing. Adjacent Horsetooth Mountain Open Space offers 29 miles of hiking, biking and horseback riding trails, and tremendous Front Range views. The outstanding Horsetooth Rock is a familiar local landmark.

Red Mountain Open Space: This 15,780-acre open space, with its deep crimson rocks and rolling grasslands, offers over 15 miles of multi-use trails and a stunning ecologically and culturally diverse landscape.

Eagle's Nest Open Space: This 755-acre open space offers river access for anglers and almost 5 miles of trails for hikers and equestrians. Mountain mahogany foothills interspersed with rabbitbrush and ponderosa pine provide diverse habitat for wildlife. The local landmark Eagle's Nest Rock has been home to nesting golden eagles for over a hundred years.

Devil's Backbone Open Space: The Devil's Backbone geologic formation is one of the most impressive geologic landmarks in Larimer County, as well as an important cultural feature. This 2,198-acre open space includes 12 miles of trails for hiking, running, horseback riding, mountain biking, and wildlife viewing.

Pinewood Reservoir & Ramsay-Shockey: The idyllic 100-acre Pinewood Reservoir offers non-motorized boating, fishing, and camping opportunities. It is located adjacent to the 177-acre Ramsay-Shockey Open Space, which offers important habitat for wildlife and a 4-mile hiking and mountain biking trail with extraordinary vistas of the surrounding valley.

Carter Lake: This beautiful 3-mile reservoir is a great place for fishing, sailing, water sports, camping, picnicking, swimming, scuba diving, and rock climbing, and is surrounded by 1,000 acres of public lands.

Lions Open Space & Bingham Hill: Lions Open Space is a small property located on the banks of the Cache La Poudre River, home to a portion of the paved Poudre River Trail. The space offers picnicking, fishing, hiking, and biking. Nearby Bingham Hill is a small park offering picnic tables and a breathtaking view of Pleasant Valley and the town of Bellvue.

River Bluffs Open Space: This small riparian open space provides habitat for waterfowl and wading birds, as well as raptors who call the space home. The property incorporates a portion of the paved Poudre River Trail and offers picnic tables and river access.

Big Thompson Parks: The County manages four small parcels – Glade, Narrows, Forks, and Sleepy Hollow Parks – in the stunning Big Thompson canyon. Each park offers public river access for fishing and picnicking and is home to a wide array of flora and fauna.

Flatiron Reservoir: This quiet 47-acre reservoir is a great spot for fishing, picnicking, and family camping. Boating and swimming are not allowed.

[Download a map of our properties](http://larimer.org/naturalresources/parks) at larimer.org/naturalresources/parks

HELPFUL DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Front Desk, <i>Main Administrative Office</i>	(970) 619-4570
Front Desk, <i>Horsetooth Area Information Center</i>	(970) 498-5610
Front Desk, <i>Hermit Park Open Space</i>	(970) 577-2090
Angela Borland, <i>Education and Volunteer Supervisor</i>	(970) 619-4489
Julie Enderby, <i>Education and Volunteer Specialist</i>	(970) 619-4552
Korrie Johnston, <i>Community Relations & Public Information</i>	(970) 619-4561

Note: Any front desk office can get in touch with a ranger or field staff by radio.

SECTION II: JOINING OUR TEAM

We are thrilled and grateful for your interest in joining our volunteer team! The Department of Natural Resources engages over 150 active volunteers each year, in addition to working with corporate groups, scout troops, and community partners to accomplish incredible and meaningful volunteer achievements. It is our goal to offer all volunteers a meaningful and rewarding experience every time they volunteer with us.

BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

Becoming a volunteer with the Department of Natural Resources is easy!

1. Visit larimer.org/nrvolunteer
2. Complete our online volunteer application
3. Our staff will get in touch with you to discuss your specific interests, current openings, and the next steps to become involved in our various volunteer programs.

We invite all potential volunteers to attend one of our New Volunteer Orientation sessions, held periodically throughout the year. New Volunteer Orientation is not required for all positions, but it's a great way to learn more about our department, meet our staff, hear about all the ways volunteers can get involved, and talk with us in person about what might be the best fit for you. Visit offerol.arimer.org to find out when the next session is taking place.

