



Colorado Natural Areas Program

Volunteer Steward Program



Opportunity

The Colorado Natural Area Program (CNAP) is currently looking for volunteers to help monitor some of the most spectacular and sensitive areas in the state. There are almost 100 areas in the State of Colorado that have been designated as Colorado Natural Areas because of rare plants, plant communities, wildlife, unique geology, fossils, or a combination of these features. The Colorado Natural Areas Program needs help from volunteers to get out and visit these sites regularly to ensure the rare and sensitive features on these sites are being preserved for future generations. You can help – you can “adopt a Natural Area”!

Required Background/Skills

We need volunteers that are willing and able to get to their site; some are difficult to access and others are close to urban areas. Many of our volunteers have extensive backgrounds in natural resources; some are experts in either botany, geology or are expert birders. However some are just dedicated to getting outside and learning as much as they can. We do require that our volunteers have skills in backcountry travel/hiking, map reading, and knowledge of Colorado natural history. While our limited staff is able to provide some in-the-field training, the ability to work independently is strongly desired.

Responsibilities

We ask that volunteers be willing to visit their site at least once a year and fill out a generalized form on the condition and attributes of the site. We also ask volunteers to take photos from the same locations each year so we have a photo record of changes over time. We provide volunteers a journal where they can record their field trips and observations and ask them to keep track of their time spent volunteering. Detecting changes to the landscape takes time and repeated observations. Whenever possible we ask that new volunteers make a three year commitment to the program.

Benefits

The most obvious benefit is that you get to see firsthand some of the most special, sensitive, and scenic places in the state of Colorado. By being a volunteer steward, you will become an ‘expert’ in protecting a special area that you will know better than most people. You can also get recognition from Colorado Parks and Wildlife based on hours of participation per year. A Colorado State Parks pass can be obtained after 48 hours of annual service. Volunteer stewards are an integral part of the Colorado Natural Areas Program.

Contact

If you are interested, please contact the Colorado Natural Areas Program via email at dnr_cn timer@state.co.us or call 303-291-7267.