

Volunteer Position Description

NATURALIST

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources
1800 S. County Road 31, Loveland CO 80537
(970) 619-4570 | larimer.org/nrvolunteer



Position Overview:

Naturalists lead a variety of educational programs on behalf of Larimer County, including guided hikes, school field trips, campground programs, outreach tables, and youth programs. Naturalists can design their own programs or can sign up to lead established programs. Larimer County offers a variety of programming designed to educate and engage people of all ages and backgrounds. Naturalists are not required to lead all program types; for example, if a Naturalist prefers to work with children there is no expectation that they will lead an adult-oriented hike. Prior teaching experience or knowledge about natural resources is helpful but not necessary; however, a willingness to learn is essential.

Overall Duties:

- Every Naturalist is required to lead or co-lead two programs of their choice per year
- Represent Larimer County in a friendly, professional manner and provide a Department of Natural Resources introduction prior to any program
- Communicate general feedback, ideas, or concerns to the Education Program following your program, and be prepared to contact a Ranger or 911 for help if there is an urgent incident during your program (participant injury, unruly camper, weather emergency, etc.)
- Abide by all rules, regulations, and safety guidelines while on Larimer County property
- If you are the primary leader of a program, you are responsible for notifying the Education Program staff as soon as possible if you need to cancel your program due to weather or other factors. Staff will then notify registered participants, other volunteers, and the public.

Program-Specific Duties:

- **Guided Hikes:** Lead a public guided hike on a day and trail of your choice; hike focuses include wildflowers, birds, geology, moonlight, or another educational topic of your choice.
- **School Field Trips:** Review lesson plan and be comfortable teaching from the established curriculum; lead students through lesson in either rotational station or guided hike format
- **Outreach Tables:** Engage with recreational users at trailheads before or after their hike/ride on a variety of topics such as rattlesnake safety and trail etiquette
- **Campground Programs:** Lead programs aimed at engaging campers during their weekend stay at Carter Lake, Pinewood Reservoir, Horsetooth Reservoir or Hermit Park; design your own program or adapt one of our existing program models
- **Other:** We are always considering new program offerings for our community and are open to our Naturalists' ideas and suggestions

Schedule:

- Naturalist training takes place each spring; new Naturalists are required to attend while existing Naturalists are welcome to join any portion(s) of training as a refresher
- Naturalists can lead whichever programs work best for their schedule and interests
 - School Field Trips take place on weekday mornings in the spring and fall
 - Outreach Tables take place year-round but mostly on summer weekend mornings
 - Campground Programs almost always take place on Saturday evenings
 - Guided Hikes take place year-round and are scheduled by the lead Naturalist

Volunteer Position Description

NATURALIST

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources
1800 S. County Road 31, Loveland CO 80537
(970) 619-4570 | larimer.org/nrvolunteer



Qualifications:

- Ability to communicate clearly and comfortably with visitors of all ages and backgrounds
- Friendly, courteous, and respectful to staff and park visitors
- Experience and comfort with speaking to and leading groups of people
- Ability to provide your own reliable transportation.
- Willingness to take initiative for designing programs or learning established programs
- Willingness to work outside in variable temperatures and weather conditions. Certain programs will require 2-3 miles of hiking
- All Naturalists must agree to a criminal background check
- Understanding and acceptance of the potential risks for this volunteer position such as inclement weather, dangerous wildlife encounters, and unpleasant interactions with members of the public

The Larimer County Natural Resources Volunteer Program is not obligated to provide a placement, nor are you obligated to accept the position offered. Opportunities for volunteers are provided without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex or age. Larimer County is committed to equality of opportunity.

Updated 10/19