Certain volunteer positions may require an interview process, reference checks, background checks, minimum service requirements, and mandatory training sessions. Any such requirements and expectations will be communicated in advance before a volunteer is offered a position. The Larimer County Natural Resources Volunteer Program is not obligated to provide a placement, nor is a volunteer obligated to accept a position offered. Opportunities for volunteers are provided without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or age, provided minimum age requirements are met. Larimer County is committed to equality of opportunity.

Larimer County staff are welcome to serve as volunteers while recognizing that their job responsibilities must take priority over any volunteer duties. Staff must receive the approval of their supervisor prior to volunteering and cannot volunteer in capacities that duplicate their regular job responsibilities.

OFFERO

Offero is our comprehensive database, calendar, and communication system, which can be accessed at offerol.arimer.org. It is a very useful tool for volunteers to:

- Manage your profile – update your interests, contact information, emergency contacts, email notification settings*, and more. (**Active volunteers must keep "Volunteer Communication" & "General Communication" emails types active in their profile.*)

- View and sign up for upcoming volunteer opportunities as well as trainings, hikes, events, and more. Your calendar will display special opportunities available just for volunteers, as well as public programs which volunteers are always welcome to join.
- Enjoy direct access to your tracked volunteer hours and activities.
- Schedule your own volunteer shifts and submit online reports (certain positions only).

If you need assistance using Offero please refer to the [Volunteer Help Manual](#), which you can find at offerolarimer.org/help, or contact our Volunteer Program staff.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM STAFF

The Natural Resource's Volunteer Program is combined with the Education Program, and is part of the Land Conservation, Planning, and Resource Management Division. The Education and Volunteer Program staff are responsible for the administration of the volunteer program and all educational programs offered by the Department of Natural Resources.

It is the responsibility of the Volunteer Program to:

- Support and engage volunteers and community groups
- Enhance staff capacity across Natural Resources districts and programs
- Recognize and acknowledge volunteers' skills, talents, and contributions
- Develop and maintain processes for volunteers to provide evaluation and feedback
- Recruit, interview, and place volunteers in positions appropriate to their skills and interests
- Provide volunteer orientations, trainings, and ongoing learning opportunities
- Maintain records for all active volunteers
- Coordinate requests from Natural Resources staff for volunteer assistance on specific projects
- Issue volunteer uniforms and name badges as required
- Provide ongoing education and assistance to staff volunteer supervisors
- Provide continuous improvement of the volunteer program

Staff Contact Information

Angela Borland, *Education and Volunteer Program Supervisor*
aborland@larimer.org | (970) 619-4489

Julie Enderby, *Education and Volunteer Program Specialist*
jenderby@larimer.org | (970) 619-4552

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

There are a wide range of opportunities to volunteer with us. The opportunities outlined below describe positions for which we regularly recruit. Please contact our Volunteer Program staff to learn more about any of our volunteer positions and to receive a detailed position description outlining qualifications and requirements for each role.

Project Team

Help in a group setting at various restoration projects, such as plantings, trail work, invasive plant removal, litter clean-ups, and more. Opportunities are available year-round on both weekends and weekdays.

Litter Cleanup Team

Help keep our parks and open spaces beautiful. Become a steward of your public lands by picking up trash. Litter clean-up volunteers work independently after initially coordinating best practices with staff. It's a great way to get outside, get to know your public lands, and give back.

Naturalists

Guide hikes, teach school groups, lead campground programs and more. If you love inspiring curiosity of the natural world in people of all ages, this is a great way to share your passion. No previous experience is necessary, but a desire to learn is a must!

Naturalist Assistants

Lend a hand during our educational offerings, such as guided hikes, evening campground programs, outreach tables, and school field trips. Help staff or volunteer Naturalists lead programs while learning about a variety of topics and interacting with people of all ages.

Volunteer Ranger Assistants

Work with Larimer County Rangers to promote safety and awareness at our parks and open spaces during site visits that you can schedule on your own time. This program is a collaboration between Larimer County and the City of Fort Collins.

Boat Ramp Volunteers

Help ensure that our beautiful reservoirs operate efficiently and that the community has a great recreation experience by aiding with boat ramp traffic and dock area parking during summer weekend days at Carter Lake or Horsetooth Reservoir.

Photographer

Help us capture the beautiful scenery of Larimer County parks and open spaces and enjoy the opportunity to be featured on our social media, publications, reports, and more.

