SORP 2017 Conference

Advancing Outdoor Stewardship – a Toolkit

Anna Zawisza
Director of Community Relations & Strategic Partnerships
Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado
The Big Picture

- Degrading Public Lands
  - Overuse
  - Budget Cuts
  - Federal Hiring Freeze
  - Climate Change
  - Natural Disasters
- Capacity Issues
  - Outdoor Stewardship Organizations
  - Land Managers
- Initiatives for getting more people outdoors
- Volunteer “mandates”
- Funding structure for volunteer stewardship projects
DESIRED OUTCOMES

• A highly effective, trained volunteer workforce
  • Highly competent
  • High quality work product
• Increased confidence in volunteers
• Greater ability to fundraise
• More capacity to do stewardship work
Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado

• Motivating and enabling people to be active stewards of Colorado’s natural resources since 1984
• Programs and Projects
• Training and Leadership Development Programs
• Collaboration and Statewide Leadership

2016 by the numbers
• 5,352 volunteers
• 36,773 volunteer hours valued at $954,627
• Volunteer opportunities in 66 places throughout Colorado
GOAL: Trained and Retained Volunteer Workforce (v-force)

• Why do people volunteer in outdoor stewardship?
  • experience the outdoors
  • build a sense of community
  • make friends with common values/interests
  • give back to lands they love
  • be active outside
  • discover new places
  • learn new skills
  • share passion with family and friends
  • participate in hands on environmental work
Focus on “Retaining” First

• Strengthen the value proposition
• Contributors to a great volunteer experience:
  • Good project selection
  • Top notch project management
  • Excellent pre- and post- project communication
  • Taking care of volunteers on the project
    • Food, more food + beer
    • SWAG and prizes
    • Expectations
    • Safety
    • Goals
    • Impact
Focus on “Training” Next

- Trained volunteer leaders with specific roles and responsibilities are critical
  - Project Lead
  - Technical Advisor
  - Crew Leader Manager
  - Crew Leaders (I, II and III)
  - Tool Manager and Assistant(s)
  - Crew Chef and Assistant(s)
- Shadowing
- Mentoring
- Building new skills
Increasing Capacity for V-force outdoor stewardship

• Ready, Set, Volunteer Toolkit
  • A set of innovative tools and techniques that effectively equip and enable organizations and agencies to engage more people in volunteer outdoor stewardship
  • Based on VOC’s boots-on-the-ground work over the last 30 years

• Audiences
  • Outdoor Stewardship Organizations
  • “Friends of....” groups
  • Land Managers
  • Community organizations
  • New initiatives
Toolkit Components

- Assessment Techniques and Tools
  - Example: Land Manager Project Application Process
- Digital and Print Guides
  - Example: Project Checklist
- Online and Field-based Certified Trainings
  - Example: Volunteer Project Management Training
- Impact Measurement and Evaluation Tools
  - Example: Post-project survey process
- Case Studies
  - Example: Del Norte Economic Impact Based on Outdoor Rec Access
- VOC Staff Support Services
  - Example: Project scouting by Technically Trained Trail Design VOC Staff person
Parting Thoughts

• Outdoor Recreation is a $887 Billion Industry
• Get recreationalists engaged in caring for the resources that make their recreation possible
• DO IT WELL
Stay connected with Us!

- Partnership News e-newsletter (sign up on our website)
- website: www.voc.org
- facebook: /volunteersforoutdoorcolorado
- twitter: @VOC_Colorado
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- YouTube: /volunteeroutdoorCO
Thank you!

See you out there!