



Request for Proposals (RFP)
Great Outdoors Colorado-Funded Youth Corps Crews
for Local Government & Open Space Projects
Submissions due Thursday, September 22, 2016 4:00 pm MDT

PURPOSE

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) recently approved up to \$500,000 (divided equally between GOCO's Open Space and Local Government purposes) to be awarded to GOCO-eligible projects in conjunction with the Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA). The goal of these funds is to employ youth and young adults (ages 14-25) throughout the state on critical outdoor recreation and land conservation projects using the network of youth corps accredited by CYCA.

BACKGROUND

GOCO is the result of a citizens' initiative passed by the voters in 1992. As the recipient of roughly half of Colorado Lottery proceeds – approximately \$62.5 million in Fiscal Year 2015 - GOCO awards grants for parks, outdoor recreation, and land conservation projects. For more information on GOCO, please visit www.GOCO.org.

CYCA is a statewide coalition of 9 youth conservation corps that employ and train youth and young adults on land, water, and energy conservation projects. Youth corps are a proven strategy for engaging young people in service to their communities and stewardship of their environment while cultivating in them valuable skills to meet the challenges of the 21st century. For more information about youth corps, or to find the accredited youth corps that serves your region, please go to www.CYCA.org.

RATIONALE

Teenage and young adult unemployment rates are alarmingly high, particularly when compared to overall employment rates. According to a Pew Research study published in June 2015, less than one-third of teenagers were employed in the summer of 2014¹ while the adult unemployment rate in Colorado remains just over 4 percent. The demand for youth corps jobs in Colorado verifies the reality of these statistics. Youth corps receive an average of six applications for every one available job. Additionally, research shows that young people who enter the workforce in a recession may never catch up economically².

Just as young people are ready and eager to work, our public and protected lands are in great need of labor. Lands intended for public recreation sometimes sit unused for lack of funds to build trails, install playgrounds, or construct other planned recreational amenities. Millions of visitors and residents enjoy the wide array of outdoor recreation activities on the state's public lands every year. However, providing sustainable and quality outdoor recreation experiences continues to be a challenge. According to US Census figures, between 2010 and 2015,

¹ "The Fading of the Teen Summer Job", Pew Research Center, June 23, 2015

² www.inthesetimes.com, March 3, 2010

Colorado's population increased by 8.5 percent and the total population was estimated at over 5.4 million. Forecasts estimate that Colorado's population will grow to almost 7 million by 2030. A growing and diversifying population, as well as recent natural disasters, has strained outdoor recreation resources³.

Increased visitation and forest health issues such as fire danger, beetle kill, and invasive species have put pressure on our conserved private lands as well. Young people can help assure that Colorado's recreational assets are enhanced and maintained and that investments in land conservation are protected.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) PROCESS

CYCA, in partnership with GOCO, is managing a competitive RFP process for projects funded from GOCO's Local Government and Open Space purposes. Applications will be reviewed and ranked based on the project parameters and criteria listed below. The review committee, made up of CYCA staff and board members, community members, and GOCO staff, will score and rank the projects based on eligibility and responses to specific Selection Criteria (see below). The GOCO Board will vote on the slate of projects in December 2016. We strongly encourage early submissions to avoid missing the September, 22nd 4:00 PM MDT deadline.

Anticipated Timeline

August 1, 2016 – RFP Released

September 22, 2016 – Proposals due to CYCA by 4:00 PM MDT

October 27, 2016 – Review committee finishes scoring and ranking projects

December 2016 – GOCO Board votes on slate of projects

January 2017 – Projects authorized to begin

December 31, 2017 – All projects must be complete

Available Resources and Funds Management

- \$250,000 dedicated for GOCO-eligible Open Space projects and \$250,000 dedicated for GOCO-eligible Local Government projects.
- Applicants must apply for a minimum of **two weeks of youth corps work**. One week of work consists of 320 hours of labor (8 people for 40 hours each, for example) inclusive of one-way travel and 4-5 hours per week of on-site education activities for the crew.
- If awarded, CYCA will reimburse the youth corps directly for their work. The applicant will not need to have an agreement with the youth corps. **The applicant will not receive any direct funding through this grant program.**

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

Eligible Applicants

- Local Government Purpose – **Only** municipalities, counties, and parks/recreation special districts may apply.
- Open Space Purpose – **Only** municipalities, counties, other political subdivisions of the state⁴ and land trusts that own parks or open space properties or that hold conservation easements on either public or private lands may apply.

