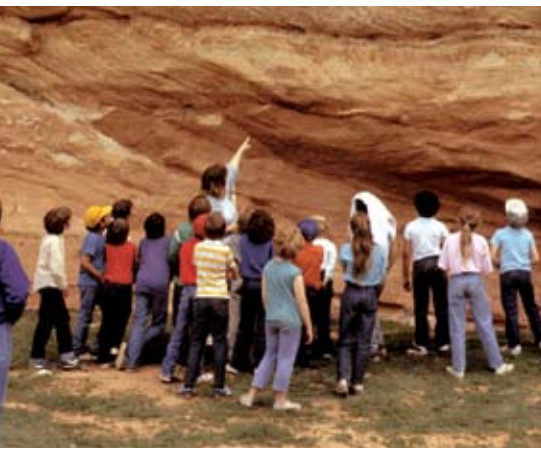


ARTS. PARKS. HISTORY.

Wyoming State Parks, Historic Sites & Trails

Thanks for lending us a hand.



Volunteer handbook

www.ArtsParksHistory.com

Wyoming residents and visitors enjoy more enriched and well-rounded lives because the Wyoming Department of State Parks & Cultural Resources provides opportunities to learn and enjoy the state's arts, parks and history.

Welcome to our volunteer program

You are joining many other generous individuals and groups who volunteer their time and talent to help make Wyoming's state parks, historic sites and trails a fun and educational experience for several million visitors each year. It is our desire to provide you with a challenging and rewarding experience that is beneficial to you, our sites and our visitors.

As a volunteer you play an important role in the overall "Quality of Life Mission" of the Wyoming Division of State Parks, Historic Sites & Trails by helping to preserve and protect these special places while providing for their use and enjoyment by our visitors.

Volunteering is important

- Volunteering is an opportunity to help preserve our natural and cultural heritage for future generations.
- Volunteers are ambassadors to our sites.
- Volunteers help create a better understanding of our sites and build a meaningful bond between a community and its local site.
- Volunteers provide support that enhances site operations.



More than 2 million people visit our state parks,
historic sites and trails each year.

The story of the Wyoming Division of State

Wyoming's system of state parks, historic sites and trails grew out of the federal government's purchase of Hot Springs State Park from the Shoshones and Arapahos in 1896. Wyoming formally accepted the lands granted by Congress in 1897. The State Parks Commission was created in 1934 and comprised the governor, state engineer and commissioner of public lands to acquire private land for parks, camp-



grounds or recreational purposes, and to set aside any unused state land. During the Great Depression in 1934, the state of Wyoming had 19 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps. A showpiece of the CCC projects resulted in the development of Guernsey State Park, which entered the state park system in 1957 and is now

a National Historic Landmark. In 1959, the Historical Landmarks Commission was transferred to the Archives, Museums and Historical Department, which includes Wyoming's historic sites. In 1969, the Wyoming Recreation Commission was established with the merging of the State Parks Commission and the Land and Water Conservation Commission. The federal Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) is

Parks, Historic Sites & Trails

a close partner of Wyoming State Parks, Historic Sites & Trails, with six of the large reservoir parks located on BOR lands. Sinks Canyon and Curt Gowdy state parks were created in 1971; 10 years later Edness K. Wilkins came on board, followed the next year by Bear River State Park. In 1989, Wyoming government reorganized into cabinet level departments, and the Wyoming Department of Commerce was formed. In 1999, the current Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources was established.



At that time, the Pioneer Memorial Museum was transferred into the department. Wyoming has an incredibly rich history and outstanding recreational opportunities at its state parks, historic sites and trails, including everything from world-class fishing, water skiing and sailing at the large reservoir parks, to a step back through time at the Oregon Trail Ruts, South Pass City, Wyoming Territorial Prison and Fort Bridger, just to mention a few. Today, the Wyoming Division of State Parks, Historic Sites & Trails system comprises more than 122,335 land and water acres and is still growing!

Purpose

The Wyoming State Parks Historic Sites & Trails volunteer program was established in 1985 to offer increased public service to visitors.

Objectives

The major objectives of the volunteer program are to enhance the visitor experience offered by our department, and to allow direct public involvement in the operation of Wyoming's state parks, historic sites and trails. You, as a volunteer, can experience firsthand the rewards of working on behalf of our department. In return, volunteers bring with them a wealth of skills, knowledge and experience that allows extension of park services that may not otherwise be possible. Volunteers also become advocates for the department's policies and positions and can be effective voices in support of its programs and services.

