



# CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TRAIL COALITION ADOPTER PROGRAM FOR LAND AGENCY PARTNERS

## What is the CDTC Adopter Program?

The CDTC Adopter Program brings additional capacity to managing agencies by recruiting, training, supervising, and coordinating volunteers to help maintain the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDT). Working under a volunteer agreement with local land management agencies along the CDT, adopters perform basic trail maintenance tasks. Managing agency personnel determine the scope of work (often times this is drainage clearance, brushing, and trail marking). CDTC Adopters help to keep the CDT open and maintained, and can be additional eyes and ears on the ground to help keep local managers and other partner organizations informed of trail conditions.

## About the Continental Divide Trail Coalition (CDTC)

The CDTC is an MOU and Challenge Cost Share cooperator working with the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to help coordinate and facilitate volunteer efforts on the CDT, especially where there may be gaps or needs. The CDTC's mission is to complete, promote, and protect the CDT by building a diverse trail community, providing up-to-date information to the public, and encouraging stewardship of the Trail.

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## CDTC Adopter Program Key Points

- The CDTC Adopter Program does not preclude other volunteer and partner organizations from creating their own Adopt-a-Trail style program for the CDT, or from working directly with local units to maintain portions of the official CDT.
- The CDTC Adopter Program is designed to be flexible to meet the needs and comfort levels of the local unit. Local units can work directly with volunteers or have CDTC supervise them. This program can easily be integrated into preexisting volunteer trail maintenance management programs within the unit.
- Close coordination with local CDT land managers is the foundation to this adopt-a-trail program. Prior to any CDTC volunteer doing work on the ground, CDTC will work with the local unit to identify any specific work needs and specifications, and ensure the volunteers are properly trained, supervised, have appropriate PPE, and working under a valid volunteer agreement with the local unit.



## Purpose and Benefits of the CDTC Adopter Program

- Help connect the public to their public lands through stewardship activities, instill in adopters a sense of pride and connection to their adopted segment, and to the CDT as a whole.
- **The land managers can define what their trail maintenance needs are and shape the CDTC Adopters' scope of work.** The CDTC will work closely with local land managers to identify how the CDTC Adopter Program might best support the CDT on their unit.

## CDTC Adopter Program Overview

Prior to any CDTC volunteer doing work on the CDT, CDTC will work with local land managers to:

- Identify CDT segments available to be adopted by CDTC volunteers.
- Coordinate on any specific adopter training needs or stipulations given local conditions or resource concerns.
- In partnership with the local unit, develop a group volunteer service agreement (OF301a and OF301b) detailing the work to be done.
- Develop Communications Protocols for volunteers and land manager POC
- Ensure any required trainings and/or certifications are completed prior to the volunteer beginning work on the ground or as specified in the agreement.
- Ensure appropriate PPE is provided, either by CDTC or in partnership with the local land management unit.

## Volunteer Service Agreements (VSAs)

Upon completion of the CDTC Adopter Training, Adopters will be signed up as volunteers under a Forest Service Group Volunteer agreement (OF-301a) with the local unit. CDTC will be designated as the group volunteer organization. Individual CDTC volunteers will be added to the Forest Service group volunteer agreement as necessary as an attachment, dependent on whether training and/or certification requirements are met.

The volunteer agreement will detail work to be done, locations, dates, trainings, certifications, personal protective equipment required, and risk analysis. The volunteer agreement will be authorized and signed by the local line officer prior to the CDTC volunteer working. The volunteer agreement will also include a designated on-site supervisor, who will have the ability and authority to watch operations, recognize hazards, and stop and/or shut down operations based on hazards, as required by OSHA.

## Who can be a CDTC Adopter?

Anyone who can commit to the CDTC Trail Adopter Requirements outlined below. Potential CDTC Adopters include individuals, families, groups or clubs, businesses and organizations.

## What is Required of a CDTC Adopter?

- Be physically able to perform trail maintenance work and/or other duties required, including being able to access the Trail. Must be able to hike for long periods and distances, stand, climb, bend, kneel, sit, stoop, reach and lift, and push or pull.
- Attend a 2-day CDTC Adopter Training, which includes a classroom and field portion, prior to working on the trail.
- Be able to meet any additional training or certification requirements that may be required for the project (such as Forest Service crosscut and/or chain saw certifications).
- Maintain their adopted section a minimum of twice a year in accordance with the respective land manager's trail objectives and standards, as described in the CDTC Adopter Guide.



