

Volunteer

Nature Educator

Position Description



Nature Educators connect visitors to Larimer County Department of Natural Resources' parks and open spaces by sharing their enthusiasm for nature through fun and engaging educational programs.

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources
1800 S. County Road 31, Loveland CO 80537
(970) 619-4552 | larimer.gov/nrvolunteer



Volunteer Position Description

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Our mission is to connect people, nature, and place.

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources (LCDNR) offers a variety of educational programming designed to connect people of all ages and backgrounds to nature and place. Volunteer Nature Educators inspire curiosity of the natural world and foster stewardship of valuable natural resources through engaging educational programs.

Interview required. This volunteer role includes three (3) positions: School Group Educator, Stewardship Outreach Educator, and Public Program Naturalist. Volunteers select the position that best suits their availability, interests, and skills.

Benefits:

- Spend your time outdoors while connecting with and giving back to the community
- Be an integral part of promoting LCDNR's mission, enhancing visitors' experiences, and fostering stewardship values
- Learn from experienced staff and volunteers
- Have access to natural & cultural history resources including a comprehensive library and educational materials (furs, skulls, games, craft supplies and more)
- Expand your knowledge while sharing your love of the outdoors
- Participate in fun volunteer appreciation and social events
- Complete 20+ volunteer hours in a calendar year & receive a LCDNR parking pass

Requirements:

- Interested in natural & cultural history and making a connection with people, nature, and place
- Good communication skills both written and verbal
- Passionate about learning and enthusiastic about sharing your knowledge with others
- Comfort with speaking to people of all ages and backgrounds
- Friendly, courteous, respectful, flexible, and a team-player
- Willingness to work outside in variable temperatures and weather conditions. Some programs require 2-3 miles of hiking
- Pass a criminal background check
- Understanding and acceptance of potential risk for this volunteer position such as inclement weather, dangerous wildlife encounters, and unpleasant interactions with members of the public
- Know LCDNR Emergency Response Procedures and be prepared to contact help if there is an urgent incident while you are volunteering. **Training provided**
- Abide by all rules, regulations, and safety guidelines while on Larimer County property

Training: All Nature Education volunteers are required to attend the following trainings:

- New Volunteer Orientation (includes overview of expectations, policies, emergency response procedures, etc.)
- Introduction to Education in the Outdoors
- Other specific position training as necessary

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Summary:

Connect youth to nature through pre-developed, fun, engaging field trips. If you enjoy interacting with kids, then this is the role for you. During the school year, enhance what students learn in the classroom by leading an interactive geology or ecology education station in the field. During the summer, guide hikes along the trails teaching Leave No Trace principles and observing all that Larimer County has to offer.

Schedule:

- Tuesday – Friday: 8:30 am – 1:00 pm
- School Field Trips: March – May and September – November
- Community Group Requests: May – September

Duties:

- Learn and lead pre-developed programs on selected natural history topics
- Must enjoy working with school-aged children
- Work with staff and other volunteers in a rotational station or guided hike style program
- Have a good understanding of LCDNR rules. Willingness to talk to visitors and address visitor concerns or rule violations in a friendly manner
- Prior teaching experience or knowledge helpful but not required

Team Training:

- Two weekdays in mid-March: 8:30 am – 1:00 pm

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Summary:

Connect visitors to nature and an enjoyable outdoor experience through informal, meaningful conversations at popular trailheads. Volunteers use good communication skills to deliver key messages and encourage responsible recreation behaviors. Play an integral role in ensuring a memorable and safe visitor experience while minimizing impact on valuable natural resources. Facilitate interactive educational activities and share materials to deepen connections to nature and place.

Schedule:

- Saturdays & Sundays: 8:30 am – 11:00 am & 11:00 am – 1:30 pm (shifts may vary slightly depending on weather)
- Seasonal: April – October

Duties:

- Act as an enthusiastic and engaged Department ambassador at a variety of locations for a wide variety of audiences.
- Host tables at trailheads, or other park/open space locations to convey pre-developed stewardship messages (such as rattlesnake safety, trail etiquette, bear aware, Leave No Trace)
- Enjoy having informal, meaningful conversations with the public
- Use nature artifacts and props to interpret stewardship messaging
- Willingness to talk to visitors and address visitor concerns in a friendly manner
- Have a good understanding of LCDNR rules, mission, and values.

Team Training:

- Second Saturday in April: 9:00 am – 11:00 am at Devil's Backbone Open Space

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Summary:

Connect visitors to natural places through a variety of cultural and natural history topics. Engage others in a topic you are passionate about. Inspire campers on a summer's evening through a Campfire Program. Volunteers can adapt an established program or independently purpose, design, & implement an educational program.

Schedule:

- Public programs: occur year-round, typically on weekdays. Volunteers can choose the date, time, and location that works best for them.
- Campfire programs: Saturday evenings 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm, June – August

Duties:

- Represent Larimer County in a professional manner and include key stewardship and Department messaging into programs
- Enjoy working independently and creating and leading formal interpretive educational programs
- Overall program creation from start to finish is the responsibility of the volunteer. Volunteers may use pre-developed programs and other education materials as resources. Programs must be approved by staff. Staff will provide coaching on content, program organization, & teaching techniques. We are always considering new program offerings for our community and are open to ideas and suggestions for traditional & non-traditional programming. Submit program ideas through volunteer software, offer.larimer.org
- Have a good understanding of LCDNR rules. Willingness to talk to visitors and address visitor concerns or rule violations in a friendly manner

Team Training:

- Fourth week in March: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

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Next Steps....

1. Submit a general Volunteer Application
2. Schedule an interview with Volunteer Engagement Staff
3. Complete a background check
4. Attend Training
 - a. New Volunteer Orientation
 - b. Introduction to Education in the Outdoors
 - c. Specific training for volunteer position
 - ❖ School Group Educator
 - ❖ Stewardship Outreach Educator
 - ❖ Public Program Naturalist
5. Shadow staff or current volunteers
6. Start volunteering!

Questions?

Contact Julie Enderby
Education & Volunteer Supervisor
970-619-4552, jenderby@larimer.org

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.