

# THE LOG STEPS

THE OFFICIAL JUNIOR RANGER NEWSLETTER



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## The Trail Crew Life

The beginning of summer can be an exciting time for youth in the Boulder area! For over the past 50 years the Junior Ranger Program has given 14-17 year olds the opportunity to join crews and jump straight into trail work. During a 4 week session each crew takes on a variety of maintenance projects. Crews maintain drainage structures to keep water off trail, clear vegetation that is creeping into the corridor, and train their eye to assess the maintenance needs of individual trails. Conservation crews also assist adult trail crews with projects such as clearing combustible materials to mitigate potential forest fires and

installing fencing to allow trampled areas near trails to revegetate. Trail crew members perform a variety of work beyond just trail maintenance including forestry, invasive species removal, and occasionally help with agricultural projects. The Junior Ranger Program provides a balanced work experience that not only accomplishes trail work goals but also provides employees with an understanding of why the work they do is so valuable to the City of Boulder.



# CREW SNAPSHOTS



## CREW 1

We're called the Baker's Dozen because there's 13 of us, and because at our first potluck, we brought way too many pastries. We are a very silly crew, we love to tell riddles, do skits, and play teambuilding games like camouflage. But we also know when to work hard! With forest ecology management program, we chipped piles of brush from 133 trees, and we razed an entire field full of invasive Scotch Thistle.







## CREW 2

Our crew is incredibly proud of the record we set in the Junior Ranger Program for the most trees chipped with the forest ecology management program (157). Perhaps one of the funniest moments was during the conclusion of our session when team lead Connor finally followed through on his joke-turned-promise to eat ramen with chocolate protein powder. In addition to laughing, our whole crew ate a spoonful of the disgusting mush in solidarity.





## CREW 3

Our crew calls ourselves the McKlauses because of our crew member, Klaus. We love the horse, named Brittney Lebowski, and bring it everywhere. We have developed strong friendships among our crew. We listen to a lot of hip hop. We love riddles, especially the rowing penguins. We had a lot of interesting projects like Douady Draw.







## CREW 4

Our crew name is the Screaming Badgers which stemmed from Animal Roulette and the awesome animal noises we can make. Takis are our favorite snack and someone always brings some to share. We moved “tons” of dirt down a dirt slide and accomplished so much as a team. Advice from Crew 4 is to watch where you sit and to avoid cacti!







## YOUTH RANGER CREW

We started off our first week by visiting the Flagstaff Mountain Top Shop to learn about the different responsibilities Open Space and Mountain Park Rangers have on a day to day basis. The very next day, our crew visited the Thorne Nature Experience in order to capture and band different species of birds. Week one finished up with a CPR & First Aid course held at Boulder County's Parks and Open Space headquarters. The following week started off with a bang! We learned about wildland fire response from the only wildland fire station in the city. Just next door Ranger Sim led the afternoon in a master class about Ranger safety and defensive tactics. The week ended with a bat ecology research night which helps to monitor the bat species within Open Space and Mountain Parks. Our crew then got to experience a variety of work projects. Everything from forestry, trail building, to a youth fishing program was the third week's focus. In our final days we conducted a full search and rescue scenario which was then quickly followed up by a visit from a Flight for Life medical rescue helicopter. Finally, Ranger Hatfield demonstrated how Rangers handle intrusive wildlife using corrective behavior techniques.





## BIKE TO WORK DAY



**Team Leaders and Junior Rangers alike gather to ride together to the Wonderland Lake Office for Bike to Work Day! We enjoyed all the free snacks en route.**



## SETTLER'S PARK FORESTRY PROJECT



**The Youth Ranger Crew and two Conservation/Trails Crews worked with Open Space and Mountain Parks forestry crews to remove invasive species surrounding Settler's Park in order to protect against future forest fires.**



**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CU MOUNTAIN RESEARCH STATION  
TRAIL BUILDING**



**The Youth Ranger and  
Conservation/Trails Crews  
work together to build a  
new nature trail at the CU  
Mountain Research Station.**





# REFLECTING ON OUR EXPERIENCE

In addition to learning trail building and maintenance techniques, our Conservation/Trails Crews also learn about working together, building community, taking care of our environment, and sharing silly riddles.

