

Larimer County Natural Resources Job Expectations Volunteer Naturalist

Department: Larimer County Natural Resources

Program: Open Lands, Parks, Weeds

Location: All Open Spaces and Park Properties

ROLE

Trained Volunteer Naturalists lead fun, educational hikes for the public along trails of their choice. Volunteers can serve in several interpretative capacities such as assisting with school field trips, leading day and/or moonlight hikes, staffing special events, performing campfire storytelling, helping with public tours, and preparing and presenting slide shows.

DUTIES

Lead a group of students (grades K-12) during school field trips to local open spaces. Teach lessons from established field trip curriculum.

Lead your own hike either during the day or at night. This may include researching and developing your own program or presenting pre-developed (canned) programs.

Provide excellent customer service to visitors and staff while sharing your enthusiasm and knowledge of the natural and cultural resources Larimer County Natural Resources manages.

Remain professionally neutral in areas of public policy, politics, religion, etc. when volunteering as a naturalist.

Be prepared and arrive on time.

Make safety your first priority.

Assist with special events and community festivals as needed.

Assist with collecting or creating props for Volunteer Naturalists to use to enhance their hikes.

Lead or assist with public tours on Open Lands, which may include operating a county vehicle.

Prepare and present slide shows.

QUALIFICATIONS

Be enthusiastic and helpful. If you don't know an answer offer to put the visitor in touch with someone who does.

Be friendly, courteous and professional when dealing with staff and visitors.

Enjoy interacting with the public and answering their questions & concerns; communicate clearly.

Be able to assess your audience and communicate on their level.

Posses a basic knowledge of natural science and an interest in the outdoors, as well as a willingness to learn.

Complete a general volunteer orientation and 60 hours of training provided by the department and successfully perform certification activities.

Be in good physical condition (ability to hike 2-3 miles easily).

Utilize strong communication skills in order to engage all of the senses of your audiences.

Agree to a background check & motor vehicle check.

Provide your own reliable transportation.

Abide by Parks and Open Lands regulations and safety guidelines.

Commit to leading or participating in at least 6 public events each year (hikes, festivals, tours, etc.).

Volunteer Naturalists must be 18 years of age or older (unless obtaining prior approval).

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Prepare and train volunteers to carry out Volunteer Naturalist duties.

Match Volunteer Naturalists with the kinds of groups that complement their personality and comfort levels.

Organize and schedule volunteers in an efficient and timely manner.

Provide necessary equipment and supplies (as budget allows).

Provide continuing education opportunities to meet the interests of Volunteer Naturalists.

Provide resource information and have them available for check out.

Evaluate training and performance of volunteers.

Recognize and reward volunteers as a valued asset to the Department.

VOLUNTEER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Successfully complete certification before leading public groups.

Communicate your preferences for kinds of groups and assignments with the Education Program.

Be knowledgeable and prepared for Volunteer Naturalist assignments.

Provide excellent customer service to staff and visitors.

Be responsible to find your own replacement, if unable to meet your scheduled obligations.

Provide your own transportation and "creature comforts" as needed - water, raingear, sunglasses, sunscreen...

Be on time.

RISKS

Possible heat exhaustion from too little water and other ailments associated with being outdoors.

Rattlesnakes in the summer

Weather related risks such as lightning, cold, heat, etc.

Hoarseness due to projecting your voice above the wind

The possibility of having low attendance at your program

Visitors that may become confrontational while you are guiding them

Larimer County Natural Resources is not obligated to provide a placement, nor are you obligated to accept the position offered. From time to time photos may be taken of you while you are on-duty. These photos may be

used for publications such as the Annual Report or the Annual Calendar or other public outreach materials. Opportunities for volunteers are provided without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex or age. Larimer County is committed to equality of opportunity.