Boat Patrol Assistant

Help our Larimer County Boat Rangers during busy summer weekends. This position involves working directly with rangers on their boats and requires volunteers who have significant boating experience.

Campground Hosts

Enjoy the unique opportunity to live and volunteer at one of our beautiful campgrounds. Positions are seasonally available at Carter Lake, Horsetooth Reservoir, Flatiron Reservoir, Pinewood Reservoir, and Hermit Park Open Space.

Internships

Spend time at our beautiful parks and open spaces while learning about Colorado's natural environment and local land protection efforts. We offer a well-rounded experience designed to prepare students for a variety of natural resource careers.

Other Opportunities

We are always open to discussing additional ways for volunteers to become engaged and contribute their specialized skills and expertise.

VOLUNTEER BENEFITS

Why volunteer? There are many reasons why volunteers want to become involved and spend their time and talents with us. We appreciate our volunteers and are always striving to acknowledge and reward their contributions. Natural Resources volunteers can enjoy the following benefits:

Helping our Mission: Volunteers help us to protect and manage our lands, improve recreational experiences for the community, and are leaders in promoting responsible stewardship of our natural resources. Together with our volunteer base, we look forward to a future generation that appreciates and protects the natural and agricultural heritage of Larimer County.

Connecting to Nature: Whether you are out with a group or volunteering in an independent role, our stunning properties are a fine backdrop for a day of volunteering. Enjoy pristine forests, breathtaking vistas, rolling grasslands, impressive geologic formations, and picturesque reservoirs as you volunteer at our properties across Larimer County.

Day-Use Access: After a day of volunteer service at one of our fee sites, we often invite our volunteers to enjoy the site at their leisure with a day-use parking pass. Picnic, hike, swim, or ride as you explore a new or familiar place. Note that there are high-visitation times of year where this option may not be feasible.

Educational Opportunities: From position-specific trainings that will instill practical knowledge to optional talks, hikes, tours, and more, we aim to provide continual opportunities on a wide range of topics to encourage our volunteers to expand their knowledge and skills in a way that will benefit them within a volunteer capacity and beyond.

Social and Recognition Events: We host periodic gatherings and events to appreciate our volunteers, recognize accomplishments, and to offer our volunteers a fun and social atmosphere to get to know staff and each other.

S-Permit: If a volunteer has served 20 or more volunteer hours within a calendar year, they will receive a special parking permit (the "S-Permit") to be used at Larimer County fee sites throughout the following calendar year. This permit is valid for personal recreational use during low-visitation times, including summer weekdays and daily October through April.

RISKS AND LIABILITY

It is important for our volunteers to understand that there can be potential risks associated with volunteering at the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources. Please contact Volunteer Program staff if you have any questions or concerns related to your safety and liability while serving as a volunteer.

Safety as a Priority

Maintaining safe working environments is critically important, and this responsibility falls on both Larimer County staff and volunteers.

- Staff is responsible for communicating safety considerations related to specific assignments and demonstrating correct methods for conducting physical tasks such as using tools or removing weeds.
- Volunteers are responsible for being aware of the general common risks of working outdoors outlined within this manual, maintaining awareness of their surroundings as they volunteer, and asking for clarification and help if it is needed.

If you encounter a situation that you feel is not safe, remove yourself from the situation and communicate your concerns to your assigned staff supervisor or Volunteer Program staff as soon as possible. Volunteers are never expected to perform duties which they are not comfortable doing, regardless of the reason.

If an incident occurs while you are volunteering, this should be reported to your assigned staff supervisor or Volunteer Program staff who will work with you to fill out any necessary forms.

Wildlife Encounters

Never approach, handle, or feed wild animals. If you encounter any kind of dangerous wild animals while you are volunteering, report the incident to the staff supervisor as soon as you are a safe distance from immediate danger and have addressed any urgent medical needs. Types of potentially dangerous wildlife you may encounter include but are not limited to:

