



2025 Seasonal Position Announcement

CREW LEADER - FIXED SITE PROJECT

on BACKCOUNTRY TRAIL CREW - {\$25.00 to \$29.00/hr}

The Colorado Fourteeners Initiative (CFI) is a nonprofit organization working to protect and preserve the natural integrity of Colorado's 14,000-foot peaks through active stewardship and public education.

www.14ers.org

Come work on Colorado's highest peaks! CFI is currently seeking applicants for leadership and crew member positions to implement CFI's trail construction projects and alpine restoration projects on Colorado's 14,000-foot peaks. These are engaging yet challenging positions based in Colorado's rugged backcountry. This position requires a strong trail work skillset; conservation ethic; excellent leadership skills; the ability to work as part of a team and a desire to work in a challenging yet beautiful backcountry setting. Come and join CFI this summer!

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

CFI has multiple major trail construction, maintenance, and restoration projects planned for the 2025 season. Crews will work together in implementing trail projects; preparing and carrying out project planning, coordinating with the horse packer for transporting supplies, supervising basecamp operations (including tidiness, Leave No Trace, and health/safety), determining tool/equipment needs, and coordinating with work groups (Youth Corps and/or volunteer crews). All work hitches will be based out of a basecamp. Projects require hiking up to 8 miles a day at altitude, carrying heavy hand tools, performing extensive stone/timber work, and contributing as part of a team.

All available positions start in late May and run through late September.

TRAIL CREW LEADER

Crew Leaders on each project will be responsible for, regularly communicating and updating CFI Field Projects Managers/Coordinators and the Forest Service Peak Manager of the status of the project; train conservation corps crews and CFI crew members in the various aspects of trail construction required for the projects; execute work priorities as per described in project construction notes; ensure project deliverables are met while identifying project challenges and pro-actively prescribing solutions. Additionally, Crew Leaders are responsible for the day-to-day management of the project, setting and maintaining a high standard of trail work for the crew, and promoting positivity and actively motivating their crew every day.

Previous leadership experience is required.

LOCATIONS

Project worksite locations are often technically challenging with steep and unstable terrain. Steep cross slopes (45+ degrees in areas) are regularly encountered, and talus fields with large rocks can be unstable at these locations.

Mount Democrat (near Alma, CO):

2025 will be the first of two seasons on Mount Democrat. Work will focus on improving the existing trail with extensive heavy reconstruction. Work will include installing both stone and timber structures to stabilize the trail and prevent further soil loss and resource damage. The work in 2025 will focus on priority sections identified by CFI, and include the installation of walls, steps, and staircases to improve trail conditions. Worksite locations will change throughout the season, but all sites will require a hike from the trailhead (12,000ft.) with significant elevation gains of up to 2,000 feet each day. The work will be highly technical in nature, using dry stone masonry techniques, native timber, and dimensional lumber to construct a variety of structures. Griphoists and rigging equipment will be utilized to quarry material from long distances over steep and loose terrain.

Work schedule is eight days on, six days off Tuesday thru Tuesday. Working ten-hour days. Worksite locations will require long hikes each day with technically challenging work. Those that are strong hikers, love stonework, and possess the desire to challenge themselves are encouraged to apply. This project will require strong project planning skills and an elevated level of independence and commitment. Experience managing crew/projects is strongly preferred to be considered for a Crew Lead position as well as any experience working with stone structures, rigging equipment and pack stock. Good communication, teaching, and organizational skills are an essential part of this position, as well as a positive attitude, healthy ego, a willingness to be the teacher as well as a student, and desire to push oneself to the limit.

Blue-Bierd (near Idaho Springs & Georgetown, CO)

New for the 2025 field season, The Blue-Bierd crew will be splitting their season evenly between two different projects. Project number one will be reconstructing the boardwalk on Mount Bierstadt. And project number 2 will consist of heavy reconstruction through the landslide on Blue Sky. The crew's objective this season is to focus on priority sections of existing trail, coming in hot and hitting them hard. Each peak will have approximately four 8-day work hitches throughout the duration of the season.

Mount Bierstadt: The crew will spend approximately 70% of their time on Bierstadt rebuilding (re-decking) the boardwalk portion of the trail through the wetland area near the trailhead. After the boardwalk is complete, the crew will spend the remaining time on Bierstadt doing heavy reconstruction projects on the existing trail using both timber and stone. Those with carpentry skills and experience building trail structures with dimensional lumber are encouraged to apply!

