



City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program

Volunteer Policies and Procedures

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Thank you to C.J. Cullins, Larimer County Dept. of
Natural Resources.

Volunteer Program Manual

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Natural Areas Program's mission is to conserve and enhance lands with existing or potential natural area values, lands that serve as community separators, agricultural lands, and lands with scenic values. Conservation of natural habitats and features is the highest priority while providing education and recreation for the Fort Collins community.

HISTORY OF THE NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM

The citizens of Fort Collins have created a legacy of natural resource conservation. In 1992, Fort Collins citizens overwhelmingly decided to tax themselves to establish the Natural Areas Program. The funds made possible land conservation, public amenities like trails and parking lots, educational opportunities and other related projects. Additional sales taxes to fund natural areas were initiated and passed by voters in 1995, 1997, 1999 and 2002. These extend the revenues from the County Help Preserve Open Space sales tax to 2018 and the revenues from the City sales tax to 2030. The citizens of Fort Collins make the Natural Areas Program possible--thank you!

A COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEERISM

As a volunteer with the Natural Areas program you are joining a long history of citizen commitment to conservation. Since its inception, the Natural Areas Program has utilized volunteers in every department from education to stewardship. Volunteers have helped to extend outreach and strengthen community involvement. The Natural Areas Program believes strongly that volunteers are a valuable resource to be nurtured and treasured.



PURPOSE OF VOLUNTEER POLICIES

As in any relationship it is important to have a clear understanding of the roles each party plays. The Natural Areas Program (NAP) values our relationship with volunteers and we want everyone to have clear expectations and responsibilities. The purpose of these policies is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer activities. It is the Natural Areas Program's hope that having clearly established guidelines for everyone will help you feel your time is well spent with a friendly and professional organization.

The NAP reserves the exclusive right to change any of these policies at any time and will inform all parties of these changes. Areas not specifically covered by these policies shall be determined by the Volunteer Coordinator.

DEFINITION OF "VOLUNTEER"

A "volunteer" is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond approved reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program (NAP). A volunteer must be officially accepted and enrolled by the NAP before performing any task.

OUR SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH YOU

Volunteer serve "at will" which means that, while the Natural Areas Program hopes you have a long and fulfilling relationship with us, you are free to discontinue it at any time. In the same vein, the NAP reserves the right to change or terminate volunteer relationships for any reason that management feels is appropriate. Any changes in volunteer status should be communicated to the Volunteer Coordinator.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to the Natural Areas Program, its staff, the natural areas, visitors and citizens. As a volunteer, you are extended the right to meaningful assignments, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation as deemed appropriate, and the right to recognition for work well done.

As a valued member of our team you can expect:

- NAP staff provide you with all the tools and supplies needed to complete tasks.
- NAP provide all necessary uniform items at no charge to the volunteer.
- NAP provide all necessary training and continuing education.
- NAP provide you with an accurate Job Description
- that placement in a volunteer position will meet your needs, interests and capabilities.
- NAP provide you with opportunities for continuing education and professional growth.

Continuing Education and Career Development

Just as it is expected of staff, volunteers are encouraged to improve their level of skill during their terms of service. Additional training and educational opportunities are made available to you during your connection with the NAP. This continuing education may include additional information on performance of your current volunteer assignment as well as more general information, and might be provided either by the NAP or by other groups. Some volunteer positions *require* participation in continuing education.

Volunteers may be encouraged to participate in new volunteer trainings or asked to take on leadership roles as part of their professional development. We support peer training and mentoring but do not require it. Conferences, continuing education and job opportunities will be announced to all volunteers as they become available.

WHAT WE EXPECT OF YOU

You are an ambassador

Prior to any action or statement which might affect or obligate the NAP, volunteers should consult with and get approval from appropriate staff. These actions may include public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the NAP only as specifically indicated within their job descriptions and to the extent of such written specifications. Remember, you are an ambassador for the Natural Areas Program and are expected to represent the Natural Areas Program positively. All volunteers are expected to effectively communicate the City's goals, management philosophy and key messages.

You maintain confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with the NAP or other corrective action.

Your dress is appropriate

As representatives of the NAP you are responsible for presenting a good image to visitors and to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. The NAP will provide you with appropriate uniforms.

Uniforms should not be altered in any way. Please return your uniform if you decide to discontinue your volunteer service.

You help us keep accurate records

Individual volunteers are responsible for the accurate completion and timely submission of timesheets to the Volunteer Coordinator whether electronically or in paper form.

POLICIES

Conflict of Interest

No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or program of the NAP, whether personal, philosophical, or financial shall be accepted or serve as a volunteer with the department. A conflict of interest shall be decided upon by the Volunteer Program staff.

Criminal & Motor Vehicle Records Check

As appropriate for the protection of visitors, staff, and the general public, volunteers in certain assignments will be asked to submit to a criminal and/or motor vehicle background check. Volunteers who do not agree to the background or motor vehicle check may be refused assignment. (Reference City of Fort Collins Personnel Policy and Procedure 3.2.4)

Certificate of Ability

Any potential volunteer who indicates that they are under the care of a physician for either physical or psychological treatment may be asked to present a certificate from the physician as to their ability to satisfactorily and safely perform their volunteer duties. Volunteers under a course of treatment which might affect their volunteer work will not be accepted without written verification of suitability from their physician.

Any volunteer who, after acceptance and assignment by the NAP, enters a course of treatment which might adversely impact upon the performance of their volunteer duties should consult with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Absenteeism

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regular schedule and timely basis. If you need to be absent from a scheduled duty, please inform your staff supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made. Continual absenteeism may result in a review of your work assignment or terms of service.

Reimbursement of Expenses

Volunteers are not paid and may incur expenses as part of their volunteer duties. The only expenses that will be reimbursed are costs that have been specifically identified as reimbursable by the NAP. Prior approval must be obtained for any expense for which you plan to seek reimbursement. Please seek advice from a professional about tax deductions that may be available in association with volunteer service.

Insurance

Insert insurance policy info (coming from HR).