

## 103: FLORIDA TRAIL ASSOCIATION TRAIL CREW LEADER

### Trail Crew Leader

An FTA Crew Leader is any FTA volunteer or staff member who organizes and leads an FTA-sponsored trail work activity. The skill sets listed below are those desirable for FTA Activity Leaders who lead trail work activities. It is recognized that crew leading is an ongoing learning and development process. As crew leaders gain experience they will expand their knowledge base and refine both their organizational and leadership capacities.

**Basic Trail Crew Leader skill sets.** The basic skill sets for Trail Crew Leaders are technical, management, and leadership.

#### Technical trail skills:

1. Has a working knowledge of trail hand tools, power equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE). Performs tailgate safety briefings prior to work activities.
2. Has a working knowledge of blazing, clearing, signage, treadway development standards, application of treadway grubbing (plant removal), and proper brushing techniques.
3. Acquires the ability to examine the trail from the perspective of a trail builder and trail maintainer as to what needs doing. Recognizes minor issues before they become major issues or replicate themselves as bad practices.
4. Is aware of the Trail Class and Design Parameters for each trail segment where work is to be performed (see Chapter 201: Trail Standards for Design, Clearing and Maintenance. For Trail Classes on the FNST see: [USDA-FS/FNST ArcGIS](#) . If the trail classes are not showing on the map, click on "Content" and check "Trail Class."
5. Has a basic knowledge of trail design methodology and terminology (see Chapter 203: Trail Design and Layout).
6. Is knowledgeable about sustainable trail fundamentals and implements practices that will reduce future trail reconstruction and maintenance.

#### Management skills:

1. Coordinates with land managers, FTA Trail Staff, FTA Trail Coordinator, and Section Leader for work plan and objectives both before and after a work party.
2. Identifies task and estimates time and crew size to complete trail work.
3. Determines tools, supplies, and material required and availability of same.
4. Coordinates transportation of volunteers, material, tools, and supplies to and from work site.
5. Has a backup/alternative work plan and work site if the primary site is unavailable.
6. Monitors weather and other factors impacting access and crew safety.
7. Communicates with volunteers, land manager, and emergency services.
8. Ensures that the emergency action plan, communications plan, and all other documents in the FTA crew leader packet are completed before work is started (see [Crew Leader Packet](#) [<http://www.floridatrail.org/crew-leader-corner>] and Chapter 208: Tailgate Safety Session/ Volunteer Profile).
9. Ensures all volunteers are formally signed in.

10. Makes crew assignments based on each individual's volunteer experience and skill level.
11. Records and reports work party details and accomplishments.

Leadership skills:

1. Welcomes volunteers and communicates work party objectives, crew assignments, meal plan, and time frame.
2. Motivates volunteers to accomplish the shared goal with quality performance.
3. Demonstrates an emphasis on volunteer safety and a safe work environment.
4. Interacts with and trains volunteers in safe tool usage and trail standards.
5. Engages in conflict resolution as needed.
6. Recognizes individual and crew achievement.
7. Makes on-site (in the field) decisions concerning safety, logistics and volunteers as required.
8. Speaks up when something isn't right!
9. Strives to ensure that every participant is included in the team and feels a sense of camaraderie and accomplishment.
10. Communicates end of work party accomplishments and extends thanks to volunteers.

**Advanced Trail Crew Leader Skills.** Advanced Trail Crew Leader skills relate to trail corridor selection and trail design. Advanced crew leaders will know and apply skills in the following areas:

1. Trail corridor planning with land manager, partners, and other stakeholders.
2. Optimal Location Review purpose, process, and application (see Chapter 210: Trail Relocations/ FNST Optimal Location Review).
3. Mapping and on-line tools available for trail corridor selection.
4. Positive and negative control points.
5. Basic fauna, flora, and plant growth characteristics.
6. Trail corridor flagging and trail corridor pin flagging.
7. Long-term maintenance, infrastructure, and overall costs.
8. Topography/hillside hydrology and their impact on water erosion (fall lines, trail grade, and out-slope).
9. Grade reversals, curvilinear design principles, water bars, check dams.
10. Wetlands trail corridor selection, minor infrastructure types and designs.
11. Hillside trail corridor selection, erosion management types and designs.
12. Management for major trail relocations and major infrastructure construction work parties.