- **Prairie Rattlesnakes:** If you see a rattlesnake, stay calm and give it plenty of space to escape. Avoid a rattlesnake bite by wearing high boots and leather gloves, staying on trail when possible, and always looking first before you reach or step into brush or rock piles.
- **Spiders and Ticks:** Two species of venomous spiders can be found in Colorado, the Black Widow and Brown Recluse. Familiarize yourself with how to identify these species, and avoid bites by staying on trail, wearing work gloves, and being alert while handling brush and other materials. Ticks are also found along the foothills and are best avoided by wearing high boots and layers of clothing to cover exposed skin.
- **Animals with Rabies:** Be aware of signs of rabies such as foaming at the mouth, snarling, snapping, and daytime activity for nocturnal animals (such as skunks, foxes, or bats). If you are bitten by a small wild animal that you suspect may be infected with rabies, it would be ideal to trap or kill the animal if possible so the body can be examined.
- **Mountain Lions and Bears:** These animals will rarely attack a human; however, if you see a mountain lion or bear on the trail, it is best to remain calm and still, allowing the animal plenty of space to escape. If the animal approaches you or does not leave, look as large as you can and back away slowly if possible. Do not run or turn your back to them. If attacked, fight back with rocks, sticks, or whatever you have. Colorado Parks and

Wildlife offers helpful resources about living around these and other species at cpw.state.co.us/learn.

Environmental Risks

Environmental conditions can pose a range of health and safety risks. Types of potentially dangerous environmental conditions you may encounter include but are not limited to:

- **Extreme Heat and Cold:** Prolonged heat exposure can lead to a series of dangerous conditions such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat rash, or heat stroke. Familiarize yourself with the symptoms of these heat stress conditions, which can often be overlooked. Drink plenty of water, wear sun protection, keep shaded whenever possible, and take breaks often. Similarly, extreme cold weather can also lead to serious conditions such as hypothermia. Always bring layers and appropriate outdoor gear for cold temperatures, wind, and precipitation, and seek indoor shelter and breaks when needed.
- **Terrain:** Some projects may involve working on uneven, loose, or rough surfaces such as rocky trails, wet concrete, snow, ice, or mud. Be sure to wear appropriate footwear for these conditions and use caution when navigating challenging terrain.
- **Lightning:** If you get stuck outdoors in a lightning storm, take shelter in a large building or in a vehicle. Avoid sheltering under a tree, or being on hilltops, wide open spaces, rock outcrops, or on the water.
- **Poison Ivy:** Poison ivy is found along the foothills. Learn how to identify this plant, stay on trail when possible, and wash your skin and clothing as soon as possible if you encounter a patch.
- **Hantavirus:** This serious virus is spread by infected rodents. Be on the lookout for rodent nesting materials or droppings if you are working in old cabins, storage areas, or other enclosed spaces. If evidence of an infestation is identified, volunteers should remove themselves from that location and report the situation to staff.

Physical Injuries

Many injuries are preventable by following safety protocols, remaining alert and aware of your surroundings, and by communicating effectively with those around you. Listen carefully to staff instructions on proper tool use. Do not hesitate to ask for clarifications or demonstrations as needed. Always follow proper lifting techniques, know your own limits, and get help to move heavy or awkward objects. If you are injured while volunteering, please report the incident to the staff supervisor as soon as you have addressed any urgent medical needs.

It is our goal to communicate the physical requirements of a volunteer assignment in advance; however, if you find that you are not able to perform an assigned volunteer duty, please let your staff supervisor know. We will work with you to modify the assignment or find another solution.

Liability

Volunteers are not entitled to Workers Compensation benefits. Volunteers are responsible for providing their own insurance for personal injury or property damage suffered or caused by the volunteer in the performance of volunteer duties. Larimer County is not responsible for loss of

property (such as car break ins or theft of personal items) while a volunteer is on duty. Volunteers will be required to sign a waiver form outlining the acceptance of this liability.

SECTION III: POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Natural Resources volunteers represent Larimer County every time they are engaging with visitors, staff, or fellow volunteers. All volunteers are responsible for knowing and following the standards and policies outlined in this volunteer manual, which should serve as a guide and resource, but which cannot address all potential situations. As such, volunteers are also responsible for practicing good judgement, using common sense, and contacting the Volunteer Program staff whenever in doubt about how best to handle a situation.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Be Professional

- Maintain a neat appearance and good personal hygiene.
- Do not curse or use offensive language.
- Follow the dress code appropriate for your volunteer role.
- Respect and honor staff decisions.
- Follow Larimer County's visitor rules and regulations, as well as all local, state, and federal laws.

