

WCNR Diversity & Inclusion Program Partnership with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy



Rocky
Mountain
Conservancy



OFFICE OF
**DIVERSITY
& INCLUSION**
WARNER COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Who is the Rocky Mountain Conservancy?

Rocky Mountain Conservancy has been able to provide over 90 years of support to public lands across Colorado and Wyoming. Founded in 1931, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy is the primary nonprofit partner of Rocky Mountain National Park and similar public lands. Our mission is to promote stewardship of Rocky Mountain National Park and similar public lands through education and philanthropy. We do this work by providing a number of services to these public lands through retail sales, educational programming, philanthropic giving, and on-the-ground stewardship work.

What work do they do?

Rocky Mountain Conservancy provides multiple areas of assistance to Rocky Mountain National Park and US Forest Service lands. Through our nature stores we are able to provide visitors to these landscapes with souvenirs to take home, and providing a percentage of revenue to the host public land site as direct aid. Through our philanthropic program we are able to accept and distribute donations that come from individual and corporate donors to provide additional funding for projects within Rocky Mountain National Park.

Since 2003, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy-Conservation Corps (RMC-CC) has supported AmeriCorps members (ages 18-25) serving in Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP) and surrounding U.S. Forest Service lands. These members serve on crews and complete on-the-ground conservation projects related to trail maintenance, habitat restoration, historic preservation, and visitor use site enhancement. Crews are comprised of four to six crew members and one crew leader. Crews complete eleven weeks of on-the-ground service and also participate in training, education, and career development. During crews' on-the-groundwork, National Park Service staff provide technical guidance, while the Conservancy's Director of Conservation and Field Coordinators provide programmatic oversight.

How does the Rocky Mountain Conservancy work advance DEI efforts?

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy has recently introduced the position of Diversity Internship Cohort Coordinator. This position is currently filled by Steven Ochoa, and he is dedicated to making this cohort not just a space for professional training, but a space for personal development, introspection, and discussion surrounding the topics of race, ethnicity, gender, and accessibility in the National Park Service. The cohort provides the space for interns, RMC staff, NPS staff, and our partners to share and build awareness of how our individual backgrounds and lived experiences interact with National Park Service culture. Steven has a varied background of work with disadvantaged communities that has contributed to his understanding of the need for cultural competence when engaging folks from diverse backgrounds.



How does the Rocky Mountain Conservancy have ties to WCNR?

The RMC-Conservation Corps program has had the pleasure of employing a number of Warner College alumni over the years. The organization regularly recruits within the Warner College of Natural Resources, and are always grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with the school. Along with recruitment and staffing, RMC staff have come to speak and provide guest lectures in the past, and would enjoy continuing to provide that opportunity.

RMC's Diversity Internship Cohort Coordinator has been building relationships with various community led organizations, non-profits, and universities in an effort recruit from historically underrepresented communities in the National Park Service's workforce. While RMC and the Continental Divide Research Learning Center are still in the early phases of building a relationship with the Warner College of Natural Resources, there is a lot of potential for this relationship to grow, particularly in the realm of research opportunities and an annual research symposium hosted out of the Continental Divide Research Learning Center.

What opportunities are available for WCNR students to be involved?

Whether it be an internship or volunteering, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy offers many opportunities for public lands stewardship that students can become involved with. We host a variety of positions with the National Park Service and Forest Service including positions in environmental education and conservation corps. Additionally, we are currently accepting applications from graduate students for our 2022 Bailey Research Fellowship. Through this fellowship, we are able to provide a graduate student with housing and an additional living expense reimbursement stipend of \$12,000 meanwhile conducting research in Rocky Mountain National Park. All these opportunities and more can be found on our website: rmconservancy.org.

Rocky Mountain Conservancy is also happy to work with WCNR staff to bring students up for panel discussions and in-person experiential learning opportunities with Park staff.

If you would like more information please reach out to the WCNR Diversity & Inclusion Program [here](#)