## LEAVE NO TRACE

### 1. PLAN AHEAD + PREPARE

Bring rain gear, check weather, know area

### 2. TRAVEL + CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

Stay on trail, snack & lunch on rocks, watch wildlife

### 3. DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

Pack it out, food too

### 4. LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

Don't pick flowers, no collecting

### 5. MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACT

Predetermined area, keep it in fire pit

### 6. RESPECT WILDLIFE

Don't hurt them, leave them natural diet, take pictures

### 7. BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

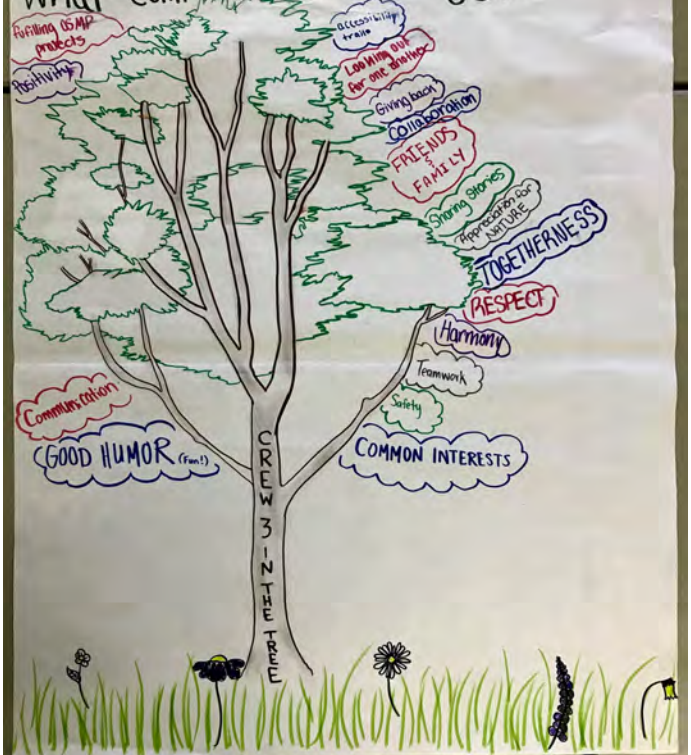
Courteous, no roughhousing, make room for trail users

2 penguins brothers are canoeing in the middle of the desert. Spot, the older brother, is sitting in the front, and Dot, the younger is paddling in the back. Spot turns to Dot and says, "wears your paddle" and Dot replied, "isn't he does."

Dear reader 100 years in the future,

I hope that you can still see the differences that my crew made to the local environment. While our water bars and rolling grade clips might not be there anymore, we did small things to bring the big picture forward bit by bit. I hope that our public lands are still public and that you continue to foster the sense of community that we worked so hard to develop. Please carry on our vision and core values for a better world and respect the effort that everyone has put in to give you what you have today. Appreciate nature and those who care for it, and do your part to maintain OSMP for those who come after you, just as we have done for your generation. Enjoy the land and make a difference,  
Ada

What community means to US....





# THE LOG STEPS

*The official newsletter of The Junior Ranger program*



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**SUSTAINABILITY WEEK**

## SESSION II JUNIOR RANGER LIFE

The second session of Junior Rangers always start off to a quick start! With four fresh crews of Junior Rangers, each crew of ten or eleven jumps right into field work. Crews maintain drainage structures to keep water off trail, clear vegetation that is creeping into the corridor, train their eye to assess the maintenance needs of individual trails, and assist other OSMP workgroups on a number of other conservation projects. In 2019, crews assisted adult trail crews on three different capital trail projects - a reroute of the Fern/Mesa and Green Mountain West Ridge trails and a water management rock project on Doudu Draw. Junior Rangers also assisted FEMP (Forestry), Vegetation Management, Restoration, and Trailheads crews.





## Over the course of four weeks Junior Rangers participated in the following:

- Three different capital trail projects
- Moving 8 tons of road base in one day on Doudy Draw
- A week long sustainability challenge
- Trail maintenance projects
- Resume building workshop by program staff
- Weekly Ecological Restoration and/or Vegetation Management projects
- A forest fire ecology and management lesson by a graduate Junior Ranger and Youth Ranger
- Weekly FEMP (Forestry) projects
- Environmental Education lesson on birds, fishing, and outdoor recreation by OSMP Outreach staff
- An accessibility hike with Topher Downham



During week four all four crews were assigned to move 8 tons of road base to complete the turnpike on Doudy Draw.



Crew 2 getting an environmental education lesson on forest fire ecology by a former Junior Ranger.



# CREW 1

## The Banana Bread Buddies

**Favorite Tool:** The mini rake

**Greatest Accomplishment:** Building the rock wall on Dougy Draw

**Favorite Potluck:** Foods from around the world

**Crew Fun Fact:** Listening to Africa by Toto on **every** truck ride



Removing Houndstongue on a vegetation management project



Rock work requires patience, teamwork, and good communication.

