



## EP40Application

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**Name:** Jane Doe **Employee ID:** 987654

**Email:** jdoe@vailresorts.com **Phone:** 123.456.7890

**Job Title:** Coordinator **Full Time Status:** Seasonal

**Division:** Specialty Sports Venture **Location:** Keystone **Department or Store:** Merchandise Returns

**Supervisor:** Bill Smith **Hire Date:** 02/16/2004

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**Date(s) of Proposed Project (Must be between April – November 2013):** 08/10/2013 08/17/2013

**Project Name:** Colorado Trail Crew #0513

**Project Location:** Winfield, Colorado (about 20 miles southwest of Leadville)

**Sponsoring Nonprofit Group:** Colorado Trail Foundation

**Nonprofit Mission:** [Environment](#)

**Nonprofit Contact Name:** Aimee O'Malley

**Nonprofit Address:** 710 10th Street, #210, Golden, CO 80401-5843

**Nonprofit Web site:** [www.coloradotrail.org](http://www.coloradotrail.org) **Nonprofit Phone:** 303-384-3729

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### Essay Questions

- For the following four essay question sections, please answer all section questions in the space provided at the end of each section.
- Within your answers, indicate which answer corresponds to which question (ex: Nonprofit Info #1...; Nonprofit Info #2...; etc.)
- Please be thoughtful and thorough in all of your answers.
- VR Echo will not accept incomplete applications.

#### **Non-Profit Information:**

1. Please provide a description of your nonprofit partner.
2. Does this non-profit have a history of working with Vail Resorts and if so, please describe.
3. If Vail Resorts does not have a partnership with chosen non-profit, please share why you think this non-profit is a good fit for an EP40 Volunteer.

*\*Please answer all three questions below.*

Non-Profit info #1. The Colorado Trail Foundation (CTF) is the organization that cares for and keeps the Colorado Trail in good condition. The Colorado Trail is one of the nation's premier long distance multi-use trails. Stretching from Denver and Durango, it is divided into 28 segments of different lengths with numerous entry/exit points, much like the well-known Appalachian Trail. Trail enthusiasts include hikers, horseback riders, mountain bikers, and cross-country skiers. The Colorado Trail Foundation organizes the volunteers who build, improve, and maintain the trail. CTF Trail Crews are weekend to week-long summer efforts with a team of around twenty volunteers accomplishing tread improvements. The Colorado Trail Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization funded almost entirely by private contributions.

Non-Profit info #2. The Colorado Trail Foundation has not previously worked directly with Vail Resorts to my knowledge. However, the Colorado Trail passes through the heart of the Frisco/Breckenridge area and directly under the ski lifts of Copper Mountain. Therefore, there may already exist a connection between trail users and the SSV retail stores or VR lodging opportunities in that area.

Non-Profit info #3. Vail Resorts is in the business of helping our guests experience the great outdoors. The Colorado Trail draws hikers, campers, equestrians, mountain bikers, and (in winter) cross-country skiers, all of whom are potential guests in our lodges or customers in our retail stores when they need gear or clothing. This trail offers recreational opportunities for people of all ages and varying abilities. Plus, it's right here in our home state, so the Vail Resorts name should be well-recognized. With a grand total of 566 miles of trail tread, it is an epic trail of epic proportions, requiring Epic Volunteers to keep it maintained.

**Project Description:**

1. What is the project and what will you be doing? What does a one of your volunteer days look like?
2. What do you expect to accomplish (BE SPECIFIC)?
3. What is the impact of the project? Please discuss impact on: Community, Environment and/or Kids?
4. What kind of inspiration or impact can this project have for other employees?
5. How do you plan to measure the success of your project?

*\*Please answer all five questions below.*

Project Description #1. The project for this week will be building new trail tread where the Colorado Trail and the Continental Divide Trail coincide near Leadville. The two officially-sanctioned trails share tread for nearly 300 miles through this state. Just last summer, the CTF added to its trail map a new alternative higher-altitude loop on the Colorado Trail called the Collegiate West 80 spur, a project we have worked on for the past three summers. This year's work will be a continuation of the new trail tread to finish that addition. These 80 new miles of trail tread account for the first truly significant change to the Colorado Trail since it was dedicated in 1988.

