

## 2018 USDA Forest Service Volunteers & Service Award Recipients

In fiscal year 2018, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service reported more than 120,000 volunteer and service opportunities on Forest lands and units. Together, volunteers and service participants contributed 5.2 million hours valued at \$128.2 million<sup>1</sup> and equivalent to 2,885 full-time employees—nearly 10 percent of the Forest Service permanent workforce. Trail maintenance and improvements, access and collaboration are themes that were most prevalent in the 55 plus nominations in five categories: Citizen Stewardship & Partnerships, Cultural Diversity, Enduring Service, Leadership and Restoration. The Forest Service is proud to recognize these individuals, organizations and partners for their exceptional work and commitment to natural and cultural resources and conservation management.

### Citizen Stewardship & Partnerships

#### Flagstaff Trails Initiative, Coconino National Forest, Southwest Region



Adam Milnor of Rivers and Trails in Conservation Assistance leads a Flagstaff Trails initiative meeting. USDA Forest Service photo.

A collaboration between the City of Flagstaff, Coconino County, Arizona State Parks, National Park Service, and multiple non-governmental organizations and businesses, the Flagstaff Trails Initiative (FTI) is a cross-jurisdictional strategy for recreational trails in the Flagstaff region of Coconino County, Arizona. The collaborative seeks to improve the quality and connectivity of, and community support for, a sustainable trail system that balances the demand for recreation with the community’s vision for conservation, development and health. In their first full year of operations, the FTI made significant headways. 2018 accomplishments included numerous public outreach meetings and a survey that garnered 600 responses from public citizens to inform the FTI’s work; over \$200,000 raised from foundations for this effort; and thousands of hours of work by hundreds of volunteers on trail and restoration projects. FTI is an outstanding illustration of how shared stewardship

with States, local communities and municipalities elevates planning and decision-making from the national forest level to all constituencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Independent Sector valuation of the volunteer hour is \$24.69 in 2018. <https://independentsector.org/news-post/value-of-volunteer-time-release/>. Visit <https://www.fs.fed.us/working-with-us> to learn more about how you can become a Forest Service volunteer.



## Cultural Diversity

### Community Training Works, Apalachicola National Forest, Southern Region



Community Training Works crew members prepare for a day's work with their crew leaders. USDA Forest Service photo.

Community Training Works (CTW), a Florida-based not-for-profit that supports workforce development for underserved young adults and veterans, has been an outstanding partner to the National Forests in Florida. Since 2015, CTW has provided opportunities for young adults to work outdoors and fuel their passion for conservation on Forest lands. In 2018, CTW participants contributed 2,026 hours of service—mowing, picking up trash and debris, weed-eating and trail maintenance—at popular recreation destinations such as the Fort Gadsden Nature Trail, Bradwell Bay Wilderness, Leon Sinks, Silver Lake OHV Loop, Camel Lake Loop, Wright Lake Trail and Trail of Lakes on the Apalachicola National Forest. Through this partnership, crew members are introduced to natural resources management and career pathways. The young men and women who serve on these partnerships are empowered to make a difference, develop an appreciation for conservation stewardship and acquire marketable skills and experience in conservation resource management. A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Service Corps member organization, CTW participants who complete an approved term of service are eligible to receive the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award and the Public Lands Corps non-competitive two-year special hiring certification.

## Enduring Service

### Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, Southern Region



Maribel, Saskia, Glen, Tony, Linda, John, Heather, and Frieda (the dog) on the Tuscarora Trail in route to repair the Gerhard Shelter privy roof and deliver supplies. USDA Forest Service photo.

