



Continental Divide Trail Coalition Volunteer Trail Crew Operations Information



The Continental Divide Trail Coalition

The Continental Divide Trail Coalition (CDTC) was formed in 2012 to assist and work alongside federal land management agencies in the protection and management of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. CDTC is a membership-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Golden, Colorado. Our mission is to complete, promote, and protect the CDT by building a strong and diverse trail community, providing up-to-date information to the public, and encouraging conservation and stewardship of the Trail, its corridor, and surrounding landscapes.

National Scenic Trails have a long history of being supported by strong public-private partnerships. Non-profit organizations like CDTC assist federal and state agencies by engaging the public, recruiting volunteer trail stewards, assisting in the completion of the Trail, and advocating for funding for Trail operations to support our federal agency partners.

What We Do

CDTC's efforts are guided by our mission to complete, promote, and protect the CDT:

- provide information to the public about accessing and using the Trail
- recruit, train and lead volunteers to build and maintain the Trail
- engage CDT Gateway Communities to build local support for the Trail and encourage the growth of outdoor recreation and tourism
- assist land management agencies with CDT programs on the ground, trail design and planning, project funding, and trail completion.
- ensure the CDT remains a nationally significant resource by assisting federal agencies where appropriate in project design and developments.

Volunteer Trail Crew Project Proposal Process

CDTC develops applications and proposals for volunteer trail work projects on a rolling basis from a number of sources and also in coordination with the agencies. Project selection is meant to be collaborative and meet the needs of and bring additional capacity to the land manager, local communities, and the Trail itself. Projects can range in technicality from easy to difficult; frontcountry to backcountry; diversity, equity, and inclusion-centric; construction, rehabilitation, or maintenance; or a combination. If time allows, the CDTC, project partner (if applicable), and/or land manager will scout the project to ensure the scope of work is suitable for volunteers and to identify objectives and overview logistics.

CDTC Volunteer Trail Crew Project Overview

Volunteer Management – When CDTC supports or hosts a volunteer project, CDTC handles all volunteer recruitment and on-site training, with assistance from agency partners and/or local partners when applicable. If the project has multiple 501(c)3 partner organizations involved, CDTC will coordinate responsibilities accordingly - meaning we will work with our partners to assist in marketing, volunteer recruitment, leadership, and tools, equipment, or gear. Volunteer registration and communication is typically handled by CDTC staff throughout the field season.

Project Design – When requested (especially in priority gap sections and projects) CDTC's Trail and Land Conservation Specialist can perform technical project design and planning in consultation or alongside land managers.



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Tools and Equipment - CDTC can provide most of the basic trail maintenance tools necessary to complete trail maintenance and construction projects. These include tread, corridor, and rock work tools. If other power tools or specialty tools are required, CDTC may request to coordinate with land managers or a local partner to ensure those tools are available.

Safety and Logistics - CDTC Field Programs staff all hold up-to-date Wilderness First Responder certifications and develop and familiar with pre-project Emergency Response Plans, communication protocols, and risk assessments and/or Job Hazard Analysis. On-site CDTC staff have all pertinent medical information for the registered volunteers, fully supplied medical kits, and inReach Delormes (with corresponding *CDTC Communication Protocols*) in case of emergency. CDTC works with field level staff to refine and agree to an emergency response plan and ensure roles and responsibilities are agreeable and clearly defined as appropriate.

Food and Water – Most CDTC projects provide an onsite volunteer crew chef in order to provide well balanced and safely prepared meals for volunteers. CDTC Crew Chefs provide 3 meals a day on site. CDTC will also provide water for projects but this can depend on project location, climate, and the season. CDTC will coordinate with the local land manager to ensure that other on site amenities, as appropriate, are provided as needed.

Though certain field projects seek specific needs, a typical one- to five-day CDTC led volunteer project follows the below timeline.

CDTC Pre-Project Planning

2 YEARS to 6 MONTHS in ADVANCE

- CDTC coordinates with land managers, volunteers, and partners to identify potential projects
- CDTC coordinates with partners and agencies to select annual projects (10-12 projects a year)
- When appropriate and/or requested CDTC seeks funding and support from partners and land agencies as needed
- CDTC and land agency partners coordinate to secure a volunteer service agreement

2 MONTHS PRIOR to PROJECT

- CDTC coordinates project site visit with land agency liaison when/if possible. If a site visit is not reasonable to accomplish because of scheduling or remoteness of project, CDTC coordinates with agency POC to identify work prior to CDTC crew arrival.
- CDTC communicates with land agency POC to confirm dates, scope of work, camping location, number of registered volunteers, and have them review the Project Specs and Emergency Response Plan (ERP).
- CDTC recruits project Crew Chef(s)

1 MONTH PRIOR to PROJECT

- CDTC emails registered volunteers Project Specs, Gear List, and pertinent maps
- CDTC manages Crew Chef, food budget, and chef gear needs
- CDTC develop staff travel plan
- Continued communication is positively upheld with land managers when necessary

1-2 WEEKS PRIOR to PROJECT

- CDTC continues management of registered volunteers



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- CDTC sends email to land agency POC when CDTC staff enter field, which includes the volunteer roster, ERP, Delorme contact info, etc. and sets up last minute in-field meetings if needed

CDTC Project Implementation

- CDTC Field Instructors travel to project basecamp, support Crew Chef needs, and scout worksite
- CDTC Field Instructors implement the project on-the-ground and lead volunteers
- Every project day begins with crew breakfast, lunch prep, stretch and safety, and explanation of work goals/expectations for the day
- Land managers are welcome to join the trail crew for any duration of the project

Post-Project

- Check-in with land agency POC immediately upon completion of project, return any loaned tools/gear
- CDTC sends follow-up email to volunteers and land agency POC with photos, project accomplishments, survey etc. within 2 weeks of project completion
- CDTC handles Crew Chef reimbursement
- CDTC sends post-project survey, volunteer accomplishments reports, hours, signed JHA, final roster, etc to land agency POC in September and October

CDTC Staff

Field Programs Manager

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Field Programs Coordinator

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Continental Divide Trail Coalition Volunteer Trail Crew Operations Information



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