- Submit a [CDTC Adopter Report Form](#) to CDTC after visiting their adopted segment.
- Uphold a positive and effective line of communication with the land managers.
- Abide by the communication protocols and adhere to safety standards and requirements as outlined by the managing agency and documented in the volunteer agreement.
- Ensure a respectful and harassment-free volunteer work environment.
- Uphold a friendly and professional demeanor when encountering trail users while undertaking or hiking to/from trail maintenance efforts on public lands.
- When working independently or with a group, at least one person must be certified in First Aid/CPR.

Adopters will fill out the Forest Service Volunteer Roster form (OF-301b) at the CDDTC Adopter Training. CDTC will send this to the local land manager. Any additional volunteers who assist the Adopter on their adopted segment will also fill out this form before volunteering and be current with all necessary trainings and/or certifications. CDTC will ensure additions or changes to the form are authorized by the local land manager.

## How does one become a CDTC Adopter?

### An interested individual or group will:

1. Visit the CDTC interactive [CDT Adopter Map](#) to identify segments available to be Adopted.
2. Fill out the [Adopter Interest Form](#) on the same webpage. This notifies CDTC staff of where interested CDTC Adopters are located and which segments they are interested in.

### CDTC will:

1. Contact the local land manager to discuss the prospective local volunteer interest and the CDTC Adopter Program.
  - If a land manager is interested, CDTC will work with the land manager to identify how best to meet their needs, including scope of work, check-in/check-out protocols, and any other local requirements.
  - This will be documented in a group volunteer agreement to be signed by the local line officer. See volunteer agreement section above.
2. Upon approval from the local land manager CDTC will schedule a CDTC Adopter training in the local area. This is mandatory for interested CDTC Adopters to attend prior to performing work on the Trail (a CDTC Adopter will not perform work on the Trail without a signed volunteer agreement and CDTC Adopter Training certification).
  - CDTC will coordinate with the local land manager to identify on potential adopter training locations. CDTC will put on the training following all agency safety protocols and requirements. It is preferable to have an agency representative attend and speak at the training, if possible, to talk about the area, communications, safety, expectations, and to build a foundation of understanding between USFS, CDTC, and volunteers.
  - Some agency reps have provided appendices to our training curriculum to include the following:

*Additional Trainings in the area*

*Additional Volunteer Opportunities in the area*

*Local Agency Contact Information*

## What does the 2 day CDTC Adopter Training cover?

The CDTC Adopter Training includes a classroom and field portion. Topics covered (depending on the scope of work permitted by the land agency partner) includes:

- CDT Trail Standards and Specifications
- Risk Assessment and Analysis
- Tool Carrying, Use, Storage, and Safety



- Required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Corridor Clearance, Removing Sloughs and Berms, Building and Clearing D rains
- Wildlife Safety
- Leave No Trace
- Signing and Marking the CDT
- Communication Protocols in the case of an incident or emergency

## Medical/Emergency Protocols

The CDTC Adopter will visit the local land manager prior to the start of the project and will adhere to the local land unit's emergency contact and communication protocols. If an emergency or accident requiring medical treatment occurs during work covered under this agreement:

- The CDTC Adopter will contact the land manager directly, as described per their Communication Protocols Worksheet.
- CDTC will assist as possible and is responsible for pulling together required documentation in coordination with the Forest Service. Copies of the volunteer agreement, the volunteer sign-up roster, documentation regarding trainings/certifications, required PPE, etc will be provided by the CDTC. CDTC will assist the Forest Service with gathering any statements or other information needed from the volunteer as requested.
- The Forest Service will collect the above mentioned documentation for any OWCP claims, for submittal to the U.S. Department of Labor, who will review and determine whether or not an OWCP claim will be covered by the Agency.

Each field going CDTC Adopter or crew will have a minimum of one person on the crew currently certified in First Aid/CPR as well as a first aid kit; the first priority in a medical emergency will be the safety of the injured volunteer.

## Reporting Requirements

CDTC will send CDTC Adopter Reports to the local land managers on a quarterly basis, unless requested otherwise. By October 1st of each year, a volunteer hour summary report will be compiled by CDTC for the entire year's accomplishments to send to the local land managers. CDTC Adopters are encouraged to fill out the CDTC Adopter Report Form for each project they work on, and submit to CDTC after each field visit. Information collected in the reports include type of work, hours accomplished, and extent of work completed, maintenance issues/concerns, signed JHA, photographs, and larger scale problems or projects that are not appropriate for CDTC Adopters to undertake.



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