**Youth Corps Grants**

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and the Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA) are pleased to announce the release of the 2020 Youth Corps grant cycle with up to $500,000 in funding for outdoor recreation, stewardship, and restoration projects completed by youth corps members. The goal of these funds is to employ youth and young adults (ages 14-25) throughout the state on critical outdoor recreation and land conservation projects using the network of youth corps accredited by CYCA.

**BACKGROUND:** Colorado’s improving economy has yet to fully reach youth and young adults. The state unemployment rate for ages 16-24 is 6.5%, more than double the overall state rate; and for Coloradans ages 16-19 it is over four-fold higher at 13%. Rates climb even higher for ethnic minority youth: the August 2018 unemployment rate for Hispanics ages 16-19 was 15% and for African Americans it was 24%.[[1]](#footnote-1) The situation in Colorado aligns with national trends. The Pew Research Center found that employment rates for young people in the summer—peak employment—were at near-record lows the last 3 years.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Just as young people are ready and eager to work, our public and protected lands require constant maintenance to ensure they remain accessible. 92% of Coloradans participate in some form of outdoor recreation activity every year, and 64% recreate outdoors once a week. This growing engagement is matched by an increasing population. Between 2000 and 2010, Colorado’s population increased by 16.9% to reach 5.2 million. Between 2010 and 2015, the population rose another 8.5% to 5.5 million, and estimates are the population will reach 7 million by 2030. It is critical we match our growth in citizens with growth in caring for our iconic landscapes.

Youth corps in Colorado engage more than 1,500 members annually to perform land, water, and energy projects to conserve resources and steward public lands. These efforts help mitigate the threat of natural disasters, such as flooding and wildfire; return delicate ecosystems back to balance; and maintain recreation infrastructure so they remain accessible for all.

**ABOUT US:** GOCO invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. Our independent board awards competitive grants to local governments and land trusts, and makes investments through Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Created by voters in 1992, GOCO has committed more than $1.2 billion in lottery proceeds to more than 5,200 projects in all 64 counties without any tax dollar support.For more information, please visit [www.GOCO.org](file://C:\Users\Scott\AppData\Local\Microsoft\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\2T4WTOT2\www.GOCO.org).

CYCA is a statewide coalition of 8 youth conservation corps that employ and train youth, young adults, and veterans on land, water, and energy conservation projects. Youth corps are a proven strategy for engaging young people in service to their communities and stewardship of their environment while cultivating in them valuable skills to meet the challenges of the 21st century. For more information about youth corps, or to find the accredited conservation corps that serves your region, please go to [www.CYCA.org](http://www.CYCA.org).

**General Guidance and Grant Information**

**IMPORTANT DATES:** Applicants must submit applications to CYCA **no later than 4:00pm on Thursday, September 19, 2019**. ***We strongly encourage early submissions to avoid missing the application deadline****.* A committee of the GOCO Board will meet to discuss funding recommendations in **November 2019**. The GOCO Board will make grant awards **on December 10, 2019** but note that this date is subject to change. Successful applicants shall have **one** year from the award date to complete the proposed project and submit final documentation.

**APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS:** After receiving an application, CYCA partners with GOCO staff and outside peer reviewers to review, score, and rank applications based upon responses to the questions in the narrative section of the application, other application materials submitted, and the general merit of the project. Each category within the proposal narrative is assigned a maximum point value, and final scores reflect the sum-total of points awarded to each category. Funding recommendations are based upon the final score and the collective assessment of the merits of each proposal. The proposal review committee reserves the right to request revisions on all components of the application.

**APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY:** This program is open to following entities eligible to receive GOCO open space and/or local government funds:

1. Colorado municipality or county
2. Political subdivision of the State of Colorado that includes in its mission the identification, acquisition, or management of open space and natural areas
3. Title 32 special district eligible to receive distributions from the Conservation Trust Fund
4. 501(c)(3) non-profit land conservation organization that includes in its mission the identification, acquisition, or management of open space and natural areas, e.g., land trusts

**PROJECT/PROPERTY ELIGIBILITY:**

1. Applicants must apply for a minimum of **two weeks of youth corps work.** One week of work consists of 320 hours of labor (8 people for 40 hours each, for example) inclusive of one-way travel and 4-5 hours per week of on-site education activities for the crew.
2. The project’s primary objective must consist of enhancing/restoring open space, wildlife habitat, or other ecosystem or enhancing/restoring trails or other passive recreational infrastructure including signs, fences, tent pads, etc.
3. The project must occur on land owned or controlled by a:

i) municipality, county, or other political subdivision of the state, or

ii) land trust or other private party when the land is permanently protected by a conservation easement or other permanent use restriction

1. **Projects on state or federal land are explicitly ineligible.**
2. The project’s primary objective must consist of enhancing/restoring open space, wildlife habitat, or other ecosystem (e.g. noxious weed removal, fire mitigation, fire recovery, flood recovery, riparian restoration) or constructing/enhancing/restoring trails or other passive recreational infrastructure including signs, fences, tent pads, etc.
3. Projects must provide a public benefit and comply with any conservation easement, other use restriction, or government policies or procedures concerning management of the property’s resources.
4. Applicant must demonstrate capacity to host a youth corps crew, and coordinate closely with the youth corps in advance of submitting a proposal, to ensure the project is appropriate for a youth corps (youth ages 14-25).

**TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION:** Successful applicants must complete the proposed work within one year of the grant award date. Applicants must respond to a CYCA-generated project evaluation upon completion of the project. GOCO may deauthorize a grant if the project is not completed within that time, or by any extended period of time authorized by staff or the board.

**COSTS AND MATCH:** The table below provides a brief description of available crews and the weekly rates for each crew. Please only include requests for youth corps labor; materials, equipment, staff time, and any other costs are ineligible for funding. Please discuss any potential project expenses with GOCO to determine the eligibility of those expenses prior to applying. Funding match is encouraged but not required. Grantee must provide technical expertise, oversight and occasional supervision, and all materials and specialty equipment.

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| **Weekly Crew Rates:** |
| Day Crew | crews go home each night and travel to the project daily | $7,000/week |
| Camping Crew | crews camp at or near the project, sponsors should work with the youth corps to help secure free camping | $7,600/week |
| Chainsaw and/or Herbicide Application Crew | includes day crew and camping crews, 80% of the crew is chainsaw trained, or meets state herbicide application compliance requirements | $9,000/week |

**WORKING WITH A YOUTH CORPS:**

From project planning to completion, it is easy to use a youth corps. Youth corps are high-capacity organizations that are well-prepared; they arrive with the equipment, skills and supervision to succeed. After talking with a potential sponsor, the youth corps will match the right type of crew for the project.

Typical youth corps projects include:

* constructing and maintaining Colorado’s trail system
* improving outdoor recreation amenities such as playgrounds and parks
* mitigating fire fuels
* restoring wildlife habitat
* installing and dismantling fences
* mitigating and removing invasive species

**Shared Project Responsibility**

Hosting a youth corps requires cooperation, communication, and shared responsibility. Many sponsors ask, “what do I need to provide?” The chart below details how youth corps generally share responsibility. Of course, a project may require a different breakdown of responsibilities which you can discuss with corps staff as you plan the project.

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| **Youth Corps Responsibilities** | **Project Sponsor Responsibilities** |
| Pre-project walk-through with sponsor’s staff | Project planning |
| Adult supervision | Pre-project walk-through with corps staff |
| Youth/young adult crew (at least 8 people and 320 hours of labor) | Specialty tools (if necessary) |
| Basic tools | Sponsor staff person available to answer questions and check work regularly |
| Transportation | Complete an end-of-project evaluation |
| Camp equipment & food (if necessary) | Access to free camping (if necessary) |

**What Youth Corps Are**

* Youth, young adult and veteran workforce development programs
* Programs focused on developing youth and young adults through service
* Programs focused on providing veterans experience for post-service conservation careers
* Programs focused on environmental education and ethic of stewardship

**What Youth Corps Are Not**

* Professional contract-work crews
* Volunteer programs
* Recreation or summer camp programs
* Court-ordered or juvenile-offender diversion programs
* Wilderness therapy or mental health counseling

**PROJECT PROMOTION:** Applicant must agree to promote a funded project using social and traditional media.

**CONTACT:** We encourage you to thoroughly review all application materials and to discuss any questions or concerns that arise throughout the process in advance of submitting your proposal. We look forward to working with you!

Please direct questions about applicant or project eligibility to either of the following:

**Madison Brannigan**
Program Officer
303.226.4526
mbrannigan@goco.org

**Chris Yuan-Farrell**
Senior Program Officer
303.226.4511
cyuanfarrell@goco.org

For all other inquiries, please contact:

**Scott Segerstrom**
Executive Director
303.863.0604
ssegerstrom@cyca.org

To locate and contact the youth corps serving your area, please visit <https://www.cyca.org/hire-a-corps/>

Submit the following documents to Nancy Weil, nweil@cyca.org. CYCA strongly encourages submission via email but please contact CYCA if you wish to submit via an alternative means, e.g. fax, standard mail, FedEx, in-person, etc.

Document 1: Full Project Proposal

Please submit a single document (PDF preferred) comprised of the following **in the order listed**:

[ ]  Summary Form

[ ]  Proposal Narrative *Please include the HEADINGS with your answers; limited to THREE (3) pages*

[ ]  Proposals should include **TWO** (2) maps: 1) a project location map showing the general location and surrounding context, and 2) a detailed map for each discrete project location showing the specific project area and components in sufficient detail. Please label the maps and appropriately reference them in the narrative proposal. Format maps for 8 ½” x 11” paper.