A normal work day begins with crawling out of my sleeping bag by 6:00AM to get dressed, then helping make breakfast for the whole crew. Everyone pitches in to share camp chores. We prepare our individual sack lunches and pack our daypacks, then gather our tools and hard hats to hit the trail by 8:00AM for the morning hike to the worksite. Building trail tread includes prying out rocks, removing shrubs and tree roots, scraping away all the grass, filling in depressions, and packing down a smooth mineral-dirt top layer to make a safe and level walking surface. We also install stable stepping stones in water crossings, sometimes even build bridges if the stream is large or deep. We take a break of about a half-hour to eat our sack lunches, and then return to digging in the dirt until mid-afternoon, usually around 3:00 or 3:30 as weather permits. Then we hike back to camp, clean up, and prepare the communal evening meal. After dishes are cleaned and put away, we have free time for socializing around the campfire before heading for bed in our individual tents.

Project Description #2. Depending upon the terrain, the Colorado Trail Foundation usually has specific numbers in mind when they send out a crew (i.e., build 300 feet of new finished tread at 36" wide), and we normally meet or exceed those goals, depending sometimes on weather. As time permits through the week, we may also make additional water drainage features and improvements to nearby existing parts of the trail, as we see how those portions are holding up over the course of time and exposure to the elements.

Project Description #3. Good trails don't just happen. Trails must be built and monitored to be "sustainable;" that is, they must hold up well to constant use and weather elements without degrading. Erosion carries away topsoil that is critical to plant growth, which feeds wildlife. Sediment runoff can choke streams, which can affect the fish and beaver who call the stream home. Trail corridors must be plotted to avoid damaging the most ecologically sensitive areas and wildlife critical habitat. The Forest Service knows the science and engineering behind it, and they plan our work; the Colorado Trail Foundation provides the hands to make that plan a reality.

Parents with children use our trail, facilitating family bonding. When kids spend time in Nature, they learn to respect it and care for it, becoming stewards so the beauty will be there for their children, too. Frequently we encounter Continental Divide Trail trekkers, and they normally tell us that the portions coinciding with the Colorado Trail are the best-kept portions of the trail that they've seen in their long trek. When they tell others of their adventures, people throughout the nation hear of the Colorado Trail, increasing tourism potential for our state.

**Project Description #4.** The Colorado Trail offers a wide variety of experiences along the way from Denver to Durango. And best of all, it's local! Our Colorado-based Vail Resort employees can learn from me about the varied recreational opportunities and then get out there and start enjoying our home state. We can easily use parts of this trail on our days off from work because we don't have to travel far to get there.

The trail travels through the spectacular Colorado Rocky Mountains amongst peaks with lakes, creeks, and diverse ecosystems. Trail users experience six wilderness areas and eight mountain ranges topping out at 13,271 feet, just below Coney Summit. Given that it is divided into segments with numerous entry/exit points, trail users can use as much of the trail or as little of the trail as they desire. When other employees learn that I am also trekking the trail because I want to have a grand adventure, perhaps they will be inspired to take a grand adventure themselves.

**Project Description #5.** The success of our project will be measured in the number of drainage features constructed and the number of feet of new trail tread completed. An intangible (but more personally fulfilling) success measurement is the number of compliments from hiker, mountain biker, and equestrian trail users who tell us that this is a beautifully-maintained trail, which has happened 100% of the time I've previously worked on such crews. In fact, I've had hikers mention that they've travelled here from the East Coast and from Alaska just because they'd heard how nice this trail is.

**Volunteer/Community Engagement:**

1. Do you have a history of working with this organization? (if so, tells us about your current involvement)
2. What made you want to get involved with this group?
3. How did you learn about the need for this project?

*\*Please answer all three questions below.*

**Volunteer Involvement #1.** I've been a Colorado Trail volunteer each summer since 2009, taking my vacation time to work on two crews each season. I plan to continue volunteering as long as I can swing a pick. In addition to digging in the dirt, I educate the local community about the trail's recreational opportunities with informational speeches during events such as National Trails Day. I'm also hiking the trail in segments. To date, I have walked 157 miles of it, beginning at Denver's Waterton Canyon trailhead. I can now say that I've walked all the way from Denver to Leadville! I should complete another 111 miles this coming summer on a hiking vacation, which will place me southwest of the Salida area. My target date for walking into Durango is August 2016.

**Volunteer Involvement #2.** I wanted to try backpacking again, an activity I had done in my youth but hadn't tried in two decades. I wondered if I could still enjoy backpacking and camping in the wild even in middle age. The 566 miles of the Colorado Trail promised plenty of backpacking opportunities to see new scenery. When I use a trail, I like to give back to it to make it enjoyable for other people as well. I want to help others have the same kind of pleasant experience and a chance to see the beauty of our state's wild areas, places to which you can't drive. And I want to see that Mother Earth isn't ruined while we're enabling humans to utilize her recreational opportunities.