Be Knowledgeable

- Know about our mission, who we are, and what we do.
- Stay up to date on major news and departmental updates.
- Learn about the "big picture" reasons behind your volunteer assignments and let this inspire your volunteer service.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, follow through to find a person or resource where you can determine the correct answer.

Be Friendly

- Be inclusive and welcoming towards all staff, visitors, and fellow volunteers regardless of their age, background, and abilities.
- Smile, make eye contact, and remember to use "please" and "thank you" when speaking with visitors, staff, or fellow volunteers.
- Respond with kindness and patience when individuals express a problem or complaint.

Be a Team Player

- Show up on time and ready to help.
- Identify ways you can help those around you and be proactive to offer your support. instead of waiting for someone to ask.
- Be flexible and adaptable to changes in your assignment or working conditions.
- Stay optimistic and motivated towards your project goals.

VOLUNTEER POLICIES

Unlawful Harassment

Larimer County prohibits unlawful harassment because of age, race, sex, color, religion, national origin, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, military or veteran status, or any other applicable status protected by Federal, State or local law. Unlawful harassment includes verbal or physical conduct that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Actions based on a protected status will not be tolerated. Prohibited behavior may include but is not limited to written messages or drawings, verbal comments, and physical motions.

Sexual Harassment

Larimer County prohibits sexual harassment and inappropriate sexual conduct. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's working performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. All volunteers and employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and appropriate manner at all times. Conduct which may violate this policy may include but is not limited to sexually implicit or explicit communications whether in written form, verbal form, or physical behaviors.

Workplace Violence

Larimer County has zero tolerance for workplace violence. Employees must not engage in intimidation, threats or hostile behaviors, physical or verbal abuse, vandalism, sabotage, bullying or any other act considered inappropriate to the workplace. Bizarre or offensive comments or jokes regarding violent events or behavior are not tolerated.

Weapons

For the purpose of this manual, weapons are defined as any object with a primary purpose to inflict physical injury such as, but not limited to, firearms, knives, or explosives. If volunteers have questions whether an item is a weapon subject to this policy, they are asked to contact the Volunteer Program staff for a determination.

- *Regarding unconcealed weapons:* Larimer County prohibits volunteers' possession or use of unconcealed weapons on County property, unless there is a reason for doing so that has been previously approved by both the Volunteer Program staff and the volunteer's assigned supervising staff member.
- *Regarding concealed weapons:* Larimer County prohibits volunteers' possession or use of concealed weapons on County Property, except where (a) there is a reason for doing so that has been previously approved by both the Volunteer Program staff and the volunteer's assigned supervising staff member, or (b) the weapon is a handgun and the volunteer holds a valid permit for the handgun and possesses or uses the handgun consistent with the terms and conditions of the permit. Volunteers carrying concealed weapons on County property must keep the weapon on their person at all times.

Confidentiality

Volunteers may have access to information that is confidential. Natural Resources staff frequently handles and discusses confidential information, including but not limited to wildlife locations, protected species, property acquisitions, and future land use plans. Discussions may be shared with volunteers or overheard by volunteers, and documents may be accessible to volunteers in a variety of ways. It is the responsibility and expectation of our volunteers to keep information, records, and

documents protected and secure. Accessing the department's information systems for any purposes other than in the performance of assigned volunteer duties is prohibited.

Pertaining to the personal information of our volunteers, Larimer County will make every effort to keep volunteer contact information and other personal information private. Volunteer email addresses and phone numbers will not be shared with members of the public or with other volunteers unless there is a practical reason to do so and we have received permission from the volunteer. Volunteer contact information may be accessed by and shared with other Larimer County staff members for work purposes. If this presents a serious concern, volunteers should contact the Volunteer Program staff so we can work to find an agreeable solution.

Social Media

We appreciate that our volunteers want to support us in their personal time through social media platforms. Please feel free to support Natural Resources' online presence by following and interacting with social media posts initiated by our communications staff – we love and encourage this!

We do ask that volunteers never post confidential, sensitive, or controversial topics related to Larimer County Department of Natural Resources on their personal profiles. In this time of materials going viral, personal social posts can easily and unintentionally become significantly damaging to an organization. Our role in serving our community is very important to us, and our staff and volunteers work hard to keep positive relationships with the citizens of Larimer County as well as our partners and supporters intact.

Regarding photography, we welcome you to share on your personal social media platforms photographs that you take while volunteering. However, please do not take or post photographs of identifiable minors without specific permission.