[ ]  Assurance and Signature Page

[ ]  Letter of authorization from holder of the conservation easement or other use restriction that indicates that the anticipated work does not violate the easement/use restriction (**IF APPLICABLE**)

*Please note that CYCA will not accept CDs, DVDs, videos, brochures, or any other additional attachments.*

*Applicants will be provided a receipt upon submission to CYCA.*

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| Applicant Information |
| Name: |  | Title: |  |
| Organization Name: |  |
| Organization Type: | Select an Organization Type |
| Phone: |  | Email: |  |
| Partnering Youth Corps: | Select a Youth Corps |
| Technical Contact Information |
| Contact person for coordination of technical aspects of project (if different from applicant, above) |
| Name: |  | Title: |  |
| Organization Name: |  |
| Phone: |  | Email: |  |
| Project Information |
| Project Title: |  |
| Property Name: |  |
| Landowner Name: |  |
| Property Type: | Select a Property Type |
| County/Counties: |  |
| **What entities will facilitate the required 4 hours of education per week:** (*check all that apply)* |
| [x]  | Applicant | [ ]  | Youth Corps | [ ]  | External Facilitator | [ ]  | Other: |  |
| Budget Information |
| Select from the pulldown menu the type of youth corps crew requested and number of weeks for that crew type: |
| Example | Crew Type: | Day Crew - $7,000/wk | Weeks: | 2 | Total $: | $14,000 |
| Crew Type: | Select a Crew Type | Weeks: |  | Total $: |  |
| Crew Type: | Select a Crew Type | Weeks: |  | Total $: |  |
| Crew Type: | Select a Crew Type | Weeks: |  | Total $: |  |
| Crew Type: | Select a Crew Type | Weeks: |  | Total $: |  |
| Crew Type: | Select a Crew Type | Weeks: |  | Total $: |  |
|  TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED: |  |
| Match Information |
| Please input the matching funds provided, cash or in-kind (if applicable): |
| Item  | Source  | Calculation  | Cost |
| Example: Chipper | Trees R Us | 4 weeks at $1,000/wk | $4,000 |
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| TOTAL MATCH PROVIDED: |  |

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| Brief Project Description |
| In the box below, provide a brief summary/overview of your proposal (100 words or less): |
|  |

**Answer each of the following Selection Criteria questions:** Three (3) pages maximum, 11-point type, 1-inch margins. Please include the question title **(not the entire question)** and answer each question.

1. **PROJECT OVERVIEW, NEED, and BENEFITS:** Describe in detail the work activities that will be performed during this project. Describe the expected outputs of the project, such as miles of trail built, acres of invasive species to be removed, acres of forest thinned, etc.

Describe how this project is a priority for your community. Describe the needs being met by this project. Describe who will directly benefit from this project. Describe the impacts and outcomes if this project is not undertaken. **(60 points)**
2. **PLANNING & READINESS, and SUSTAINABILITY:** Describe the planning process for this project, including who was involved in the project development. Are all approvals, permits, and other required components in place? If not, describe the status of those components. Are there any barriers to completing the project by December 31, 2020?

Describe the sustainability of this project and its impacts, and who will be directly responsible for those activities. For example:

Specific to invasive species projects: describe the upstream contamination and how that will impact this project’s sustainability. Describe the downstream contamination and how this project may impact those areas. Who will provide monitoring? Who will eradicate re-growth? What resources are in place to commit to those efforts in future years?

Specific to trail construction projects: describe what the planned maintenance for this trail will be in future years, based on use, location, weather, etc. Who is committed to performing this monitoring and maintenance? What resources are in place to commit to those efforts in future years?

**(40 points)**

**ASSURANCE**

I certify that I am authorized to sign on behalf of the applicant and that, if awarded a grant for this project, the applicant will comply with the grant administration requirements of both GOCO and CYCA. I further certify that the applicant collaborated on this proposal with the youth corps indicated and that the youth corps is fully aware of and agrees to the scope of the project, budget, and timeline.

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| Name and title of youth corps staff consulted on this proposal: |
| Name: |  |
| Title: |  |

**AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE FUNDS**

Applicant recognizes that it will not receive payment from GOCO. By its signature below, applicant hereby authorizes GOCO to make payment on its behalf directly to CYCA in the event this project is chosen for funding.

**SIGNATURE**

*(electronic and pdf signatures are accepted)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: |  |
| Title: |  |
| Organization Name: |  |
| Signature: |  |
| Date: |  |

1. Colorado Department of Labor and Employment & the Bureau of Labor Statistics [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “The Fading of the Teen Summer Job”, Pew Research Center, 6/23/2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)