Mount Blue Sky: The crew will spend the other 50 percent of their season doing heavy reconstruction work on the portion of the Echo Lake trail that was covered by a landslide in 2019. The crew will construct a variety of stone structures, to help harden and build a more sustainable section of trail through this unstable area. The worksite sits at around 12,000 ft. and

will require a strenuous hike each day. This project will mostly consist of rock work, and structures built using dry set stone masonry techniques.

Work schedule is eight days on, six days off. Working ten-hour days. Applicants should have strong project planning and management skills and the ability to work autonomously in a backcountry setting. Experience managing large-scale, technically complex projects is a desirable qualification to be considered for this Crew Lead position as is experience with rock work and building trail structures with dimensional lumber.

Mount Shavano (near Salida, CO):

This project is the most technically challenging and hazardous work site that CFI has taken on in recent years. The cross slope is very steep (exceeding 45 degrees in areas) and unstable. Rigging equipment will be used daily to mitigate risk. It requires a 3-mile hike with 3,000 feet of elevation gain EVERYDAY to get to the worksite at ~14,000!

2025 will mark the fourth year of the two separate major trail re-route projects on Shavano. One will focus on full bench construction below tree line initially, and then trail restoration work up high for the second half of the season. The other project will focus on building new trail in the alpine, at an elevation of around 14,000 ft with intermittent full bench construction and a variety of different stone structures. Both re-routes will be completed by two separate CFI crews. Both crews will be backcountry camping for the duration of the season while on hitch. Each crew will function completely independent of each other for the full duration of the season. This is two different projects happening simultaneously on the same peak.

*The **upper work site** has a long strenuous hike to and from the worksite daily. Approximately 6 miles round-trip with 3,000 vertical ft. of elevation gain/loss. Primary work will consist of all new trail construction using full bench (40%) and dry set stone masonry (50%) techniques, transporting material long distances on very steep, loose slopes, trail delineation through talus fields, building structures such as stairs and walls with locally sourced materials that require various rigging techniques. Secondary work will be the installation of timber structures just below tree line (10%).*

The **lower work site** will be focused on finishing the new re-route during the first half of the season using full-bench construction techniques (40%) as well as building some rock structures (20%). After completing the re-route mid-season the crew will then transition into a restoration focused crew and will begin the multi-year restoration process on the upper flanks of the mountain. The second half of the season will require long hikes of up to 2.5 miles with up to 2,500 ft. of elevation gain *EVERYDAY!* This project is diverse in its scope of work and will require a wide breadth of different trail construction and restoration techniques.

Work schedule is 8 days on, six days off. Working ten-hour days. The technical nature of both projects prefers applicants (project dependent) with multiple years of experience in rock work, full bench construction, trail restoration, experience running a chainsaw, rigging experience using a grip hoist, and a familiarity with working in steep, technical terrain.

Crew Lead Positions: Preference will be given to candidates with experience managing large scale projects

WAGES AND BENEFITS

*Crew Leader positions range from: **\$25.00 to \$29.00/hr***

Benefits Include:

- \$30/day per diem for field days
- Up to \$400 Gear Allowance
- Up to \$350 Medical Training Reimbursement
- Local Gym Membership with access to fitness classes
- Performance-based end of season bonus
- 401k with company match upon start of third season
- Sweet CFI Uniform/Swag
- Pro Deals on outdoor gear and equipment

CFI leases a 5-acre property located on Twin Lakes from the USFS. This property has two rustic off-grid yurts (no electricity, no running water) with porta-potties. Staff working on this project are welcome to stay here on their time off.