Eligible Properties/Project Types

³ 2014 Colorado Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Colorado Parks & Wildlife.

⁴ As designated in state law. GOCO does not determine or grant status as a "political subdivision of the state".

- Local Government Purpose – The land must be owned or controlled (by easement, lease, or otherwise) by a municipality, county or parks/recreation special district and the project must be to construct or enhance outdoor recreation facilities eligible for funding through GOCO’s Local Government programs (such as parks, playgrounds, and trails).
- Open Space Purpose/Publicly-Owned Lands – The land may be owned by a municipality, county, or other political subdivision of the state, and must be managed as protected open space. Eligible project types include (but are not limited to) construction/maintenance of trails and trail amenities, noxious weed removal, wildlife habitat restoration, and fire mitigation. All work must comply with any conservation easement or other use restriction governing the property and the owner’s policies regarding its public lands.
- Open Space Purpose/Private-ly-Owned Lands – The land may be owned by a land trust or other private party, so long as the land is permanently protected by a conservation easement or other permanent use restriction. Eligible project types must provide a public benefit and include (but are not limited to) noxious weed removal, wildlife habitat restoration, fire mitigation, or other natural resource protection/stewardship. Construction of trails or other recreational amenities are eligible project types. Projects intended to benefit only the property’s owner (such as digging ditches or constructing agricultural structures) are not eligible. All work must comply with the conservation easement or other use restriction governing the property.
- **Projects intended for state or federal lands are ineligible.**

Whether an applicant or a project is eligible for funding through this RFP is entirely and exclusively at the discretion of GOCO. Questions about applicant or project eligibility should be directed to Madison Brannigan, GOCO’s Local Government Program Coordinator (mbrannigan@goco.org). Questions about the appropriateness of using a youth corps, how to prepare for hosting a youth corps, etc. should be directed to Scott Segerstrom, CYCA’s Executive Director (ssegerstrom@cyca.org) or the youth corps that serves your area (find youth corps region map at <http://www.cyca.org/>).

Additional Eligibility Criteria

- Project must be appropriate for youth corps crews (14–25 year olds).
- Applicant must coordinate closely with the youth corps in advance of submitting a proposal.
- Applicant must have the capacity to properly host a youth corps crew.
- **Applicant must agree to promote a funded project using social and traditional media**
- Project must be “shovel-ready”: able to be completed in calendar year 2017 and have all approvals in place.
- Project is unlikely to be funded from another source.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed against set criteria and scored based on the point system outlined in the Proposal Narrative section. Funding recommendations will be based on a numerical score

and the collective assessment of the merits of each proposal. The proposal review committee reserves the right to request revisions on all components of the application.

Other Considerations

- Multi-agency collaborations will be considered if the project lends itself to collaboration.
- Funding match is encouraged but not required. Grantee must provide technical expertise, oversight and occasional supervision, and all materials and specialty equipment.
- Applicant must work closely with the corps to plan the project.
- Multiple distinct projects should be submitted using separate applications rather than “bundled” into one large proposal. However, applicants may want to consider “bundling” projects that are in close proximity with similar types of work.

WHAT PROJECT SPONSORS NEED TO KNOW

From project planning to completion, it is easy to use a youth corps. Youth corps are high-capacity organizations that are well-prepared; they arrive with the equipment, skills and supervision to succeed. After talking with a potential sponsor, the youth corps will match the right type of crew for the project.

