

# TRAIL&RAILS VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Volunteer Trails&Rails Interpreter

Updated: 07 December 2021

This position is located within the **Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (JUBA)**, The official duty station is onboard Amtrak trains with some remote virtual volunteer opportunities from home. Volunteer is responsible for conducting educational/interpretive programs on board Amtrak passenger trains running through California, between **Santa Barbara and San Jose**. The Trails&Rails program is offered during specific seasons on the **Coast Starlight and Pacific Surfliner**. Volunteer assists assigned park staff and volunteers in presenting Trails&Rails programs to Amtrak passengers, providing information on the significant natural and cultural sites, history, the environment, and the cultural diversity along each route. Programs are presented over the train's public address system and in other designated areas. Volunteers will be available to answer questions about the region, the Anza Trail, the National Park Service (NPS), and to hand out literature.

## **Major Duties**

Assists in the development and presentation of various onboard educational programs that relate the park's central interpretive theme of preserving significant examples of the natural, cultural, and historical resources of each route and to interpret them to show the development of cultural diversity. Provides information on the significant cultural and natural resources along assigned train routes.

Sets up temporary displays and associated materials in designated areas of the train. Is available to answer questions concerning areas of interest along the train route, provide information about the park, region, places of special interest and the National Park Service.

Meets and works with various passengers and entities relating to cultural and natural interpretation and folk life activities.

Participates in all sessions and completes assignments, training, and presentations required for the Trails&Rails training.

Maintains consistent, positive relations with NPS, Texas A&M University and Amtrak staff who may participate in conducting mandatory training.

Participates in and completes required annual training and assignments.

Resolves activity conflicts; refers them to park staff or Amtrak staff when higher resolution is needed.

Some activities may take place virtually such as training and meetings.

The volunteer must have access to a computer with camera and audio, printer and WIFI connection to complete assignments and participate in real time virtual activities.

## **Knowledge and Skills Required by the Position**

Knowledge of the resources and history of California.

Knowledge of the cultural and natural history of the Park, Amtrak route and surrounding region.

Ability to work virtually.

Ability to effectively communicate orally with diverse individuals and groups.

Ability to work and deal harmoniously with people and resolve conflicts under possible stressful situations.

Ability to develop and present information as an educational program and to provide accurate information to passengers.

Ability to anticipate, recognize, and analyze problems and to make effective decisions, devise contingency plans, and develop alternatives.

### **Supervisory Controls**

The volunteer is under the direct supervision of the park's **Trails&Rails Coordinator**. Assignments are made in broad terms, generally as to objectives desired.

The volunteer will communicate frequently with the Trails & Rails Lead on the steps to complete assignments.

Volunteer independently plans the detailed steps necessary to complete assignments. Selects and/or establishes the proper methods and procedures for resolving problems or situations within established guidelines and carries through to completion without direct supervision. Controversial/ sensitive matters are discussed with supervisor before implementation. Makes difficult decisions and judgements affecting program and interpretive development.

### **Guidelines**

Guidelines consist of regulations, management policies, including the most recent version of legislative mandates, goals and objectives, activity guidelines and standard operating procedures.

Guidelines provide boundaries within which the volunteer functions but allow considerable leeway. See [DO-7, RM – 7](#) for application and adaptation. Volunteer is expected to use judgement in application of program presentation styles. Situations sometimes call for special interpretation of the guidelines to resolve unique problems. Volunteers should follow the guidance of Amtrak staff about changes in protocol or operations procedures.

### **Complexity**

The volunteer must coordinate and synthesize a variety of knowledge skills, and resources to achieve a high-quality interpretive program, which is comprehensive, imaginative, and sensitive to the various needs of the passengers. Volunteer must be able to adapt to a variety of audiences, possible changes in train equipment, on board staff and personalities, and occasionally take the initiative in locating alternative public address systems for train-wide announcements and methods of presentation.

The volunteer may occasionally coordinate the completion of assignments and presentations in a virtual environment. The volunteer having completed six months conducting the program may occasionally coordinate the completion of new volunteers' training assignments and presentations in a virtual environment.

### **Scope and Effect**

Well developed, accurate, inclusive, and informative interpretive programs serve as important devices for informing the public about park values, park activities, the purpose of the park and its objectives.

The image of the National Park Service, Amtrak, the park, partners and the effectiveness of its programs, operations, protection of its resources, and the harmony of relationships with the local communities and park support groups are affected by the volunteer's knowledge, abilities, and actions.

### **Personal Contacts**

Contacts are with Amtrak passengers and employees, community members, other volunteers and park staff and partners. Contacts are made to provide information to Amtrak passengers about California's central coast, the park, region, and the National Park Service.

### **Physical Demands**

The work involves a combination of activities from periods seated at a desk to walking throughout a moving train and up and down narrow stairs. Additional activities involve walking, standing, bending, heavy lifting (literature and equipment case weighing 20 lbs plus) and carrying it on board and through a moving train and in and around Amtrak stations. Typically, long periods of time are spent either seated, standing, walking, and/or talking. Work involves periods of sitting, standing, or walking to complete training and assignments on and off-line.