POSITION DUTIES

- Implement trail construction and maintenance projects at high altitude (10-14,000+ feet), including:
 - Extensive rock work including rock steps and walls
 - Restoration including alpine tundra stabilization and re-vegetation
 - Serving as the on-mountain expert on technical trail construction or restoration/re-vegetation work and ensure that project work is being constructed, meeting time qualifications and CFI's quality standards
 - Setting regular project goals/priorities
 - Providing/facilitating solutions for working through problem areas
- Coordinate with CFI staff and US Forest Service (USFS) to implement CFI's project goals
- Report on progress of field projects to CFI staff regularly
- Oversee the work of a 6–10-person conservation corps crew, providing training, guidance, and feedback to crew leaders/members as necessary
- Ensuring CFI staff and corps have healthy interactions with public/hikers
- Train CFI staff and/or youth corps and/or volunteers in project tasks/techniques
- Ensure project safety and quality.
- Prepare, transport, facilitate, and manage base-camp setup and all relevant tools and gear needed from CFI's equipment caches
- Identify project challenges and pro-actively prescribe solutions
- Supervise basecamp operations (set-up, sanitation, Leave No Trace, etc.)
- Foster a positive, open, engaging, and motivating experience for volunteers and/or youth corps members
- Educate self, volunteers, and/or youth corps in alpine ecology and Leave No Trace principles
- Education/outreach tasks including:
 - Educating volunteers and/or youth corps crew members on Leave No Trace and alpine ecology topics
 - Contacting hikers/climbers on-mountain and present them with information about Leave No Trace and CFI

- Photograph worksites before, during and after work to document on-the-ground work accomplishments and share these images/videos with crew photographer
- Complete daily work journals that record accomplishments neatly and accurately
- Compile detailed project reports at the conclusion of each hitch
- Submit ALL receipts to the CFI Controller in a timely manner
- Other tasks as assigned to contribute to the overall implementation and operations of CFI's projects

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Technical/Physical

- **Excellent physical fitness and ability to exert oneself at 13,000 + feet in elevation.**
- Trail building/maintenance experience in a supervisory role (or trail experience plus other project and people management experience). 3+ seasons of trail work experience preferred for Crew Leader Positions
- Strong rock work skillset (stairs, retaining walls, check dams, etc.) as pertaining to trails
- Experience working with crosscut saw/chainsaws and performing roughhewn timber carpentry
- Experience working with rigging equipment
- Proficiency in travelling (hiking and navigating) and living in mountain backcountry environments
- Strong communication and "soft skills"
- Willingness and ability to live and perform strenuous work at high altitude for multiple consecutive days

Leadership

- Outdoor leadership experience (or other leadership background)
- Positive, professional attitude
- A strong passion for leading volunteers and/or young adults and related experience
- Excellent communication, motivational, and interpersonal skills applicable to a group outdoor setting

Management/logistical

- Excellent organization, planning and logistical skills
- Ability to manage multiple tasks and delegate, as necessary
- Ability to pro-actively solve problems, work independently, and be creative and resourceful
- Passionate about the outdoors and possesses a strong conservation ethic
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Attention to detail

Other desirable qualifications include:

- S212 Chainsaw Training / FS Crosscut Certification
- Education or background in Natural Resource Management, Forestry, Ecology, Botany, or related field
- Botany/Ecology background (through education and/or work experience)
- Experience working within or managing a budget
- Experience working with pack stock
- Experience working for or with the US Forest Service

- Environmental education experience
- Ecological restoration experience
- Familiarity with the alpine environment and ecology
- Digital photography/multimedia skills including photographing project accomplishments and field activities

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ALL APPLICANTS MUST HAVE:

- Current valid driver's license and good driving record
- Current certification in either Wilderness First Aid (WFA) *or* Wilderness First Responder (WFR), or have obtained these by the first date of employment
- Current CPR certification
- Personal outdoor camping/backpacking/hiking equipment
- Be available for the full term of the position – May 19th - September 28th, 2025

WORK SCHEDULE

Work schedule is 8 days on, 6 days off Tuesday through Tuesday

HOW TO APPLY

Positions available until filled. We will begin reviewing applicants in early November. Preference will be given to applications received by **Tuesday, December 31st, 2024** (*though the sooner you submit your application the better*).

To apply, you will need to submit 1) CFI online application, 2) one-page cover letter, and 3) your resume as follows:

- Fill out and submit an online **Application for Seasonal Employment & Internships** (link available on our website at www.14ers.org)
- Included in the online application will be instructions for how to submit your cover letter and resume to CFI. (NOTE: Cover letter and resume MUST be in MS Word or PDF format.)

If you have trouble with the online application form, submitting your materials in PDF or MS Word format, or submitting your cover letter and resume electronically, contact hire@14ers.org.

Finalists will be required to complete a thorough background check, and a driving background check.

All questions pertaining to these positions can be directed to hire@14ers.org. (Please, no phone inquiries). For additional information about CFI, please visit our website at www.14ers.org.

The Colorado Fourteeners Initiative is an equal opportunity employer.

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