



## City of Boulder Open Space & Mountain Parks

2520 55<sup>th</sup> St., Boulder, CO 80301; 303-441-3440

<http://www.osmp.org>

**Subject:** Important Junior Ranger Program Update 4/17/2020

Dear Junior Ranger applicant:

It is with a very heavy heart that I write to update you that the Junior Ranger Program has been cancelled for 2020. We know that this will be profoundly disappointing to you, as we understand how much our dedicated Junior Rangers look forward to this job opportunity every summer. Believe us, we are heartbroken too. This will be, to our knowledge, the first summer that the Junior Ranger Program will not run since it began in 1965. We are deeply saddened not to be able to offer these jobs to you this year, along with the learning, community-building, and fun that is Junior Ranger tradition. It was important to us to get you this message before any potential job offers were made so that you can make alternative plans this summer.

As you know, Colorado's collective efforts to stay home, wear masks, and participate in social distancing – we hope – are making a difference in limiting the spread of COVID-19. However, you may also know that these efforts have led to a dramatic decline in economic activity as businesses are forced to close. Sales taxes are the primary source of funding for OSMP's land preservation and maintenance programs, including the Junior Ranger Program. The pandemic and its far-reaching impacts have forced the City of Boulder to make extremely difficult decisions about what services to continue and which workers to employ.

Although the Junior Ranger Program has been cancelled for the year, we still hope that you will support our community's open space and public lands. Here are a few ways you can do that (and invite your friends to do so as well):

- **[Fill out this JR Interest Form](#)**: We are not sure what our staffing capacity or ability to gather in groups will be in the coming months, but if we can, we may try to organize a few unpaid volunteer trail work days in the late summer or fall. We may also try to provide some trail skill building workshops online as soon as May or June. This interest form gives us your contact information so that we can share opportunities as they are available. This interest form is for ANYONE – you don't have to have applied this year or have been in the program before to participate, so feel free to share with your friends.

- **[Help Us Keep Trails Open](#)**: The only way we can continue to keep open space and trails open for the public to use during this pandemic is if people follow the state regulations put in place by Governor Polis. This includes not gathering in groups of more than 4 (especially not groups of friends who do not live with you), maintaining 6 feet of physical distance between you and other trail users, following one-way trail patterns where applicable, and wearing masks or face coverings when out in public – including when you are biking, trail running, and hiking on open space. Truly! This is critical to keeping trails open. Boulder City Council has already spoken multiple times about the potential of closing trails if people do not comply with these health safety practices.
- **[Apply for a neighboring youth trail program for 2020](#)**: We hope you'll come back to the Junior Ranger Program in 2021, but in the meantime, TeamWorks is still accepting applications for 2020 (subject to change based on the changing pandemic). You can apply at <https://teamworkscolorado.org/home/crew-members/> (Crews in Boulder or Nederland for ages 16-20).

Know that we are thinking of you and hope that you, your family, and friends are healthy, safe, and well. We know this is super disappointing news, and our hearts are with you during this challenging time. Please reach out if you have any further questions, or if you have any needs that we can help you with. We hope to see you virtually online (if we are able to provide some skill building opportunities), at a volunteer event (if we are able to gather in groups this summer or fall), or at the very least, we'll see you next year on the trails!

With gratitude for all you do,

Natasha and the OSMP team