Typical youth corps projects include:

- constructing and maintaining Colorado’s trail system
- improving outdoor recreation amenities such as playgrounds and parks
- mitigating fire fuels
- restoring wildlife habitat
- installing and dismantling fences
- mitigating and removing invasive species

Shared Project Responsibility

Hosting a youth corps requires cooperation, communication, and shared responsibility. Many sponsors ask, “what do I need to provide?” The chart below details how youth corps generally share responsibility. Of course, a project may require a different breakdown of responsibilities which you can discuss with corps staff as you plan the project.

Youth Corps Responsibilities	Project Sponsor Responsibilities
Pre-project walk-through with sponsor’s staff	Project planning
Adult supervision	Pre-project walk-through with corps staff
Youth/young adult crew (at least 8 people and 320 hours of labor)	Specialty tools (if necessary)
Basic tools	Sponsor staff person available to answer questions and check work regularly
Transportation	Complete an end-of-project evaluation
Camp equipment & food (if necessary)	Access to free camping (if necessary)

What Youth Corps Are

- Youth employment and training programs
- Programs focused on developing young people through work and learning

What Youth Corps Are Not

- Professional work crews
- Volunteer programs
- Recreation programs

Weekly Crew Rates:

- Day Crew (crews go home each night and travel to the project daily) - \$5,850 per week
- Camping Crew (crews camp at or near the project, sponsors should work with the youth corps to help secure free camping) - \$6,300 per week
- Chainsaw and/or Pesticide Application Crew (includes day crew and camping crews, 80% of the crew is chainsaw trained, or meets state pesticide application compliance requirements) - \$7,500 per week

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- No more than three (3) pages of narrative, single sided, single space, 12 point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins
- Maps – submission must include two electronic maps – 1) a project location map showing the project location in relation to the nearest town or landmark and 2) a detailed area map showing the specific project area. Each map needs to be printable on 8 ½ x 11-size paper.
- Electronic, fax, and email submissions are allowed and encouraged in order to save resources. FedEx or other overnight services are discouraged.
- CYCA will not accept CDs, DVDs, videos, brochures, or any other attachments.
- Applicants should request a receipt upon submission to CYCA.
- Proposal must include a statement that asserts that a youth corps has collaborated on the application and agreed to the budget, scope of work, and timeframe.
- Proposals that do not meet these minimum requirements will not be considered.

PROPOSAL CHECKLIST:

Complete proposals will include the following documents in the listed order:

- _____ Cover Sheet (does not count toward three-page limit)
- _____ Proposal Narrative (three-page limit)
- _____ Two (2) maps (does not count toward three-page limit)
- _____ Assurance and Signature Page (does not count toward three-page limit)
- _____ Letter from holder of the conservation easement or enforcer of the use restriction verifying that the work does not violate the easement/use restriction (if applicable) (does not count toward three-page limit)

DEADLINE & SUBMISSION:

Proposals are due to CYCA by 4:00 PM Mountain Daylight Time on Thursday, September 22, 2016. Late or incomplete proposals will not be accepted.

Submit proposals via US mail, fax, or email to:

Nancy Weil, Office Manager
Colorado Youth Corps Association
1640 Grant Street, Suite 210
Denver, CO 80203
nweil@cyca.org
fax - 303 / 863-0610

Questions can be directed to Scott Segerstrom, Executive Director, at 303-863-0604 or ssegerstrom@cyca.org.

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COVER SHEET

1. Name of organization applying:
2. Name of Project:
3. Provide a 75-word summary of the project:
4. Name of partnering youth corps (go to www.CYCA.or/join for map and list of accredited corps):
5. Proposal contact info (name, title, organization, address, phone, email):
6. Contact person for coordination of technical aspects of project (name, title, organization, address, phone, email):
7. Budget: Type of youth corps crew requested and number of weeks per crew type:

Crew Type	Weeks Requested by Crew Type	Crew Week Rate	Total Cost
<i>Example: Day Crew</i>	<i>4 weeks</i>	<i>\$5,850</i>	<i>\$23,400</i>
Day Crew		\$5,850	
Camping Crew		\$6,300	
Chainsaw Crew		\$7,500	
Pesticide Application Crew		\$7,500	
Chainsaw <u>and</u> Pesticide Application Crew		\$7,500	
TOTAL			

Note: Funds from this grant can only be used for youth corps labor. Do not include a request for materials, equipment, staff time, or any other costs in the budget.

