



Trail Crew Leader - Darrington Ranger District

Position Announcement - November 14, 2025

Compensation: \$24.50 - \$25.50/hour, temporary, full-time, non-exempt

Priority application date: January 4, 2026

Season dates: April 20 - October 15, 2026

Base of operations: Darrington and Verlot, WA

Housing: No-cost housing provided at the Darrington and Verlot Forest Service bunkhouses

About Washington Trails Association

Washington Trails Association (WTA) is the nation's largest state-based trail nonprofit. For 60 years, we've been mobilizing public lands advocates, trail stewards and on-the-ground hiking experts in pursuit of our vision of Trails for Everyone, Forever. Each year, with the support of over 23,000 donating members, WTA staff and more than 3,500 volunteers perform over 160,000 hours of trail maintenance across the state. Through our online Hiking Guide and Trailblazer app, we help hundreds of thousands of people find trails, from everyday adventures to backcountry explorations. Our vision depends on fostering an organization and outdoor community where all people are welcome, represented and included.

About this opportunity

WTA seeks a Trail Crew Leader to advance our mission to mobilize hikers and everyone who loves the outdoors to explore, steward and champion trails and public lands. The Trail Crew Leader will contribute to the overall success of WTA by leading single and multiday volunteer trail work parties in the North Puget Sound region of Washington. The Trail Crew Leader will work in both frontcountry and backcountry locations and will focus on a broad range of trail projects including annual maintenance, new trail construction, logout and construction of trail structures. On backcountry hikes, the Trail Crew Leader will be predominantly self-supported and required to carry their tools, food and camp supplies into remote settings.

The ideal candidate will love working with people outdoors and share our commitment to trail stewardship and volunteerism. They will have prior experience with trail work, leading a team outdoors and share our belief that everyone should feel safe and included in the outdoor community. The Trail Crew Leader will contribute to the overall success of WTA by ensuring that all work is completed to specification by our land management partners and by cultivating a sense of safety and belonging at worksites for crew members of diverse identities, experiences and backgrounds.

The Trail Crew Leader is a temporary, full-time, non-exempt position based in Darrington and Verlot, WA. This position reports to the Senior North Puget Sound Trails Coordinator.

Primary responsibilities

Leading volunteer work parties (70%)

- Ensure physical and emotional safety for a volunteer crew of diverse ages and backgrounds.
- Support, motivate and train volunteers to complete a variety of trail projects ensuring all technical work is to standards. Projects may include annual maintenance, new trail construction, logout and construction of trail structures.
- Uphold WTA's risk management values and policies on the crew.
- Effectively manage emergency situations following WTA's emergency response protocols.

Trail Crew Leader - Darrington Ranger District

- Report all incidents affecting the safety, health and well-being of your crew to supervisor, complete an incident report, and assist in any follow up investigations and debrief as deemed necessary based on the event(s).
- Positively represent WTA mission, programs and membership in all interactions with volunteers, trail users and others.

Preparing for work parties (15%)

- Arrive at each work party with tools, refreshments and work plan.
- Coordinate work party projects and plans with WTA staff and land manager.
- May communicate directly with volunteers via email and phone prior to work parties.
- May assist other WTA staff and volunteers in identifying volunteer trail projects.

Documenting work parties (10%)

- Using a WTA cellphone, provide digital photo documentation of project progress and volunteer engagement.
- Maintain and submit Safety Briefing Checklist and annual waivers for volunteers within 1 week of work party completion.
- Prepare and submit a summary report and thank you email to volunteers for each work party within one week of work party completion.

Outreach & other (5%)

- May assist efforts to engage hikers, volunteers and community groups in other WTA programming (e.g. representing WTA at events in the region).
- Potential to engage youth through school programs and trail maintenance events.
- May perform other tasks in front- and backcountry settings to ensure program success.

Experience, skills, knowledge and values

WTA is committed to supporting professional development, so we encourage you to apply even if you do not meet all the qualifications listed.