When in doubt, check with the Volunteer Program staff before taking online actions.

Photography and Media Policy

When you are on a Larimer County public property for either volunteer or recreational purposes, your photograph may be taken and used. We often use photographs of volunteers in action for promotional purposes, recognition, and other reasons. We ask all volunteers to sign a waiver that includes a photography release.

If you happen to capture an amazing photograph that you'd like to share with us, please do! We will make every effort to properly credit your photograph if we use it in presentations, reports, or in the media. We have an official Volunteer Photographer position as well, for those volunteers who have a background and experience in professional photography. If this interests you, please contact the Volunteer Program to learn more.

If a member of the media approaches you for information, an interview, or a comment, please politely refer the person to contact our Communications and Public Relations Specialist, Korrie Johnston, at (970) 619-4561.

Attendance and Cancellation Policy

Most volunteers have the capability of registering and removing themselves from assignments using Offero, though this may vary depending on your volunteer role. If you are no longer able to

fulfill a volunteer commitment you signed up for on Offero, please remove yourself from the assignment as soon as possible.

If it is within one week of the assignment, please notify a Volunteer Program staff member directly to ensure we are aware of the cancellation. This direct notification is especially critical if your assignment will require a replacement to cover your duties, such as leading an educational hike or working a boat ramp shift.

We understand that life happens and that the unexpected may come up and interfere with your ability to volunteer. Direct and prompt notice is the most helpful action that a volunteer can take as soon as they are aware that they will not be able to volunteer.

That said, continuous cancellations, no-shows, or tardiness is unacceptable and will likely result in corrective action or dismissal. We depend on our volunteers to be reliable and follow through on the commitments that they have made. Staff put significant time and energy into preparing for and coordinating volunteer activities and roles, and some volunteer-led programs may have to be cancelled if we are unable to find a replacement in time, negatively affecting not only our staff but the members of our community.

Leaves of Absence

For volunteers who need to take a medical or personal leave of absence, we request that you submit a written notice to the Volunteer Program staff, in email or letter form, including your expected return date. Volunteers may be asked to return Larimer County uniform property, depending on the situation and the length of the leave.

At the end of your leave, please contact the Volunteer Program staff to confirm your desire to return and carry forth your volunteer commitments. Please note that we cannot guarantee a volunteer opening in the same role upon your return.

Dress Code

Volunteers are expected to dress in a professional, hygienic manner that is appropriate for their assigned volunteer role. Volunteers are not allowed to wear clothing that has offensive or controversial wording or images on it, clothing that is inappropriately revealing, or clothing that is excessively ripped and torn, especially when serving in public-facing volunteer positions.

Regardless of the season, if you are volunteering outdoors always come prepared with sturdy closed-toe footwear, layers of clothing for varying weather conditions, and sun protection.

Some assignments may require a uniform or other form of identification to be provided by LCDNR. Uniform items are important and necessary so that you can be recognized as a representative of Larimer County, and as such, should be worn in public *only* when working on an assignment. Uniform items may include hats, T-shirts, vests, or nametags. Uniform items are the property of LCDNR and should be returned at the conclusion of your volunteer service or upon request by staff.

Smoking

Volunteers are not permitted to smoke cigarettes (including e-cigarettes) while they are representing Larimer County. This includes while actively volunteering or at any time if you are wearing a Larimer County volunteer uniform that is visible to the public.

Alcohol and Drug Use

Using alcohol or drugs, including marijuana, or being under the influence of these substances while volunteering is strictly prohibited. In addition to this, volunteers are prohibited from using or purchasing alcohol or drugs at any time that they are wearing a Larimer County volunteer uniform that is visible to the public.

Per the Drug-Free Workplace Policy, Larimer County prohibits the use, sale, dispensing, manufacture, distribution, or possession of alcohol or drugs on any Larimer County properties, including within vehicles parked on Larimer County properties. This does not include temporary possession of a sealed container of alcohol, nor does it include off-duty consumption of alcohol at the Ranch. Drugs are defined as illegal drugs or legal controlled substances not prescribed to the volunteer or not used as prescribed.

Drugs prescribed by a health care professional are permitted so long as they will not impair a volunteer's ability to safely perform assignments. If you must use a prescription or over-the-counter drug for health reasons, check with your doctor. If you feel that the drug might impact your ability to safely perform your volunteer duties, notify your assigned supervisor for their evaluation on whether you should continue volunteering and if any modifications are necessary.

