



Natural Areas Program
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Date: March 21, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New! Cooperative Volunteer Ranger Assistant Program

What do you want to be when you grow up? A park ranger perhaps? Do you dream of being outdoors, chatting with visitors, enjoying wildlife and helping the environment? It's not too late! You can become a Volunteer Ranger Assistant and help park and natural area rangers accomplish much of their important work. As a Volunteer Ranger Assistant you will be an ambassador for natural areas and open spaces.

Volunteer Ranger Assistants are a friendly face on the trail that can answer visitor questions. Volunteers have an important role in caring for trails, kiosks and other amenities. You can volunteer on foot or ride your bike or horse, or monitor trails by wheelchair- recreationists of all types are welcome! In training, which is two evenings and a Saturday in June, you'll learn about local and regional trails, how to approach visitors, ecology, safety and stewardship. You'll meet rangers from Larimer County Department of Natural Resources and the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program. You might meet new friends too!

The Volunteer Ranger Assistant program is a ground-breaking partnership between the City of Fort Collins and Larimer County; which each used to have its own unique program (City volunteers were called Trail Hosts, County volunteers were Trail Ranger Assistants). In an effort to increase efficiency and inter-agency cooperation, the programs are merging. Existing volunteers love the idea because it means they can visit more open spaces and natural areas, and help fellow citizens understand the differences and similarities in the City and County programs. Thanks to this new partnership, volunteers will help monitor over 75,000 acres of conserved land and about 100 miles of trail.

The Volunteer Ranger Assistant program is the perfect volunteer position for you if work during the week because the schedule is flexible. Volunteers are especially needed on weekends. This opportunity is family friendly—your whole family can join the fun! Volunteer with a group, with a friend or by yourself. Get exercise, fresh air and quiet time all while giving back to your community.

Volunteer Ranger Assistants will attend 20 hours of training, and are asked to contribute 20 hours of service in return. Other benefits include monthly continuing education classes such as

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first aid and CPR, winter ecology, special behind the scenes tours and more. You'll be invited to recognition events and have the chance to earn points for friendly competition and prizes.

Thank you Fort Collins and Larimer County voters! The Volunteer Ranger Assistant Program is made possible by you- your citizen-initiated sales tax dollars conserve natural areas and open spaces and provide visitor services like the Volunteer Ranger Assistant Program.

So stop dreaming about being outdoors, chatting with visitors, enjoying wildlife and helping the environment! It's not too late, you can apply to be a Volunteer Ranger Assistant, www.fcgov.com/naturalareas.

Zoe Whyman is the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Community Relations Manager, contact her at zwhyman@fcgov.com or 970-221-6311.