



# Volunteer Ranger Assistant

## Volunteer Description Overview

Volunteer Ranger Assistants (VRAs) serve as a visible presence in the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas and at Larimer County Parks and Open Spaces to enhance the experiences of trail users by providing information, site monitoring, and visitor assistance. VRAs work through the Ranger programs to respond to questions and inquiries, monitor trails, parks, open spaces and natural areas for visitor safety and resource protection, assess timing and types of recreational uses, administer user surveys, and alert rangers to situations that require staff attention. VRA's may hike, bike, or ride their own horse.

## Key Responsibilities

- Provide a visible presence along trails and in open spaces, parks and natural areas.
- Focus patrol efforts on most actively visited natural areas and open spaces during high use periods.
- Respond to visitor questions and issues consistent with training received.
- Record and report visitor comments, recreational trends and safety issues to ranger staff.
- Complete and submit an online patrol log following each assignment.
- Assist rangers at special events and on special patrols when needed.
- Initiate contact with natural areas visitors on issues related to multi-use conflict, safety, and City of Fort Collins Natural Areas and Larimer County Natural Resources regulations.

## Impact

Assist others and protect our natural spaces through peer education. VRAs reach over 10,000 visitors a year, greatly enhancing the number of contacts paid staff can make alone.

## Training

- Approximately 15 hours of training which includes an orientation to the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas and Larimer County Natural Resources, personal





outdoor safety, resource protection, conflict management, and emergency assistance.

- Opportunity to attend continuing education sessions

### **Support**

Rhonda Peckham  
Natural Areas Ranger  
City of Fort Collins  
[rpeckham@fcgov.com](mailto:rpeckham@fcgov.com)  
(970) 631-2933

Julie Enderby  
Education and Volunteer Supervisor  
Larimer County Natural Resources  
[enderbj@co.larimer.co.us](mailto:enderbj@co.larimer.co.us)  
(970) 619-4552

Patrol log responses are given about once a month.

### **Commitment**

- Complete 20 hours of volunteer patrol during a calendar year.
- The need for the VRA is highest between May and October on weekday evenings and weekends.
- Assist Larimer County Natural Resources and the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas rangers with at least one special event or patrol a year which may be included in the 20-hour requirement.

### **Skills and Qualifications**

- Strong interpersonal skills
- Enjoy working in the outdoors under a variety of weather and trail conditions.
- Be capable of working independently with little or no supervision while on patrol.
- Must share a commitment to the mission and goals of both the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas and Larimer County Natural Resources and be able to communicate those missions to the public.
- Must abide by parks, open spaces, and natural area rules and regulations as well as established volunteer policies and procedures as outlined in the VRA training manual.
- Must possess the skill and ability to safely patrol the natural areas by their choice of means. This includes trailhead hosting, hiking, biking, and horseback riding.
- Volunteers must provide their own transportation, non-uniform outdoor clothing, and gear.
- Background check required.
- Must be at least 18 years old.

### **Dress Code**

While volunteering two out of the three items listed below must be worn. All are provided:

- Volunteer name badge/tag
- Volunteer shirt
- Volunteer hat



Additionally, proper safety equipment (safety glasses, vests, gloves, when required)

### **Benefits**

- Interact with people with similar interests
- Participate in fun volunteer recognition and social events
- Be an integral part of large well-respected and forward-thinking land conservation and stewardship programs.
- Be truly valued by City and County staff and managers.
- Enjoyment of the outdoors and physical activity while representing Larimer County Natural Resources and the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program.
- Meet other volunteers and sharing interests in the outdoors.
- Developing a greater understanding of the role and mission of Larimer County Natural Resources and the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas.
- Continuing education and volunteer recognition events.

### **Our Philosophy**

By becoming a volunteer with us, you are joining a long history of community commitment to conservation. Since their inception, the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas and Larimer County Natural Resources have engaged volunteers on every level, from education to stewardship to leadership. Volunteers help extend outreach and strengthen community involvement. We believe that volunteers are one of our most valuable resources.

### **Information**

Rachel Balduzzi, Natural Areas Volunteer Specialist, 970-577-1568, [rbalduzzi@fcgov.com](mailto:rbalduzzi@fcgov.com)

### **Application**

Will be posted early December 2022.

### ***Competitive Application Process:***

*Typically, there are more applications than there are spaces in the training class. The rangers from both agencies rely on VRAs to be their representatives on the trail. As such only the most qualified candidates will be accepted. Thoroughness in completing the application is a must. Experience in the outdoors, experience with interpersonal customer service and the ability to hike or bike a minimum of two miles should be recorded on the application. Experience dealing with medical issues and emergencies is a plus.*