Political Activity

Volunteers may not identify themselves as Larimer County volunteers while engaging in campaign activities, including but not limited to wearing any components of their volunteer uniform or other Larimer County branded clothing items. Volunteers who participate in political campaigns must exercise care to do so on their own time, without any use of County resources, and without implication that their actions are supported by or attributable to the County.

Conflicts of Interest

Volunteers should avoid conflicts of interest that may occur when their personal interests interfere with the performance of their assignment or the best interests of the Department of Natural Resources. A conflict could result from the receipt of a personal benefit, or expected receipt of a personal benefit, either now or in the future. If you are aware of a potential or actual conflict, or have questions, please contact the Volunteer Program staff for further discussion.

ISSUE RESOLUTION

Reporting a Problem

If you witness or become part of an issue related to harassment, violence, discrimination, workplace safety, or other policy-related violations, please notify either your assigned staff supervisor or the Volunteer Program staff in a timely manner.

Every circumstance is different. We will handle any reported situations on a case-by-case basis. It is our goal to resolve any issues with consideration for the privacy of all involved parties and with an unbiased and fair approach. If the need for investigative or disciplinary actions arise, departmental management and Larimer County Human Resources staff may become involved to assist and support in the carrying out of appropriate practices and standards as deemed necessary for the situation.

Corrective Action and Dismissal

Larimer County has the right to terminate a volunteer with or without cause at any time. While we acknowledge this right, we will do our best to be considerate and intentional when processing the dismissal of a volunteer.

Violation of the guidelines and policies outlined within this manual or violation of any local, state, or federal laws may result in corrective action or immediate dismissal. Depending on the severity of conduct, the existence of prior offenses, and/or other circumstances contributing to the situation, Larimer County may decide to issue a warning instead of a full dismissal. The decision to offer a warning is at the sole discretion of Larimer County staff and may include verbal warnings, written warnings, or an organized meeting to discuss the problem and identify potential solutions. Despite the receipt of a warning, the County retains the right to dismiss a volunteer at any time for any reason, regardless of the occurrence or absence of future violations.

Leaving your volunteer position

As a volunteer, you can decide to terminate your volunteer status with Larimer County Department of Natural Resources at any time, and for any reason or no reason. However, we do expect and encourage our volunteers to be honest and transparent about their continued interest and abilities in volunteering.

If you would like to explore volunteer opportunities with us that are different from the ways you are currently involved, we are happy to discuss finding a role that may better match your interest, schedule, or abilities, while still allowing you to contribute to the work and mission of the Department of Natural Resources.

If you are no longer able or interested in volunteering with us in any capacity, please know that we are extremely grateful for the time and contributions made by all our volunteers, regardless of the length of their service with us. To officially leave your position as a Natural Resources volunteer, please notify the Volunteer Program staff in writing. We will then be able to update our records and, as necessary, recruit a replacement for your volunteer role.

Volunteer Emergency Response Sheet

While volunteering a situation may occur that requires the involvement of a ranger. Use the information on this sheet to guide you.

Non-Emergencies: Larimer County dispatch (970) 416-1985. Call this number for situations that don't rise to an emergency but require a Ranger's response. Dispatch will be able to contact a Ranger in your area. This number is also located on trailhead kiosks. The rangers are our peacekeepers and initial emergency response.

When do you need a ranger?

If you are witnessing anything more serious than the typical leash/trash/hammock types of offenses. Some examples include:

- Someone carrying or displaying a firearm (if they are threatening to use one or are using one, call 911 first)
- Minor medicals (i.e. sprained ankle)
- A situation involving alcohol or drugs
- Vandalism
- Illegal campfires/fireworks
- Motor vehicle accidents with no injuries but minor property damage
- Vehicles driving off-road
- Resource damage
- Suspected DUI
- Suspicious visitors
- Aggressive animals
- Egregious parks regulation violations, etc.

If a non-emergency is being reported to you, collect the reporting party (RP) name and phone number in case a Ranger needs to follow up with the RP.

Cell phones have good reception on most properties (excluding Eagle's Nest Open Space.) Getting to high ground will likely get you a signal. Some areas also have emergency call boxes on site.