- Demonstrated commitment to WTA's mission, values and vision of trails for everyone, forever.
- Demonstrated skills in trail maintenance and building.
- Demonstrated experience leading a team in an outdoor setting.
- Ability to accept and integrate feedback graciously and give effective feedback to team members.
- Ability to work independently in a dynamic environment and as a member of a collaborative team.
- Ability to effectively manage emergency situations.
- Cultural competency experience and demonstrated ability to work with people of diverse races, ages, genders, abilities and economic backgrounds.
- Ability to work in an outdoor environment, including hiking and backpacking up to 6 miles daily across a variety of terrain and follow Leave No Trace principles.
- Ability to work weekends and 10-hour days for the duration of employment.
- Strong computer skills and proficiency with Google Suite (Gmail, Calendar and Drive).
- Reliable internet (library and other public access is fine) for work party planning and documentation.
- WFA and CPR certification valid through the duration of employment; WFR certification preferred.
- Valid driver's license and ability to drive a truck on highways and dirt roads.
- Crosscut (bucking) and chainsaw certifications preferred. Pre-season certification opportunities may be available through WTA's annual training series.

Trail Crew Leader - Darrington Ranger District

Location and schedule

The Trail Crew Leader is a temporary position beginning April 20, 2026 and continuing through October 15, 2026. Work will take place on the Darrington Ranger District in Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. The expected work schedule is 40 hours per week over 4-5 days. Generally, work parties will occur Thursday-Sunday unless otherwise defined and require working most weekends. Work party-related communication as well as documentation of activities may occur outside of work party days. Throughout the season, the Trail Crew Leader will also be assigned to lead volunteers in backcountry trail projects 4-7 days in length. Training opportunities will be available at the start of the season. There is a weeklong, unpaid summer break from August 3-9, 2026.

This role is based at the Darrington Ranger Station and the Verlot Public Service Center. Employees are responsible for their own commute to and from the base of operations.

Compensation

Compensation is \$24.50 - \$25.50/hour, depending on experience. A supplementary per diem of up to \$50/day is provided for multi-day backcountry trips. WTA provides a cell phone, hard hat, work gloves and safety glasses. WTA does not provide boots, clothing or other personal outdoor and backpacking gear required for fieldwork, but does provide a \$300 reimbursement to offset wear and tear on personal gear.

A WTA vehicle will be provided for transportation to work parties from the base of operations. Should a personal vehicle be used to fulfill program needs, mileage reimbursement is provided for travel between the work site and the base of operations (Darrington Ranger Station and Verlot Public Service Center), up to 250 miles round trip. Position is eligible for paid holidays, sick leave, health stipend and an employer match retirement plan. For more information on benefits, please visit our website at www.wta.org/benefits.

Join our team

Our hiring process

At WTA we consistently evaluate and update our hiring process to align with current best practices for equity and inclusion. The hiring process for this role will include a phone screen, virtual panel interview, background check and reference checks. WTA's practice is to run a background check with the opportunity to discuss any results before final hiring decisions are made. If you have any questions or need accommodation in our recruitment process, please contact seasonaljobs@wta.org.

Equal opportunity

We believe WTA and Washington's outdoor community are stronger when made up of people with varied backgrounds, identities, abilities and lived experiences. WTA is committed to advancing equity and continually working to become a more inclusive organization. People of color and people with other identities that are underrepresented in the outdoor industry — including but not limited to gender identity, class, sexual orientation, age, ability and background — are strongly encouraged to apply.

To read our complete Equal Opportunity Employer statement, please visit www.wta.org/careers.

How to apply

Complete a brief [application form](#) and submit a resume to seasonaljobs@wta.org. Include **"Darrington Ranger District - Trail Crew Leader"** in the subject line. Please use the following format for file names: "last name, first name - resume." The position is open until filled, with priority given to applications received by **January 4, 2026**. If you have any questions, please contact seasonaljobs@wta.org. We look forward to hearing from you.