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THE COLORADO TRAIL FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

POSITION SPECIFICATIONS

The Colorado Trail Foundation (the **CTF**) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that oversees the building and maintenance of The Colorado Trail (“CT” or “Trail”). An elected Board of Directors collaborates with three full-time employees (an Executive Director, a Field Operations Manager, and an Office Manager) to ensure the financial health and sustainability of the CT.



The Board and **CTF** employees oversee the work of 600-700 volunteers who devote thousands of hours each year to keep the Trail in good condition. Most of that work is accomplished by trail crews lasting from one to eight days and by nearly 100 individuals who adopt sections of the Trail, performing annual maintenance. Individual contributions from 2,000 supporters, as well as contributions from corporations, foundations, and the U.S. Forest Service, provide the \$500,000 needed annually to sustain **the CTF’s** efforts.

Since its completion more than 30 years ago under the leadership of the late Gudy Gaskill, a woman of great vision and tenacity, the Trail has become known as one of the premier long-distance trails in the country. It comprises 567 miles of trail between Denver

and Durango and passes through some of the most spectacular scenery in the Colorado Rockies. Users traveling end to end encounter the high mountain lakes and towering peaks of six national forests, six wilderness areas, eight mountain ranges, and five major river systems as they climb nearly 90,000 vertical feet. The average elevation of the Trail is 10,300 feet, topping out at 13,271 feet just below Coney Summit in southwest Colorado. The Trail shares 314 miles of its length with the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, a Congressionally-mandated, 3,100-mile-long trail stretching from Mexico to Canada.



The mission of The Colorado Trail Foundation is to provide and maintain, through voluntary and public involvement, and in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, a nonmotorized, sustainable recreation trail between Denver and Durango. The Trail provides single- and multi-day opportunities for hikers, bikers and riders to experience the inspirational beauty of Colorado's high country.

This is our vision for The Colorado Trail, lauded by many as “Mile for mile, the most beautiful trail in America”:

- *To offer a sense of community that comes with participating in activities in a natural outdoor environment.*
- *To support environmental education, to preserve a place for healing and self-renewal, and to facilitate an appreciation for the value of natural systems.*
- *To support multiple-use, non-motorized, family recreation in a variety of unpopulated ecosystems.*
- *To foster volunteerism and promote a sense of public ownership of our public lands.*



Big issues that are beyond the capability of individual Adopters are referred to **the CTF's** all-volunteer trail crews, which work in the field from one to eight days to accomplish needed Trail improvements.

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The CTF maintains its headquarters in the American Mountaineering Center located in Golden, Colorado.

The organization's other key location is its Field Operations Center, a 3,500-square-foot storage, maintenance, and office facility located near the midpoint of the Trail in Poncha Springs.



For more information about the colorful history of the Trail and the work of **the CTF**, please go to the Foundation's website at coloradotrail.org.

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OPPORTUNITY

Bill Manning was hired seventeen years ago as the first and to-date only **Executive Director** of **the CTF**. He has been a tireless advocate for the Trail and is reluctantly leaving to deal with health challenges (see the announcement at coloradotrail.org). He leaves **the CTF** in sound financial condition. Over the years, he has cultivated and maintained a highly collaborative relationship with the U.S. Forest Service and has developed a substantial database of individuals, donors, corporations, foundations and other key parties that follow and support **the CTF** and the Trail.

Bill's successor as **Executive Director** will serve as the chief executive officer of **the CTF**. He/she will be responsible for all facets of **CTF** operations, including building and maintaining the Trail, volunteer and donor outreach, support for CT users, and maintaining good relationships with major stakeholders, primarily the U.S. Forest Service. Additional duties include overseeing the publication of CT guidebooks and maps, social media, operations of an online store selling Colorado Trail merchandise, and a Trekking Program that offers guided trips on the CT.

