



Colorado Fourteeners Initiative  
A Partnership for Preservation

## **2025 Seasonal Position Announcement**

### **CREW MEMBER / PHOTOGRAPHER - FIXED SITE PROJECT**

on BACKCOUNTRY TRAIL CREW - {\$20.00 to \$25.00 /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](http://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 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 MEMBER / PHOTOGRAPHER**

Do you enjoy doing trail work *AND* taking high quality photos? This exciting position could be for you. Trail work experience preferred along with a basic understanding of photography and the ability/artistic desire to take high quality photos. In addition to working alongside the crew to build new trail (85% of duties), this individual will also be responsible for documenting progress of the project throughout the field season using still photos and videos (15% of duties). CFI will provide a GoPro to this individual to be used daily at the worksite. Those that have their own DSLR or photography/videography gear are welcome to use their own equipment as well. This Crew Member/Photographer will be required to take photos for a minimum of one hour each day to help document the work happening up on the mountain. Lots of before and after photos along with great action shots are what CFI needs from this position.

**Additionally, this individual will be responsible for sorting, uploading, and organizing all of the best photos captured at the end of each hitch to the CFI cloud storage.** CFI is looking for someone highly organized, creative, and competent with digital images and video to fill this role on each fixed site project. Crew Members will work under the direction of their CFI Crew Leader to complete all project objectives set by the Forest Service Peak Manager and CFI Field Projects Managers/Coordinators.

## 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. A positive attitude, healthy ego, the willingness to be the teacher as well as a student, and the desire to push oneself is required for these positions.

### **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 Tuesday through Tuesday. Working ten-hour days.

**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 continue to 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 a 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 Tuesday through Tuesday. Working ten-hour days. The technical nature of both projects prefers applicants with multiple years of experience in rock work, full bench construction, trail restoration, using a grip hoist, and a familiarity with working in steep, technical terrain.

**WAGES AND BENEFITS**

*Crew Member positions range from: **\$20.00 to \$25.00/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 in their time off.*

**If deemed necessary**, travel with a personal vehicle is reimbursed at the federal rate.

### **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
- Photography/videography
  - Taking high quality photos/videos for a minimum of 1 hour each work day
    - Before and after photos of every major structure and project
    - Action shots of crew members, youth corps and volunteers
  - Responsible for sorting, uploading and organizing all the best photos and videos to the CFI drive at the end of every hitch, including photos/videos taken from other crew members
- Coordinate with CFI staff and US Forest Service (USFS) to implement CFI's project goals
- Assist CFI Crew Leader with conservation corps crew, by providing training, guidance, and feedback
- Ensure project safety and quality
- Assist in the preparation, transport, and setup of all base-camp equipment as well as gathering all tools necessary for the project
- Identify project challenges and pro-actively prescribe solutions
- 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
- 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.**
- 2+ years of trail building/maintenance experience
- Experience with dry-set stone masonry techniques (stairs, retaining walls, check dams, etc.)
- Experience working with crosscut saw/chainsaws and performing roughhewn timber carpentry
- Experience working with rigging equipment
- A positive attitude
- The desire to learn
- The desire to challenge themselves
- Proficiency in travelling (hiking and navigating) and living in mountain backcountry environments
- Willingness and ability to live and perform strenuous work at high altitude for multiple consecutive days

### **Photography/Videography**

- Basic understanding of photography and videography
- Passionate and motivated to take high quality photos
- Highly organized with a strong attention to detail
- Excellent communication
- Experience documenting field projects and activities

### **Leadership**

- Outdoor leadership experience
- 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 multi-task 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 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

### **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 19<sup>th</sup> - September 28<sup>th</sup>, 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 31<sup>st</sup>, 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 (with a link to your portfolio), 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:hire@14ers.org). (Please, no phone inquiries). For additional information about CFI, please visit our website at [www.14ers.org](http://www.14ers.org).

***The Colorado Fourteeners Initiative is an equal opportunity employer.***

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