Responsibilities & opportunities

Professionalism is expected. The Wyoming Division of State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails is a service agency. It is essential that volunteers understand the role of our staff in providing positive and friendly public service. Opportunities abound at our sites. You, as a volunteer, are encouraged to bring your wealth of personal skills and knowledge with you. These may include carpentry, mechanical assistance, mowing, administrative office assistance, plumbing, tour

guides and talks, trash pick up and comfort station cleaning, trail construction and living history programs, to name a few. Your abilities will be put to good use enhancing the visitors' state parks, historic sites and trails experiences.

Equal opportunity

Discrimination on the basis of religion, race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex or disability is prohibited.

Sexual harassment

The State of Wyoming strongly disapproves of offensive or inappropriate sexual behavior at work. All employees must avoid any action or conduct that could be viewed as sexual harassment.

The role of SPHS personnel

In order for any park volunteer program to operate efficiently, it is important to understand the roles of the various department personnel directly involved in the program.

Park/site superintendent

The site superintendent or his/her designee is responsible for your training, supervision and evaluation at the park/site level. The site superintendent must also maintain the volunteer program within the parameters of established department policy. Additionally, each site superintendent should

strive toward maintaining a cooperative working relationship between paid staff and the volunteer.

Volunteer coordinator

The volunteer coordinator provides assistance to site superintendents and staff at all levels of the volunteer program. The volunteer coordinator provides recruitment opportunities through the media, and frontline and follow-up communication (oral and written) with potential volunteers and pertinent department information. The volunteer coordinator can give advice in problem solving, training and any aspects of the program. The volunteer coordinator organizes the production and ordering of materials for the program and answers questions regarding program guidelines and direction.

General volunteer program guidelines

The type of volunteer program developed for each park/site is a reflection of the site's needs and the qualifications of each applicant. While volunteer programs will vary greatly from site to site, they all operate within the framework of the guidelines described below.

All volunteers must be in good health and physically able to carry out assigned duties. The qualified volunteer is recruited and trained, but is not considered an employee. All prospective volunteers must file an application with the volunteer coordinator or superintendent. A copy must be on

file in the headquarters office in Cheyenne with the volunteer coordinator.

The superintendent will select a volunteer and contact him/her in order to ascertain that this is a worker suitable for the site.

All volunteers must have a signed, completed volunteer agreement on file at the site, at headquarters in Cheyenne and in their personal possession. The volunteer agreement must clearly indicate the volunteer's name and address, social security number (if you choose to be covered by Workers' Compensation), the duties of the volunteer and must be signed and dated by the volunteer and your supervisor. The volunteer agreement will specifically list what benefits are to be provided by the department and what is expected of you in regard to tasks, number of hours worked and days to be worked.

All volunteers will be supervised by staff employees of the site. You are expected to conduct yourself in the same manner as paid department employees.

All volunteers will wear identification that indicates their affiliation with the department and status as volunteers. In most cases, this will be a department cap and/or campground host pin.

As a volunteer, you are not expected to perform any duty or job you do not feel comfortable or capable of performing.

Benefits

All volunteers must be made aware of the following benefits of volunteer service: (1) receipt of a certificate of appreciation for your service; (2) tax benefits as allowed under the charitable contributions provisions of the Internal Revenue Code (details on these tax benefits are available from the local office of the IRS; ask for publication 524); (3) in certain cases, a campsite with partial or full utilities will be provided; (4) Workers' Compensation, if desired, and your Social Security number is provided on the volunteer time sheet.

Orientation

As a volunteer, you are a representative of the state of Wyoming, the department and the division. It is important that you represent it properly. It is your basic right as a volunteer to be oriented. Orientation is the responsibility of the site superintendent and includes:

- Information about the department and its structure
- Information on the general purpose, objective and philosophy of the department
- A clear explanation of your obligation to the department, your supervisor, etc.
- Training for the "agreed to" duties assigned
- Mechanical information such as assigned work space location of supplies, restrooms, phone usage, etc.

Training & supervision

Your volunteer training is ongoing. The supervisor of the specific program area is responsible for your training and supervision, either directly or through staff assignment. The amount and type of training depends upon the skill required to perform the specific assignment and the skill and expertise you bring to the program. In many cases, skills training can be given to staff and volunteers at the same time.