**Volunteer Involvement #3.** I first learned about the volunteer efforts to maintain the Colorado Trail while attending an informational presentation at an REI store given by a man who had through-hiked the Colorado Trail in 2008. Then I studied the Foundation's website, where I learned that the trail was completely built by and is maintained solely by volunteers. The trail is in constant need of tread maintenance to prevent erosion. 566 miles is a lot of ground to cover; it requires an army of volunteers. Portions of the trail are still being rerouted away from motorized dirt roads to create more of a backcountry footpath experience, so trail-building is in the CTF plan for years to come.

**Why should Vail Resorts sponsor your project?**

1. Why is this work important?

2. How might this project benefit you and help with your personal development?
3. How does this project relate to Vail Resorts' values?
4. How will you share your experience with your colleagues while you are working on and when you have completed the project?

*\*Please answer all four questions below.*

Sponsorship #1. Through-hikers spend an average of 6 weeks walking the trail and some have called it a "life-changing experience." The Colorado Trail Foundation estimates that 150 people complete the trail annually, and thousands more use small portions of it. Without maintenance, the trail would erode from "being loved to death," causing damage to the ecosystems surrounding it and impacting wildlife habitat. This project fits well with the Vail Resorts philosophy of good environmental stewardship while having the experience of a lifetime enjoying the outdoors.

Sponsorship #2. Trail maintenance crews are all about learning teamwork. Heavy rocks can't be moved alone. Teamwork translates over to my work environment. The diversity of crew volunteers teaches me not to underestimate another person based solely on first impressions, what they look like, or their age. I gain more self-confidence when we complete tasks that originally seem large and overwhelming. It also teaches me to take pride in doing a job well.

Sponsorship #3. Trail maintenance allows me to Serve Others by making an easier, more pleasant trail for our users; we often invite backpackers to share our campsite and meals, or offer them rides into town to resupply. I can Do Right by giving back when I use a resource; that restores balance. Improving this trail Drives Value by attracting tourists to our state from many other states and countries, tourists who support our local economies and perhaps stay at our resort properties, tourists getting their money's worth out of an enjoyable trip. I can Do Good for the environment by preserving sensitive ecosystems from erosion. I help trail users Be Safe by removing obstacles from the path, and I stay safe by using the protective equipment and tools provided for us according to our training so that it doesn't endanger my fellow volunteers. Finally, I Have Fun when we camp in beautiful settings and enjoy getting to know new people around the evening campfire; you ought to hear the laughter when we start telling stories!

Sponsorship #4. I will share my experiences by posting a link to photos with explanatory captions on my own Facebook page as well as the Vail Resorts Facebook page and the Colorado Trail Foundation's Facebook page. I'll be happy to speak to any Vail Resorts group meetings deemed appropriate. I also present information externally for the Colorado Trail Foundation at local events such as National Trails Day in June, and I will mention my company sponsorship there. In fact, I'm already scheduled for a community outreach event in Highlands Ranch on April 24, 2013. I'll also write a story to submit to the Echo webpage under "Employees in Action" and for the Buzz. During the project itself, though, I will be out of contact for blogging or Tweeting. There is no cell phone or Internet reception that far into the backcountry. But I always keep a journal of all my activities on the Colorado Trail, whether I'm hiking it or maintaining it, and I'll use that journal to make a report once the work is finished.

**Your Responsibilities:**

*Epic Volunteers are expected to: 1) participate in Epic Volunteers training and complete required HR paperwork prior to starting the project, 2) complete the proposed project within timeline you were selected for, 3) share your story.*

**Agree to the EP40 requirements.**

I agree

*What we need from you:*

- A **letter of approval** from the contact person of the sponsoring nonprofit on the group's letterhead. If possible, also include the group's literature to give us a better sense of what they do.
- A **letter or email of approval**, or signature from your supervisor, agreeing to the dates specified for your internship.
- A **budget**, including the total number of days. We are able to offer \$250 to help cover basic travel expenses **if your project requires travel out of the community where you currently reside. You will be responsible for any travel expenses over \$250.** Include:

- PTO cost for the 40 hours
  - Travel costs (including the \$250 stipend)
  - Costs covered by non-profit including items like room and board, clothing, etc
- Finally, please **email your completed application** (supervisor letter, sponsoring group letter, typed responses to the questions and any supporting materials from the group) to: [ndeford@vailresorts.com](mailto:ndeford@vailresorts.com). *Incomplete applications cannot be approved.*



OUR COMMUNITY. OUR MOUNTAINS. OUR FUTURE.