**Per Amtrak Emergency Requirements, all Trails&Rails volunteers must have:**

- Ability to read/understand emergency evacuation instructions
- Ability to easily understand crew instructions
- Sufficient eyesight (*may be accompanied by the use of glasses/contact lenses*)
- Ability to hear (*may be accompanied by the use of a hearing aid*) and understand instructions shouted by crew members
- Ability to speak clearly/issue instructions to passengers
- Sufficient body mobility, strength, and dexterity in all limbs to assist/direct others in the following:
  - Reach upward, sideways, and/or downward to location of emergency exit mechanisms
  - Grasp, pull, turn, or manipulate emergency exit mechanisms
  - Shove, pull, or open emergency exit mechanisms
  - Lift, hold, or deposit on nearby seats/objects the size/weight of emergency exit windows (*approximately 35 lbs*)
  - Maintain your balance while removing obstructions of similar size/weight to emergency exit windows
  - Reach emergency exits cautiously/quickly
  - Exit the train via stairways, doors, and ladders cautiously/quickly
  - Assist others in getting off train
  - Ability to stand for extended periods of time and walk the length of a moving train
  - Walk on uneven surfaces such as the ballast (rock) which supports the train rails.

**Work Environment**

**On board the train.** The official duty station and work assignment is located primarily inside a train with varying exposure to extreme heat, cold and humidity in and around train stations. Work requires **seven to 12 hours of work and travel per trip**. The train is subject to delays that are beyond the control of the National Park Service. Volunteer must be flexible to these delays and adaptable to the changing needs of the program. Working conditions also include all hazards associated with train travel and virtual volunteer opportunities from home and other locations as identified in the Position Description.

Potential risks may include;

- slipping or tripping
- dark conditions
- sharp or slippery surfaces
- train malfunction/fire
- unruly passengers.
- exposure to extreme heat, cold and humidity in and around train stations
- requires approximately (*park to fill in*) hours of work and travel.
- works in close quarters with Amtrak personnel and Amtrak passengers with limited social distancing opportunities.
- possible exposure to surface and airborne related viruses, contaminants, and hazardous materials

For the purposes of tort claims, injury compensation and any agreed-to reimbursements, the Trails&Rails VIP is considered to be in volunteer status from the point that a Trails&Rails VIP enters

Amtrak property at their designated departure station until the time they depart Amtrak property at their designated return station. This would include the location point in which a Trails&Rails VIP has disembarked to await the arrival of their return train in which they continue with the onboard Trails&Rails program, except for any periods of time the VIP reports they are off duty for an extended layover, using reporting protocols specified by the local Trails&Rails program.

Volunteer will be provided with NPS and Amtrak protocol information about COVID-19 guidelines and required Personal Protective Equipment, (provided by NPS). The NPS Coordinator will provide updates on a regular basis including any protocol modifications. Volunteer should also check in with the park Volunteer Coordinator regularly for updates and modifications. Volunteers may continue to use PPE for their own comfort level even as national and local pandemic guidelines relax.

**Virtual/Residence.** There may be work assignments carried out primarily inside the trainee or Guide's residence. Working virtually often means challenges with connections and technical troubleshooting. Volunteer must be flexible to these delays and adaptable to the changing needs of the program. Volunteer must ensure that the work area is safe and free of tripping and electrical hazards.

### **Personal Protective Equipment**

The volunteer agrees to adhere to local health guidance. Volunteers may continue to use their own PPE even if local health guidance no longer require the use of PPE.

<b>Trails&amp;Rails JOB HAZARD ANALYSIS (JHA)</b>	2020	New JHA X Revised JHA
Division: <u>Interpretation</u>	Branch:	Job Performed by: Trails & Rails VIP
JOB TITLE: Trails & Rails VIP	JHA Number:	Page <u> 1 </u> of <u> 2 </u>
Analysis By:	Supervisor:	
Job Tasks/Steps/Procedures:	<p>- Assists in the development and presentation of various onboard educational programs that relate the park's central interpretive theme of preserving significant examples of the natural, cultural, and historical resources of each route and to interpret them so as to show the development of cultural diversity. Provides information on the significant cultural and natural resources along assigned train routes.</p> <p>- Sets up temporary displays and associated materials in designated areas of each train. Is available to answer questions concerning areas of interest along each train route, provide information about the park, region, and the National Park Service.</p> <p>- Meets and works with various passengers and entities relating to cultural and natural interpretation and folk life activities. Maintains consistent, positive relations with passengers and Amtrak staff. Resolves activity conflicts; refers to park staff or Amtrak staff when higher resolution is needed.</p> <p>Special Note: If a VIP Guide is injured, becomes seriously ill, or are involved in a serious incident while onboard, they must: Notify the Park Trails &amp; Rails Coordinator <i>as soon as possible</i>. The Park Trails &amp; Rails Coordinators will take appropriate action through the National Park Service and/or Amtrak channels as per Volunteer in Park Guidelines (RM # 7)</p>	
Potential Risks/Hazards:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- slipping or tripping</li> <li>- dark conditions</li> <li>- sharp or slippery surfaces</li> <li>- lifting heavy objects</li> <li>- bombs or explosives</li> <li>- train malfunction/fire</li> <li>- unsafe or dangerous passengers</li> <li>- exposure to extreme heat, cold and humidity in and around train stations</li> <li>- requires approximately 8 hours of work and travel.</li> <li>- works in close quarters with Amtrak personnel and Amtrak passengers with limited social distancing opportunities and Personal Protective Equipment</li> <li>- possible exposure to surface and airborne related viruses, contaminants and hazardous materials</li> </ul>	
Tools and Equipment:	Flashlight, carry-on suitcase with program props (brochures, Junior Ranger page and stickers, crayons, tangible displays).	
Safe Job Procedures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be especially careful when boarding and exiting the train. Use the handrail.</li> <li>• Be especially careful while walking when the train is in motion.</li> <li>• Report unsafe conditions, such as spills in the isle or sharp edges/surfaces to the Conductor as soon as possible.</li> <li>• Be sure the required flashlight is in working condition before boarding the train.</li> <li>• Do not attempt to carry something that is too heavy. Seek assistance or</li> </ul>	

