

Volunteer Trail Steward Position Description

(04/30/14)

This position is filled by one or more volunteers working on state, public, and municipal lands within the 62,000-acre Red Cliffs Desert Reserve (Reserve) in Washington County, Utah. The Reserve is administered by the Washington County Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Administrator in collaboration with partner agencies and municipalities.

Trail stewards work as individuals, couples, or teams in monitoring trail conditions, conducting minor trail maintenance, providing visitor information, and reporting vandalism and non-compliance with Reserve regulations. Work entails hiking, mountain biking, or horseback riding on designated trails in the Reserve in a desert environment with rugged topography and extreme temperatures during seasons of the year.

Stewards are expected to provide their own transportation to assigned work sites and to be properly attired to promote personal safety in a striking and sometimes difficult environment. Volunteers will be provided with clothing items by the HCP Administrator's office to identify themselves as representatives of the Reserve and other supplies or equipment needed to safely accomplish their assignments.

Stewards must attend specific training sessions provided by the HCP staff to develop sufficient understanding of Reserve history, purpose, and management to respond to visitor questions and recognize non-compliance when it is observed while on trail duty. Other training will be provided to increase the volunteers' knowledge of Reserve biology and habitat requirements essential to Reserve management.

Stewards will regularly submit written reports to the HCP Administrator's office to document time spent on assignment, areas monitored, and observations made on trail conditions, maintenance needs, important wildlife sightings, visitor activity, and non-compliance. From time-to-time, stewards with sufficient expertise or training may be assigned, at their convenience, to conduct photographic or GPS surveys and documentation, prepare trail guides or information, or assist HCP staff and agency biologists in wildlife surveys or clearances.

In general, stewards are expected to engage in trail monitoring in assigned areas on an average of 2 hours per week or more, where possible. Times, dates, and locations should be coordinated with and reported to the HCP staff and/or the Volunteer Coordinator.

The Reserve supports a wide variety of wild animals, insects, and environmental elements such as flood channels, steep inclines, cliff faces, jagged rocks, sandy washes, thorny vegetation, rock slides, intense sunlight, and hot or cold temperatures. Because many, if not all, of these elements can cause discomfort or harm, stewards will be required to certify that their general health and physical condition is sufficiently sound to allow completion of trail duties in such an environment.