

Programs Director & Trail Crew Leader for the ABWF

The Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation (ABWF) in Red Lodge, MT is seeking a seasonal, full-time individual for the summer to lead ~10-14 trail projects (single-day and multi-day projects) per summer, working with untrained volunteers on trail-building and maintenance, weed-eradication, and backcountry rehabilitation projects in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. We employ a workforce that is composed largely of volunteers from all over the region & country who are willing to join us in doing physically strenuous trail-work. We are a close partner with the Custer Gallatin National Forest on all work that we do.



The ABWF needs a capable outdoors person who will plan and organize the trips, help lead the trail work efforts and facilitate our volunteers' experiences--providing leadership, and ensuring safety in a backcountry environment. Trip leadership is a must. We're looking for someone with reasonable knowledge and experience in trail-work. Most important of all we're looking for someone with great "people skills"; i.e. someone who is gregarious and willing to make the experience safe, fun, and fulfilling for the volunteer and who is passionate about Wilderness and capable of being 'the face' of wilderness volunteerism for the ABWF.

Overview of the ABWF:

The ABWF is a non-profit "Wilderness Stewardship" organization dedicated to supporting good stewardship of the A-B Wilderness, and fostering an appreciation of our most protected public lands. We work together with the Custer Gallatin National Forest and other partner groups in sponsoring "boots-on-the-ground" projects that improve trails and maintain good access for all wilderness users. A "Friends-Of" type organization, we also try to educate wilderness users, to teach them to respect and protect the Wilderness with ever greater care. We believe deep down, that by actively involving more and more people through trailwork, hikes, and other programs, we can build better awareness and more committed advocates for this outstanding Wilderness area.



Location:

The Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Area is a 944,000-acre wilderness gem nestled atop the northern border of Yellowstone National Park. It is some of the absolute wildest country in the entire Greater Yellowstone! It is known for its high, rugged peaks (tallest in Montana) and remnant glaciers, it's immense expanses of high alpine tundra skirted by the famed Beartooth Highway. Its myriad of lakes and fishing



opportunities, and its outstanding recreational resources (750 miles of trail) are unequalled. Largely overlooked by the legions coming and going from Yellowstone, the A-B Wilderness is remarkably pristine, with stunning scenery and amazing opportunities for solitude. Its key gateway communities are Red Lodge, Gardiner, Cooke City, Big Timber, Livingston, and Billings. The position is based in Red Lodge where the ABWF office and logistics are located.

Benefits:

- Pay: \$15-17/hour (a 9-hour day); typical trips are 5 days (plus 2 days for prep and cleanup). Meals are provided when working in the field.

Duties of the Position:

- Become familiar & knowledgeable about the A-B Wilderness, its cultural and natural history, as well as a comfort level with the geography, climate, weather, etc. of the Northern Rockies.
- Help promote, recruit, inform, screen, contact and collect paperwork, and follow-up with potential trail volunteers.
- Coordinate trip logistics with Forest Service staff and partner groups (like Backcountry Horsemen).
- Purchase and pack out food, equipment, and supplies needed for the volunteer trip.
- Lead Trail Projects (2016= 7 day-long projects; 6 multi-day long projects) into the field. We regularly sponsor 9-14 projects/trips a summer between June and mid-Sept.
- Facilitate a safe, fun, educational, and meaningful experience for the volunteers
- Oversee the safety of Volunteers: Provide regular safety briefings, demonstrate proper tool use, tend to illnesses and injuries, recognize altitude challenges and hydration issues, proactively assess and mitigate dangerous weather/altitude/work conditions.
- Facilitate the Volunteers' experiences; assist with backcountry camping skills, organize time off & evening activities.
- Organize the volunteers into kitchen and camp crews and involve them as much as possible in helping out with the work load.
- Clean up/put away gear from trips; write project final reports/debrief with E.D.
- Work closely with the Executive Director while exhibiting a willingness and flexibility in sharing additional duties that support the general functioning of the organization.

Necessary Skills:

- Experience leading outdoor trips/groups in a remote backcountry setting over 4-7 days. Considerable experience and training with programs such Outward Bound or NOLS is preferred, if not a must!
- This is HARD, physically STRENUOUS work, using hand-tools in a primitive backcountry environment. You must be in excellent shape, and physically strong.
- Significant comfort level and experience hiking & backpacking in mountainous terrain.
- Current certification as a Wilderness First Responder (WFR) from WMI, WMA, Aerie
- Trail-building and maintenance experience (note: ABWF Trail Crew Leaders almost always team up with at least one member of the Forest Service trail crew who has significant trail expertise.

- Excellent interpersonal skills—enthusiastic, gregarious and not afraid to engage with volunteers on both a personal and professional level, with the ability to initiate thoughtful conversations and lessons with folks who you've newly met.
- Willingness to collaborate with the Executive Director
- Loves & advocates for Wilderness and wild places; willing to share that passion with others. A caring and compassionate outdoorsperson.
- Able to maintain a positive attitude despite the extreme physical and rigorous nature of the work.
- Solid skills in backcountry navigation—use of map compass and GPS
- An expert practitioner of Leave No Trace ethics.
- A passion for volunteerism. Patient with volunteers of all abilities.
- Knowledge of Rocky Mountain natural history & ecology—weather, vegetation, history.
- Capable of meeting the demands of physically demanding travel in and out of the backcountry and engaging in strenuous physical work for days at a time.
- Able to facilitate a fun, safe and multi-dimensional service-learning experience for volunteers in your care.
- Solid record-keeping skills for trailwork data collected in the field, plus good writing skills for writing programmatic reports.

Additional Preferred Skills and Background:

- Experience teaching, delivering lessons, and developing curriculum for school-aged children (and students of all ages!) in both indoor and outdoor settings.
- Interest in photography and/or videography; proficiency capturing good images of volunteers in action and the beauty of the landscape. Photoshop is always good! These images are incredibly important in how we sell and advertise our programs!
- Knowledge of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness and the Greater Yellowstone.
- WordPress, Excel, Social Media, Publication Design/Layout, database skills.

***Professional Growth Opportunity:**

While this position is billed as a full-time, summer-seasonal opportunity, there is the potential for the position to grow into a year-round Program Director's position, dependent on the right individual's level of initiative and leadership. The E.D. currently operates the ABWF alone, and is seeking a person to become a dependable, full-time staff person capable of sharing in the overall leadership of the ABWF. Dependent on funding, a full-time Program Director's position would also include managing our Fall/Winter/Spring educational programs with school groups across the region, helping write and manage grants that power our programs, plus marketing and advertising those programs. The position would come to combine both field and administration duties. The ABWF is seeking someone willing to become a partner in a grass-roots conservation organization, learning behind-the-scenes, non-profit management skills.



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**Send a cover letter and resume to:
David Kallenbach, E.D. of the ABWF**

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