*"A big challenge that our crew faced as a whole that made us come together and be more of a team was on the Tuesday of the second week when we were coming down Flagstaff Road. We got stuck up on Flagstaff for about 1.5 hours. During that time our crew played Mafia... lots of Mafia. We ended up hiking down View Point trail due to the time. This has changed not only me but probably the other crew members because it taught us that even though something we have to do isn't fun or is unplanned, we can still make the most out of things."*

*- First year Junior Ranger*





# CREW 2

## Crew H20

**Favorite Crew Tool:** The mini rake

**Favorite Trail:** Fern/Mesa Reroute

**Best Crew Moment:** Playing Drip Drip Drop on Doudy Draw

**Favorite Potluck:** Pasta potluck on top of Flagstaff

**Crew Motto:** How many cows? 3



*"Before Junior Rangers I was more of a reserved, lead-by-example type of guy, but I feel like thanks to Junior Rangers, especially this session/this year, I have expanded my leadership horizon to include more prominent and up front, classic leadership techniques."*

*- Third year Junior Ranger*



Above: Setting rocks for a turn pike on Doudy Draw

Below: Removing duff piles on Green Mountain West Ridge





# CREW 3

## Dunions (Alpha Beta Sigma)

**Favorite Crew Tool:** The McLeod

**Greatest Accomplishment:** Rough cutting tread on the Fern/Mesa reroute

**Crew Motto:** "Crackin' open a cold rock with the crew"

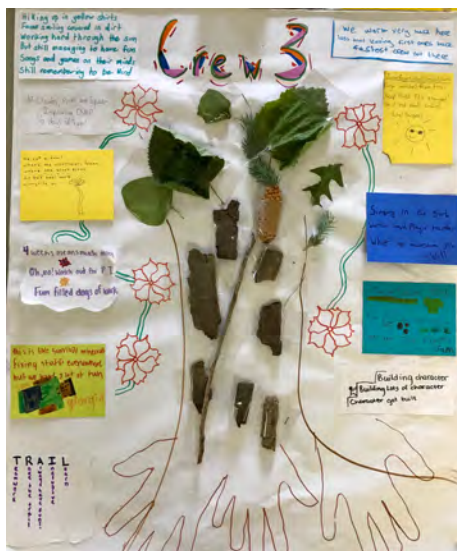
**Favorite Crew Activity:** Playing Mafia and working on the trails



Above: Setting rocks patio style on Doudy Draw.

Left: Learning about accessible trails on our system.

Below: Setting cobble on the turnpike on Doudy Draw.





# CREW 4

## Sara and the Flat Tires

**Favorite Crew Tool:** Bucket

**Crew Motto:** Go crew 4, disperse the dirt, use good ergonomics and you won't get hurt.

**Favorite Crew Activity:** Mafia

**Greatest Accomplishment:** Not getting bit by a rattle snack after Garrett stepped on it.



Standing in front of a log pile after chipping and dispersing slash with FEMP.



*The biggest thing I learned through being a part of the Junior Ranger program is that I can actually do a lot more, and work a lot harder than I originally thought I could. After the first day, I was not sure that I could continue, as it was difficult work. But each day, as I continue in the program, I feel myself working harder, making new friends, and generally feeling a lot happier and healthier. I feel like I am my best self working for this program.*

*- First year Junior Ranger*



Weed whipping mullein at Settler's Park





# Sustainability Week

During week 3 all four crews participated in a sustainability week challenge. Junior Rangers and program staff were encouraged to travel to and from work in any form of alternate transportation. Each form of transportation, whether it be bike, foot, bus, scooter, or carpool was worth different point values. The number of miles traveled using alternate transportation was taken into account to figure out which crew won in each category below. Though in the end every participant was a winner!



Total miles for each crew below:

**Crew 1:**

- Bike/Walk - 81 miles
- Bus - 97 miles
- Carpool - 49.5 miles
- Total - 227.5 miles using alternate transportation!

**Crew 3:**

- Bike/Walk - 66 miles
- Bus - 169 miles
- Carpool - 116 miles
- Total - 351 miles using alternate transportation!

**Crew 2:**

- Bike/Walk - 36 miles
- Bus - 256 miles
- Carpool - 137 miles
- Total - 429 miles using alternate transportation!

**Crew 4:**

- Bike/Walk - 138 miles
- Bus - 116 miles
- Carpool - 122 miles
- Total - 376 miles using alternate transportation!