The **Executive Director** is supported by a highly engaged "working" Board of Directors, now totaling 12 individuals, who each have specific responsibilities, including financial and investment oversight, communications, operations and event planning. The **Executive Director** directs and oversees the work of an Office Manager and Field Operations Manager. All three team members work with the approximately 600-700 volunteers who annually support the organization's mission and help maintain the Trail. The total operating budget is approximately \$500,000.

Other key responsibilities include:

- Communicating, implementing and enhancing **the CTF's** mission and vision in collaboration with the Board of Directors and stakeholders.
- Promoting and supporting the efforts of **CTF** volunteers, who are the heart of the organization.
- Enhancing the experience of CT users (hikers, backpackers, mountain bikers, and equestrians) with high-quality publications, social media outreach, and personal interaction.
- Managing communications and relationships with the approximately 2,000 individual donors and several grantors who provide the bulk of the revenue that supports **CTF** operations.
- Monitoring principal plans and projects.
- Addressing business challenges with diplomacy and timeliness resulting in positive outcomes.
- Ensuring **the CTF** is staffed with well-trained, high-quality employees and providing effective direction and management.
- Administering internal processes and systems, including information technology, business operations, required reporting, monitoring, etc.
- Maintaining and monitoring **the CTF's** historically strong financial performance.
- Operating with the understanding that the organization does not typically promote specific political, social, or environmental causes.
- Monitoring the macro-environment in which **the CTF** operates.
- Performing other duties as directed by the Board of Directors.

THE PERSON

The successful **Executive Director** candidate must be a highly organized individual capable of multi-tasking in areas ranging from broad strategic planning to giving detailed attention to complex matters. Sound judgment, exceptional interpersonal skills, and an unwavering commitment to the mission and vision of **the CTF** are mandatory.

Other desired qualifications include:

- An undergraduate degree at minimum. An advanced degree and/or continuing education and professional citations will distinguish the most attractive candidates.
- Substantial (ideally 10 or more) years of progressive experience in a leadership position. Experience in outdoor recreation or a related nonprofit setting involving working with multiple stakeholders and/or constituents is beneficial.
- Demonstrated staff management and development experience; a strong record of effective team building, ideally including volunteer engagement.
- Familiarity with the use of social media to engage with stakeholders and to build awareness about **the CTF** and the Trail.

- Strong budgetary and financial management experience.
- Proven project leadership/management skills.
- Prior experience working with/for an engaged board of directors is a plus.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- An energetic, hands-on, confident, but down-to-earth leader who is willing to roll up his/her sleeves to ensure the ongoing success of **the CTF**.
- An inspirational leader with a proven ability to establish trust-based, collaborative relationships with others, such as the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management officials, and those in other related agencies, as well as volunteers, corporate partners, and other key stakeholders.
- Results-oriented and driven to move things forward; demonstrates superior analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Highly developed oral and written communication abilities; strong public presentation skills; persuasive and articulate; diplomatic and open style; a good listener; credible.
- A proactive leader; intellectually curious; regularly investigates and brings new ideas to the organization, especially with regard to operational best practices and staff leadership; skilled in critical and creative thinking to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to issues.
- Impeccable ethics and highest integrity.

COMPENSATION

The CTF will offer the successful candidate a competitive base salary targeted to be in the \$95,000 to \$105,000 range, dependent on experience and qualifications. Performance-based incentive compensation may also be offered to the successful **Executive Director** candidate. Other benefit offerings include medical and prescription drug insurance coverage, short-term disability, a Simple IRA retirement savings plan with organizational match, and a generous PTO policy.

APPLICATION PROCESS

EFL Associates, an executive search firm, is assisting **the CTF** Board of Directors with this important search. All calls and inquiries should be made through the search firm representatives listed below. Referrals and applications will be held in confidence. Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. The position is targeted to be filled as soon as reasonably possible.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Our client and EFL Associates firmly support the principle and philosophy of equal opportunity for all individuals, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, disability, veteran status or any other protected category pursuant to applicable federal, state or local law.

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