If you feel comfortable, politely address visitors' minor offenses such as dog off leash, picking vegetation, feeding wildlife, etc. It is possible they just don't know the rules. Show them the kiosk with a list of regulations and the regulation brochure. As a volunteer, you are not obligated to but you can be a good ambassador and educator for LCDNR.

Simply walk away from conversations gone bad. Avoid making contacts with intoxicated or aggravated individuals. Be aware of environmental hazards. **Contact 911 for anything that makes you feel unsafe.**

Emergencies: Call 911

The first goal of the volunteer is to remain safe at all times. If you feel that the current situation is jeopardizing your safety, stop what you are doing and make yourself and the situation safe. Take whatever action is necessary to accomplish this.

Gather important information like the location, number of people involved, injury details, etc. If someone is telling you about a situation, keep them there until a ranger can speak to them directly. Describe the situation in facts. Emergency examples include:

- Life threatening (someone is threatening to take their own or harm another person)
- Disorderly or threatening person. Includes someone threatening to use a weapon or claims to have a weapon
- Medical Emergencies
- Wildland fires
- Reporting a missing juvenile or at-risk adult
- A Vehicle Trespass
- Verbal and Physical disturbances
- Indecent exposure
- Any situation which you feel requires immediate response from a Ranger, Deputy, EMS, or Fire.

In Medical Emergencies, rangers require the following information:

- Location of the patient
- Male/Female
- Type of injury and extent of injury
- Approximate age
- Conscious/Unconscious
- Breathing/Not breathing
- Any known medical information (pregnant, allergies, diabetic, under the influence, etc).
- Clothing/description of patient

Volunteer related accidents:

A volunteer involved in an accident of any kind while working for LCDNR must notify a staff member as soon as possible. For emergencies call 911. The volunteer must also notify volunteer program staff of the incident by phone, email or in person. This also includes accidents involving serious injury, death, or any criminal charges against the volunteer. As stated prior, volunteers are not entitled to Workers Compensation benefits. Volunteers are responsible for providing their own insurance for personal injury or property damage suffered or caused by the volunteer in the performance of volunteer duties.

Wallet Card:

Feel free to print this page, cut out this card and keep it with you while volunteering. Place it somewhere that will always be with you such as your wallet, backpack, or volunteer nametag holder. Use it as reference if an emergency arises.

Fold Here

If there is an emergency call 911

Medical Emergency Info:

- Location of the patient
- Male/Female
- Type of injury and extent of injury
- Approximate age
- Conscious/Unconscious
- Breathing/Not breathing
- Any known medical information (pregnant, allergies, diabetic, under the influence, etc.)

Larimer County Non-Emergency Dispatch:

970-416-1985

Red Mountain & Horsetooth Districts:
970-498-5610

Big Thompson District:
970-577-2090 (closed 12/1-3/1)

Carter Lake District & LCDNR Admin Office:
970-619-4564

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your time reviewing the contents of this volunteer manual. The information provided is critical for keeping volunteer and staff goals and expectations aligned, ensuring that all parties are familiar with our policies and procedures, and for maintaining a safe, productive, and welcoming working environment for all.

We strive to maintain open and honest communication with our volunteers, as we feel this encourages growth, motivates positive change, and redirects issues before they gain momentum. As you embark in your journey as a Natural Resources volunteer, we welcome you to provide your thoughts and feedback about your volunteer experiences with us.

Once again, we extend to you our sincere thanks for your interest in volunteering your time for the benefit of Larimer County Natural Resources. Please sign this acknowledgement form below and submit this page to the Volunteer Program staff.

VOLUNTEER MANUAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please print, sign, and email this acknowledgement page to the Volunteer Program Team. This is a requirement as a new volunteer. The signed page will be kept with your volunteer profile.

We suggest that you use this manual as you begin your volunteer service and continue to refer to it thereafter. Please note that the contents of this manual will be updated and revisited periodically. The most up-to-date version will be maintained at larimer.org/nrvolunteer.

By signing below, I acknowledge receiving this volunteer manual. I understand that while I am serving as a volunteer for the Department of Natural Resources, I am responsible for following the policies and expectations outlined within this manual. Failure to do so may result in corrective actions including but not limited to immediate dismissal from the volunteer program.

Printed Name: _____
Signature: _____
Today's Date: _____