

Stewardship Program

February 11, 2022

Ian Stafford, Director of Stewardship, Nathan Morrow (New Stewardship Field Manager)

- Overseeing the hiring process for the 2022 Conservation Corps Season, filling 56 positions within the Conservation Corps program, and 15-20 positions in the High School Leadership Program
- Reintroducing the Conservancy's year-round Stewardship program to increase the on-the-ground impact of the Conservancy within the Park and National Forest
- Tracking and providing substantive involvement for state and federal policy issues
- Submitting grant applications, and seeking out additional funding streams for Corps programs

Recent Accomplishments and Current Activities

- In honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day RMC held our 3rd annual food drive for the first two weeks of 2022. By partnering with ROMO staff and volunteers we were able to raise over 143 lbs. of food for the Community Cupboard Food Bank at the Old Gallery in Allenspark. In an effort to expand the ethos of service within the organization, this event will now be the first of our annual stewardship events that will take place every year in the future. Programs like this will allow RMC to partner with a wide variety of groups to further increase our annual impact, and build lasting relationships across the region.
- As of January 25th, 2022 RMC-CC has 70+ applications for the 2022 Conservation Corps program, and have began offering positions to Crew Leaders and Members for the season. We are working to fill 56 positions, and will accept applications until Friday, March 18th. We have expanded our recruitment efforts to build new relationships with different institutions to attract talent from a more diverse regional area, HBCUs, technical colleges, local and regional groups, and a myriad of other organizations.
- RMC is working with a nationwide coalition to continue to track and advocate funding for public lands. We were able to work closely with federally elected officials for the passage of the Infrastructure Bill, which provided the Park Service with an additional \$1.7 billion in funding and \$1.4 billion to expand transportation access to recreation areas on public lands, along with many other priorities that are important to our partners.

Upcoming Activities and Projects

- Working with RMC's new Stewardship Field Manager to reestablish the High School Leadership Corps, and public facing volunteer programs for the 2022 season.
- Beginning the process of seeking out new potential properties to acquire or convert to conservation easements around the park.
- In the coming weeks, we will assist the National Parks Conservation Association in the drafting of a letter to the heads of congress on the importance of efficiently increasing the distribution of Great American Outdoors Act funding.

Challenges and Opportunities

- We are prioritizing the goal of having a fully functional Stewardship program for the 2022 season, with all programs operating at full capacity, expanding our involvement in lands projects, and becoming more involved in policy development than RMC has ever been. This will allow RMC to resume its pre-pandemic effectiveness, while also growing its involvement in ways we never have as an organization.

Program Financials

- We have submitted a grant proposal to the National Forest Foundation and will be submitting a grant application to the National Park Foundation by Friday, February 11th, and are pursuing a few other funding sources for our work.