Founded on volunteerism and public service to outdoor enthusiasts in the Mid-Atlantic region, the PATC has sustained a shared stewardship partnership with the Forest Service for over 90 years. Established in November 1927 to survey and construct hundreds of miles of the Appalachian Trail and a 2,100-mile footpath following the crest of the Appalachian mountain chain, PATC volunteers now maintain over 255 miles of trails and 3 trail shelters and manage and maintain the 250 mile Tuscarora Trail, annually. Over the years, PATC volunteers have assisted with the layout and construction of parts of the Massanutten National Recreation Trail, restored a historic log cabin in the Elizabeth Furnace Recreation Area and a wooden platform on the Kennedy Peak Observation Tower, and performed multiple trail relocations and bridge construction projects. In 2018, they wrote and produced two trail guide books and three

companion topographic maps to aid trail users, worked with other volunteer groups such as equestrian, mountain bikers, runners and other hiking groups to leverage their capacity for trail maintenance, and established web-based tools to support the partnership.



**John Lorenzana, Sierra National Forest, Pacific Southwest Region**



John Lorenzana at work on a plant resource guide, one of many publications he authored during his 24 years of volunteer service. USDA Forest Service photo.

Since his retirement from the Sierra National Forest in 1994, John Lorenzana has volunteered on the forest as a mentor to rangeland managers and seasonal interns, helping to build capacity in plant identification, rangeland compliance and monitoring and grazing permit administration. He has authored plant resource guide publications and facilitated numerous trainings for range conservationists and resource managers to improve awareness about changing field methods and new scientific knowledge. John’s personality is warm and engaging. Coupled with his knowledge and expertise he has effectively delivered training, education and critical information about plant species, vegetation types, and the ecology of wetlands associated with Pacific Southwest Region rangelands. His work with Forest Service employees, volunteers and service participants has significantly improved the conditions of rangelands. Over

his 24-year volunteer career, John has contributed nearly 10,000 hours to strengthen Forest Service efforts to build capacity in support of the Agency’s mission.

**Leadership**

**Colorado Mountain Club, Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands, Rocky Mountain Region**



Julie Mach, Colorado Mountain Club Director of Conservation and Volunteer & Partnership Coordinator. Photo courtesy Colorado Mountain Club.

The Colorado Mountain Club (CMC) is a conservation management public lands leader working throughout Colorado and in partnership with the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Their work is most noteworthy on the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands in the Upper Arkansas River Valley (UARV). CMC has a joint agreement with the Forest Service and BLM to support a full time Volunteer and Partnership Coordinator and provide trail stewardship crews. This collaboration has resulted in new partnerships, collaborations and structure to the volunteer programs that support BLM and Forest Service work in the UARV. In 2018, CMC facilitated collaborations with more than 30 partner organizations whose volunteers contributed over 60,000 hours. They hosted annual trainings that supported the USFS and other land managers and equipped volunteer leaders with hard and soft skills, specific trail building skills, and safety

knowledge. CMC has led volunteer stewardship projects for over 30 plus years. Their leadership is critical to the effectiveness of volunteerism and service on the Leadville and Salida Ranger Districts.



## Restoration

### University of Minnesota Crookston Natural Resources Club, Chippewa National Forest, Eastern Region



Crookston Crew members show off their dibbles (a tool for planting seedlings). Photo courtesy University of Minnesota Crookston.

Under the leadership of club advisors Phil Baird, Tom Feiro and Laura Bell, the University of Minnesota Crookston Natural Resources Club (affectionately known as the “Crookston Crew”) students, staff, faculty, alumni and families have volunteered on the Chippewa National Forest since 1983. Volunteers work on projects to reforest areas, restore natural resource conditions, and help ecosystems become more resilient after insect and disease infestations and planned timber harvests. The Crookston Crew’s planting and animal damage control contributions have helped the Chippewa National Forest achieve and exceed reforestation targets on an annual basis. Over consecutive years, the 35–50 Crookston Crew volunteers who convene annually have planted 200,000 seedlings and contributed 22,000 hours valued at \$550,000! The Crookston Crew’s arrival in the spring and fall is an important and much anticipated tradition that is helping the Chippewa National Forest achieve their reforestation targets.