	<p>make an additional trip.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report unclaimed or unattended packages/baggage to the Conductor as soon as possible.</li> <li>• Report strange smells (i.e. electrical) or smoke of any nature to the Conductor as soon as possible.</li> <li>• Pay particular attention to passengers who appear to be exhibiting odd or abnormal behavior and report it to the conductor as soon as possible.</li> <li>• Be prepared for variable weather conditions.</li> <li>• Be well rested for a long day and the ability to stand for extended periods of time and walk the length of a moving train.</li> <li>• Meet Amtrak physical safety standards for each trip and self certify each year that the individual meets those physical standards;</li> </ul> <p><b>PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAILS &amp; RAILS GUIDES</b></p> <p>All Trails &amp; Rails Guides must meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to read/understand emergency evacuation instructions</li> <li>• Ability to easily understand crew instructions</li> <li>• Sufficient eyesight (<i>may be accompanied by the use of glasses/contact lenses</i>)</li> <li>• Ability to hear (<i>may be accompanied by the use of a hearing aid</i>) and understand instructions shouted by crew members</li> <li>• Ability to speak clearly/issue instructions to passengers</li> <li>• Sufficient body mobility, strength, and dexterity in all limbs to assist/direct others in the following:</li> <li>• Reach upward, sideways, and/or downward to location of emergency exit mechanisms</li> <li>• Grasp, pull, turn, or manipulate emergency exit mechanisms</li> <li>• Shove, pull, or open emergency exit mechanisms</li> <li>• Lift, hold, or deposit on nearby seats/objects the size/weight of emergency exit windows (<i>approximately 35 lbs</i>)</li> <li>• Remove obstructions of similar size/weight to emergency exit windows while maintaining balance</li> <li>• Reach emergency exits cautiously/quickly</li> <li>• Exit cautiously/quickly</li> <li>• Assist others in getting off train</li> <li>• Ability to stand for extended periods of time and walk the length of a moving train</li> <li>• Attend and successfully complete and pass exam on Amtrak's Emergency Operations training module.</li> </ul>	
Required Personal Protective Equipment:	Flashlight, closed-toed footwear, VIP uniform shirt, and long pants. Current PPE as addressed in current CDC guidelines or local health authorities.	
Approved By:	Date	Safety Officer Concurred:

## TRAILS & RAILS POSITION DESCRIPTION ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have read and reviewed the Position Description for the **Trails&Rails** volunteer.

By signing the National Park Service VIP Agreement (OF301a Volunteer Service Agreement), I affirm that I currently have the physical abilities to perform all duties above and expect to continue to be able to do so for the duration of the Trails&Rails season. Should temporary (including illnesses) or long-term conditions arise that would prohibit me from meeting the above conditions, I will notify my supervisor as soon as possible, and will temporarily remove myself from onboard activities until such time as I can perform all of the duties stated above. During this period, I may be reassigned to other Trails&Rails duties. I understand that I can be removed from onboard activities if, in the judgement of the Park Trails&Rails Coordinator and/or Amtrak representative, it appears that I cannot meet all of the duties stated above.

The volunteer assumes the responsibility for following the NPS, CDC, and Amtrak mitigation guidance to reduce the potential for transmission of COVID-19 infections and other airborne illnesses and keep themselves and the people they interact with, safe.

Volunteers will be asked to reassess their physical condition and sign a new OF301a and Position Description Acknowledgment annually if the volunteer wishes to continue volunteering as a Trails&Rails onboard guide in future years. Current and updated OF301a and Position Description Acknowledgement forms are kept on file with the park.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please sign and scan the Position Description Acknowledgement and return this page to park staff. You will not become an official member of the **Trails&Rails** team without your acknowledgment and signature and acceptance by the NPS Coordinator.*