Ongoing direct supervision is important in order to assure: the full utilization of your skills and energy to the advantage of the agency; allow you to grow and develop through your activities; maximize the benefit and satisfaction you have from your work experience; and provide a forum for discussing problems and giving appraisal, evaluation and appreciation.

Volunteer rights

Volunteers have the right to:

- Receive Workers' Compensation under state of Wyoming law
- Receive the same fair-personnel practices as paid staff.
- Have your time used effectively
- Receive clear and non-conflicting guidance, support and direction
- Be kept informed of activities pertaining to your

volunteer assignments.

- Receive appropriate orientation, training and supervision.
- Be assigned jobs that are worthwhile and challenging
- Be made aware of the overall operation of the site
- Have opportunities for growth
- Be offered a variety of experiences
- Receive regular, clear feedback on the quality and effectiveness of your work
- Have an opportunity to provide input into the volunteer program
- Be assigned a supervisor

Volunteer time sheets

The supervisor or designee provides the volunteer time sheet. The volunteer time sheet is filled out on a monthly basis unless other arrangements are made at the supervisor's discretion. The volunteer time sheets must be submitted to the volunteer coordinator at Cheyenne headquarters NO LATER than the first week of the following month. Payroll has to submit the Workers' Compensation report by the 10th of each month. The supervisor is responsible for faxing or calling the information into payroll if the time frame cannot be met. Phone: (307) 777-3631. Fax: (307) 777-6381. (Otherwise the volunteer will not be covered for that month under Workers' Compensation.)

Dismissal of a volunteer

Volunteers who do not observe the rules and regulations of the Wyoming Division of State Parks, Historic Sites & Trails volunteer program, or who fail to satisfactorily perform their assignments, may be subject to dismissal. If a volunteer blatantly violates any laws, policies, rules or regulations, termination may be immediate. Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to: gross misconduct or insubordination; being under the influence of alcohol or drugs; theft of property or misuse of park equipment or materials; abuse or mistreatment of visitors or co-workers; failure to abide by the Wyoming Division of State Parks, Historic Sites & Trails procedures and/or rules and regulations; misrepresentation of the department's position on issues affecting its sites; and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties. Completion of an application does not guarantee placement within the department's volunteer program.

Safety

As a volunteer, you must be 18 years of age or older to operate power tools, equipment, machinery or vehicles. Specific training is required for everyone who will be using power tools, equipment, machinery or vehicles. The supervisor, or appointed designee will provide information on emergency procedures, emergency phone numbers and first aid. For safety sake, volunteers should be aware of potential safety hazards to site visitors and report them to your supervisor.

Communication

Site employees are responsible for communicating to you changes, policies and information about the department. As a volunteer, you will be provided with a site-specific “chain of command.” Management is open to communication between volunteers and employees. All feedback is communicated according to department protocol.

Interacting with visitors

Do:

- Be a good listener.
- Be polite and friendly, with a desire to be helpful.
- Be positive about the park, staff and rules.
- Be a good neighbor. Set a good example by obeying the site’s rules.
- Be familiar with site rules and regulations so you can explain them when asked or when you see a violation. Hand out an appropriate brochure if available. If the violation continues, report it to site personnel.
- Give out accurate information. If you can’t answer a question, check with site staff.
- Refer campers with complaints to the site superintendent or assistant superintendent.
- Wave as you walk by and smile.

Don’t:

- Try to enforce rules.

- Argue, scold or “chew out” a visitor.
- Be harsh, sharp, abrupt, hurried or impatient.
- Act like a know-it-all or be self-righteous.
- Be a busybody. Respect campers’ privacy and their right to “get away from it all.”

Emergencies

Fortunately, emergencies don’t happen every day, but when you are faced with one, you need to know what to do. As a volunteer, a visitor may contact you first because of your location and visibility. You should make every attempt to contact the park ranger first, or if life threatening, notify authorities and make sure the park ranger is then notified of the emergency. The most common types of emergencies in a park are: health or injury/accident; disturbance, fire (recreational vehicle, building or facility, or forest fire); and a lost child.

Remember, safety first – always!

Information

For questions or additional information, please contact:

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mmoore@state.wy.us

Campsite reservations

may be made at <http://wyoparks.state.wy.us/>
or by calling (307) 777-6323

