

**Job Title:** Walking Mountains Conservation Internship

**Department:** Youth Programs Outreach in partnership with the White River National Forest

**Location:** 318 Walking Mountains Lane, Avon, CO 81620

**Reports To:** Natalie Neuwirth, Environmental Leadership Coordinator

**FSLA Status:** Exempt

**Organizational Overview:**

Founded in 1998, Walking Mountain's mission is to awaken a sense of wonder and inspire environmental stewardship and sustainability through natural science education. As part of a dynamic organization, you are part of a team of like-minded, spirited colleagues who are passionate about the mission of Walking Mountains and the impact it's making in the community.

**Position Overview:**

This is a full-time, seasonal professional growth position offered through Walking Mountains in partnership with the United States Forest Service's (USFS) White River National Forest (WRNF). The WRNF encompasses approximately 2.3 million acres of public land and has the most visitation of any national forest with 11 ski resorts, eight wilderness areas, and a diversity of wildlife and ecosystems. Throughout the duration of the Conservation Internship, Conservation Interns will develop skills in field biology survey techniques, natural resource conservation, trails and land management, and interpretation/education while exploring a variety of careers and opportunities with the USFS. This internship demands a strong work ethic to be successful in this fast paced and dynamic work environment.

Conservation Interns will work alongside field scientists and career professionals from the WRNF and Walking Mountains on a daily basis. Individuals will be placed in one of the following positions based on skills, career goals, and educational experience::

- Aquatics and Fisheries - Work with the USFS aquatic staff to conduct field surveys (fisheries, amphibians, and aquatic macroinvertebrates) to support various projects. Additional work will include providing hands-on assistance with habitat restoration projects and ecosystem assessments.
- Wildlife Management - Work with the USFS wildlife staff to conduct field surveys (e.g., raptor and songbird surveys, bumblebee surveys, acoustic bat monitoring, and pika surveys) to support a variety of projects. Additional work will include overseeing juniper removal in sagebrush habitat and the removal of livestock fencing with partner organizations.
- Timber Crew – Work with the USFS timber staff to perform timber sale preparation work. Tasks include implementing vegetation management project for a variety of goals including reducing fuel loading, improving forest health, and providing for long term wildlife habitat. Other tasks will include regeneration surveys, hazard tree identification, and other projects as assigned. This is primarily a field going position working on uneven and sometimes steep ground in all types of weather conditions for extended periods of time. Some overnight camping will be required.
- Trails and Wilderness - Work with the USFS wilderness staff to provide public outreach, restoration work, and perform trail maintenance to maintain wilderness character in congressionally designated Wilderness. Ability to carry 50+ pounds, hike 5-20 miles a day, and spend up to 3 nights in the backcountry is required.
- Dispersed Recreation Crew- Work with the USFS Front Country Program in a variety of patrols and projects in dispersed areas adjacent to the mountain communities in Eagle County. Duties include professionally representing the USFS by contacting visitors about safety, Forest regulations, and providing information about the local area to visitors through education and engagement. Additional tasks can include: educate on Leave No Trace practices, patrol Forest Services roads via trucks and/or UTV's, provide motorized recreation information, implement the travel management, collect and maintain field data, assist with volunteer projects with local partner clubs, assist on trail workdays, and complete projects that protect natural resources and enhance the recreation experience.

**Training:** Conservation Interns will receive extensive training at the start of the internship. This training will be focused on practical skills and knowledge of local geography and ecology to set individuals up for success in their internship

placements. Skills and topics will include but are not limited to: Leave No Trace, backcountry travel and navigation, comfort and efficiency while backpacking/camping, diversity and inclusion, communication and conflict resolution, education and interpretation, risk management, and local flora and fauna.

Additionally, this position has an added focus on career exploration and professional development. Conservation Interns are scheduled time within the work week to engage in natural resource conservation, environmental education experiences, and career exploration. These opportunities include field trips, observation to the work of all crews, job shadowing, skills workshops, and special topics discussions.

### **Essential Duties and Responsibilities:**

#### ***Program Development:***

- Participate in on-site, paid training prior to beginning internship responsibilities
- Arrive for work on time and follow an assigned work schedule
- Maintain open lines of communication with leadership from both WMSC and the WRNF
- Work with other Conservation Interns, WRNF personnel, and WMSC staff to complete assigned projects that further both organizations' missions.
- Learn and apply new skills to complete field work in rugged terrain and variable environmental/weather conditions while maintaining a strong work ethic
- Contribute to positive and professional group dynamics with colleagues and practice a team-oriented mindset
- Cultivate a friendly and positive attitude during interactions with visitors to the WRNF and participants in WMSC programming
- Actively participate in professional development and learning opportunities provided within the internship experience

### **Qualifications:**

- Age 18 - 25 with a desire to pursue further education and/or a career in natural science, education/interpretation, natural resource conservation and management, or another environmentally related field
- Be able to work and keep a positive attitude in various work situations and all types of weather
- Able to hike and carry equipment up to 50 lbs for 5 - 20 miles, work outdoors in all weather conditions
- Professional and accountable individual who takes ownership and pride in their work, curious and self-motivated, willing to learn, and open to giving and receiving feedback
- Positive, organized, and creative individual who is an effective communicator (oral and written) and can work independently and as part of a team
- Preferred: Local full-time or seasonal resident of Eagle County or nearby areas
- Preferred: proficient Spanish language skills (oral and written)

### **Work Environment**

Conservation Interns work primarily outdoors at various field sites within the White River National Forest, with periodic indoor responsibilities.

- Outdoor responsibilities average 10+ hours per day and may include traveling in vehicles long distances on rugged and uneven gravel roads, hiking in steep rocky terrain, carrying heavy packs, conducting detailed field protocols, and interacting with the public.
- The work of each Conservation Intern has a different conservation focus and as a result, has a different work schedule and duties/responsibilities than other interns. All Conservation Interns will work a 4/10s schedule, meaning 4 days a week for 10 hours per day.
- Interns will have access to a Gear Library where they can check out equipment as needed to be comfortable and prepared for necessary field work
- Conservation Interns will have access to resources in an open office environment at Walking Mountains Science Center including, computer, printer, internet, etc.

**Internship Durations:** Start date for Conservation Internship: May 20th, 2024  
3 Month (14 week) Internship End: August 25, 2024

### **Compensation and Benefits:**

\$350 weekly stipend *with housing*

\$500 weekly stipend *without housing*

**Contact:** For more information and details on the application and interview process, please contact Natalie Neuwirth, Environmental Leadership Coordinator, at [natalien@walkingmountains.org](mailto:natalien@walkingmountains.org)

**Application Deadlines:** Applications and interviews will be held on a rolling basis until all positions are filled, so apply early. The last day that applications will be accepted is March \_\_\_\_.

**To Apply:** Visit: [Join Our Team](#)

Complete the online application and upload resume, cover letter, and contact information for 2 professional references on our employment page:

Applicants are encouraged to include and describe any pertinent personal and professional experience in a cover letter when applying.

The position is open until filled