



Volunteer Position Description:

Colorado Natural Areas Program Volunteer Steward

About CNAP:

Established in statute in 1977, The Colorado Natural Areas Program (CNAP) is a statewide conservation program within Colorado Parks & Wildlife focused on the recognition and designation of Colorado's most special natural places. Colorado's 95 designated State Natural Areas contain our state's most rare and unique natural features including plants, wildlife, insects, natural communities, geologic features, and fossils. State Natural Areas designations can occur across any land ownership type, on both public and private lands. Additionally, CNAP is the only state government program with an emphasis on rare plant conservation. Learn more about CNAP here: <https://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/CNAP.aspx>.

Volunteer Responsibilities:

- Independently monitor assigned State Natural Area at least once a year, typically during the growing season.
- Monitoring may include observations of rare species and features, plant community condition, natural disturbances, noxious weed occurrences, public use, etc.
- Re-take photos at established photo monitoring points and take additional site photos as needed.
- Submit an annual site monitoring form and photos based on your observations at the State Natural Area.
- Communicate with CNAP staff to obtain all necessary permits and notify appropriate landowners prior to your site visit.
- Keep an accurate record of the hours you worked on the project and report those hours in a timely manner in your CPW Connect account or to CNAP staff.
- Provide own transportation to and from the assigned State Natural Area.

Time Commitment:

- At least one monitoring visit to the assigned State Natural Area per year.
- The time it takes to monitor a State Natural Area will vary based on location and monitoring needs. Some sites can be monitored in a quick half-day trip while others will require multi-day trips to travel to and monitor the site.
- We ask that volunteers commit to at least three years of annually monitoring their assigned State Natural Area.

Qualifications:

- Self-motivated and able to work independently.
- Good, proactive communication skills.

- Background and knowledge in Colorado’s natural history and ecology, including but not limited to botany, geology, paleontology, wildlife biology, entomology, or other natural resources field, is preferred, but not required.
- Ability to safely navigate to and within assigned State Natural Area. Some sites are remote, high altitude, uneven terrain, and/or difficult to access. Access may require 4WD roads, long and difficult hikes on and off-trail, and backcountry navigation and safety skills. We will work with potential volunteers to match their abilities and comfort level with appropriate sites.
- Ability to submit electronic files (forms, reports, photos) is strongly preferred. Experience with GPS, GIS, and digital data-gathering tools is a plus.

Benefits:

- Play a role in helping to recognize and protect some of the most special, sensitive, and scenic places in the State of Colorado.
- Opportunity to further develop knowledge and skills in ecology, natural history, botany, geology, wildlife biology, etc.
- Earn hours toward volunteer recognition awards.
- Annual State Park Pass for volunteers who donate 48 or more hours of their time within a consecutive twelve month period.

Training and Preparation:

- There is no formal in-person training for this position.
- Volunteers are provided maps, species lists, natural feature descriptions, past reports, and site monitoring goals to familiarize themselves with their assigned State Natural Area.
- A volunteer handbook, training guides, and other helpful resources are electronically provided.
- Volunteers may join CNAP staff during triennial staff monitoring visits to their assigned State Natural Area.

How to Apply:

- You can apply by filling out an application located here: <https://cpwconnect.state.co.us/D/CNAP/GetInvolved>. Note: if you don’t already have a CPW Connect account you will need to first create one.
- Volunteer applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. We may put you on a waitlist if no open sites are available, or delay onboarding until the off-season (Nov.- March) to allow time to secure permits and site info ahead of the field season.
- We will review your application, and get back to you to set up an introductory phone call to familiarize you with the program and figure out which site may be a good fit.

Contact for Questions:

- Please email CNAP staff at dnr_cnap@state.co.us