

VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE: Trail Steward Volunteer
LOCATION: Chinsegut Nature Center & Wildlife Environmental Area
SUPERVISOR: Chinsegut Nature Center Director

Background:

The Chinsegut Wildlife and Environmental Area and Nature Center (CWEA) is unique in the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) wildlife management system, for its strong focus on providing conservation education programs to the public.

The CWEA is composed of two tracts. The 408-acre Nature Center Tract contains rolling sandhills and scenic Mays Prairie, hiking trails and boardwalks, and a 49-person capacity Nature Center. The 420-acre Big Pine tract has the distinction of being one of the largest contiguous (and the southern-most) tracts of old-growth longleaf pine in Florida and also contains hiking trails. The diverse natural communities of the CWEA provide habitats attractive to many wildlife species (including several that are endangered or species of special concern).

Position Responsibilities:

Trail Steward Volunteers will monitor and maintain existing trails and construct new trails to maximize conservation education through recreation. Future projects for Chinsegut include rerouting existing trails to better interpret the natural resources of this area and expanding the trail system by connecting the Nature Center and Big Pine tracts to one another and to neighboring public lands.

Assigned Tasks:

- Monitor trail conditions on a schedule developed with the Nature Center Director. Clear vegetation to maintain trail treads and clearances at required standards and remove obstacles such as downed limbs.
- Report any resource problems such as erosion or social (unauthorized trails) and work with FWC staff and other volunteers to correct problems.
- Repair or install educational or directional signage as needed
- Install benches or other trail amenities as needed
- Work with FWC staff and other volunteers to clear and mark new trails
- Orient visitors to the trail and provide guided trail orientation as needed.
- Assist with clearing new or existing fire breaks
- Maintain and store all equipment according to directions after each use
- Complete other tasks as assigned by The Nature Center Director

Skills/Previous Experience/Qualifications:

Previous experience with developing and building trails, bridges etc.

Plentiful Experience with gardening tools, such as rakes, shovels, hoes, weed wackers etc

Working with power tools (for example, chainsaws, routers, drills, table or circular saw)
Experience with exterior painting or staining
Able to lift 50-60 pounds
Must possess a valid drivers license
Ability to operate an ATV and tractor

Requirements:

- Complete required orientation and training
- Complete appropriate application and other administrative forms correctly
- Must be willing to undergo a security check
- Accurately record volunteer hours
- Contribute at least 12 hours of scheduled work each month
- Contact director within 24 hours of observing problems on the WEA
- Be willing to participate in appropriate training opportunities

Benefits: The Trail Steward volunteer will get a “behind the scenes” exposure to wildlife and land management on a Wildlife Management Area, through interactions with CWEA and other FWC staff. The volunteer will be able to learn and apply technical knowledge in trail development and construction.

Length of Commitment: Trails become in need of upkeep and maintenance throughout the year. Trail Steward Volunteers need to commit to at least 100 hours per year.

Equipment Issued:

- Uniform T-shirt
- Nametag
- Volunteer Handbook
- Educational and training materials
- Trail maintenance equipment

Chinsegut Nature Center Director Date

Chinsegut Trail Steward Date

TrailSteward02/2004