8. Matching funds (cash or in-kind):

Item	Source	Calculation	Cost
<i>Example: Chipper</i>	<i>Trees R Us</i>	<i>4 weeks of chipper at \$1,000/wk</i>	<i>\$4,000</i>
TOTAL			

9. Applicant organization is a:

- Municipality
- County
- Parks/Recreation Special District
- Land Trust (Open Space funds only)
- Other Political Subdivision of the State (Open Space funds only)

(The applying organization must be one of these.)

10. Name of landowner:

11. Name of property:

12. Property is:

- Private, protected by a conservation easement
- Publicly owned park
- Publicly owned open space
- Other _____

Is the property protected by a conservation easement or other use restriction?

- No
- Yes. If yes, the holder of the conservation easement or enforcer of the use restriction **must** submit a letter that the work contemplated does not violate the easement/use restriction.

13. This is an application for:

- Local Government Purpose Funds
- Open Space Purpose Funds
- Consider in either category

(Note that the final purpose allocation is at GOCO's discretion.)

14. County/counties the project is in:

15. Name of nearest town or landmark:

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PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Three (3) pages maximum, 12-point type, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins. Please re-state the original question **title (not the entire question)** and answer each question.

Answer each of the following Selection Criteria questions:

1. **Project Description** - Describe the project's characteristics. Describe in detail the work that will be done (miles of trail and trail characteristics or acres of invasives to be removed and density, for example). Proposals that clearly describe the goals of the project and what will be distinctly different after the work is complete will score better.(30 points)
2. **Education** - What opportunities for education – particularly environmental or outdoor recreation education – does the project offer? Describe any contribution that the applicant or landowner can offer related to corpsmember education (project-specific training, environmental education, career discussions, etc.) that goes beyond what a youth corps normally offers to its corpsmembers. How and when will the education be offered and who will conduct it? Projects that offer the corpsmembers interesting learning opportunities and dedicated time for education will score better. (10 points)
3. **Need & Benefits** - Describe the need for the project and its benefits. What impact will it have; what makes this project important compared to other projects you might have proposed; who will use or otherwise benefit from it; what would happen if the work were not completed? (30 points)
4. **Planning & Readiness** - Describe the planning that has gone into the project. How did you determine the need for the project, the scope of work, and the number of hours needed to accomplish it? What has the applicant done to prepare itself for hosting a youth corps crew? Are permits or other needed approvals in place? If not, discuss the status of obtaining those approvals. Provide detail of any barriers to the project being completed by Dec 31, 2076 (NEPA, access issues, etc.) (20 points)
5. **Funding Need and Match** - Describe the need for GOCO funding. How likely is it that the project would be accomplished if GOCO funds were unavailable? Is the applicant able to provide any matching funding or resources (e.g. project materials, specialty equipment (if needed), camping for crews, staff to provide education, staff technical assistance, etc.)? If yes, detail the matching contribution. (10 points)

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ASSURANCE, AUTHORIZATION, & SIGNATURE PAGE

ASSURANCE

Did your organization collaborate on this proposal with the youth corps and is the youth corps fully aware of the scope of the project and budget?

_____ Yes

Name & title of youth corps staff person _____

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE FUNDS

Applicant recognizes that it will not receive payment from GOCO. By its signature below, applicant hereby authorizes GOCO to make payment on its behalf directly to CYCA in the event this project is chosen for funding.

SIGNATURE

(electronic and pdf signatures are accepted)

Name _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Signature _____

Date _____