



Position Description: Basecamp Specialist Educator

These Basecamp Specialist Educator positions at Cottonwood Gulch work as a small staff team to implement outdoor educational programs and the mission of Cottonwood Gulch Expeditions (CGE). Our mission is to provide outdoor learning adventures to youth of all backgrounds that foster personal growth, strengthen community, and inspire stewardship of the natural world. We have been leading outdoor expeditions since 1926, and currently work with hundreds of students (or “trekkers,” as we call them) each year. Using the outdoors as our classroom to explore science, culture, history, art, and adventure in New Mexico and surrounding states, we aim to inspire personal growth and build strong community. During the school year, we partner with more than 30 schools and nonprofits, primarily serving New Mexico students in grades 1-12 on trips ranging from one day to two weeks. These treks vary between classroom visits, day trips, overnight multiple day road-loops or Basecamp stays, and backcountry experiences. During the summer, we run multi-week expeditions for 8-18 year olds. This totals about 10,000 field days each year, a thriving Gulch Community, and hundreds of lives impacted for the better.

Job Objective: The Basecamp Specialist team provides exceptional outdoor education to our summer trekkers. This is a full-time, 24/7 residential position throughout the summer.

Resident **Naturalist** will focus on providing high-quality science education programming including, but not limited to: ecology, biology, geology, astronomy, and ornithology to trekkers. We do not expect any one person to have expertise in each of these fields, but should have knowledge in some or most of them, and be willing to engage trekkers in topics that pique their interest. Activities and projects facilitated by this person should lead trekkers to understand contemporary issues such as fire ecology, riparian and stream health, native vs. non-native species, impacts of grazing and logging, light pollution, mining, climate change, etc.

Resident **Culturalist** will have expertise in one or more of the cultures in the Southwestern U.S. through personal experience, archaeology, or traditional knowledge, and be willing to share that expertise with our trekkers. Activities and projects facilitated by this person should lead trekkers to understand the cultures of the Southwest on a deeper level. Potential projects could include surface archaeology, artifact analysis and curation, mapping, hands-on skills like flint knapping, or visits to important sites and communities. Many of our programs focus on experiential learning with a focus on understanding cultures and traditions of the Southwest.

Resident **Art Specialist** provides exceptional arts and cultural education to our summer trekkers. This position plans and facilitates activities in the Basecamp Nature Arts Workshop (NAW) (without electricity) to trekkers. The studio is equipped for metalwork/silversmithing, pit-fired pottery, weaving, leather work, beading, printmaking, and a variety of other visual arts. This person should be ready to lead art activities, participate in the artistic process with a variety of trekkers, and exhibit passion for both traditional and contemporary art of the Southwest, engaging community artists for expertise in areas they do not have experience.

The **Climbing and Adventure Specialist** provides exceptional adventure education to our summer trekkers, including facilitating top rope rock climbing, bouldering at the Basecamp bouldering wall, rappelling, roped tree climbing, team building initiatives, orienteering, and low ropes course elements. We follow the AMGA Single Pitch



Instructor guidelines for facilitating rock climbing. This position would also be responsible for tracking the use of and appropriately maintaining the gear used for climbing.

The **Farmer** provides high-quality farm education programming while also producing vegetables from a ¼-acre farm for use in our programs. Our Basecamp is located at about 7500' in a very dry climate and Southwestern farming techniques are essential to the success of the farm. The farmer is also responsible for caring for a flock of laying hens and chicks including educating our trekkers about chicken care.

Mountain Bike Specialist provides exceptional adventure education to our summer trekkers using CGE's fleet of mountain bikes. We follow the BICP Level 1 Pre-Ride Assessment and Ride Guide recommendations to introduce new mountain bikers to the sport. Once on the trail, our focus is teaching mountain bike skills, IMBA Trail Etiquette, and fun. We also expect our bike specialists to perform essential repairs and maintenance, and to include trekkers in those repairs. The mountain bike specialist can also participate in trail design and development at our Basecamp. Our mountain bike fleet is housed in a trailer that can be used at our Basecamp or at a variety of trails throughout the region.

Responsibilities:

Responsibilities specific to this role:

- Lead topic-specific education sessions, called “Cottonwoods”, at our Basecamp twice daily throughout the summer to trekkers ranging in age from ages 8-20.
- **Resident Naturalist** will:
 - Lead interpretive hikes throughout our 550-acre Basecamp property and surrounding areas
 - Engage trekkers in land management strategies such as invasive species removal and erosion mitigation
 - Create interpretive works with trekkers such as field guides, water quality indices, dendrochronology displays, etc.
 - Model a professional, scholarly, and fun approach to such topics as environmental ethics, public and private land management, ecotourism, hunting for sport and food, etc.
- **Resident Culturalist** will:
 - Engage trekkers in experiential activities in your area of expertise, such as traditional knowledge, yucca weaving, corn grinding, stone cooking, ceramics, basket making, flint knapping, atlatl throwing, and masonry
 - Lead interpretive hikes within our 550-acre Basecamp property and surrounding areas
 - Model a professional, scholarly, and respectful approach to the related contexts of living contemporary cultures
 - Maintain and develop relationships with Indigenous communities throughout the Southwest
- **Resident Art Specialist** will:
 - Lead traditional and contemporary art activities for trekkers



- Our focus on art activities has historically been metalwork/silversmithing, pit fired pottery, weaving, leather work, beading, and printmaking. Experience with these media (or some of them) is strongly preferred
- Engage trekkers in collaborative art projects
- Maintain organization and care of art tools in the studio
- Support trekkers in creation of short projects (2-3 hour session) and longer projects (2-5 days)
- Support and supervise trekker-directed work during “down times”
- **Climbing & Adventure Specialist** will:
 - Facilitate top rope rock climbing at a variety of sites with trekkers ages 8-18 with a variety of experience and comfort levels with climbing
 - Manage risk with a group of up to 20 trekkers at a climbing site
 - Plan and execute a variety of team building activities and games with groups of 5-20 trekkers including low ropes course elements
 - Maintain rope logs and appropriate gear management of ropes, shoes, harnesses, helmets, anchor materials, climbing holds, and crash pad
 - Ensure that AMGA SPI protocols are being followed
 - Teach LNT principles while climbing
 - Facilitate roped tree climbing, orienteering, and bouldering while at Basecamp
- **Farmer** will:
 - Plan, plant, care for, and harvest vegetables in a ¼-acre farm with two hoop houses
 - Plan and execute a variety of farm activities for trekkers such as planting, harvesting, plant identification, etc.
 - Maintain a composting system
 - Communicate with the Basecamp kitchen staff about anticipated harvest amounts and timing
 - Care for a flock of about 20 egg-laying chickens
 - Integrate Farm to Table projects to incorporate farm produce into meals
- **Mountain Bike Specialist** will:
 - Facilitate mountain bike skill sessions and trail rides.
 - Manage risk with a group of up to 20 trekkers on mountain bike rides with support from other staff members
 - WFR or WEMT strongly preferred
 - Plan and execute a variety of bike-based activities for trekkers both on and off Basecamp
 - Maintain and service a fleet of approximately 20 mountain bikes
 - Ensure that BICP L1 pre-ride assessment and ride guide protocols are being followed
 - Teach IMBA and LNT principles while mountain biking

Responsibilities of all Gulch Basecamp staff:

- Plan and execute effective outdoor programming in the field and at CGE’s Basecamp. Actively seek out and participate in opportunistic learning opportunities



- Provide leadership and support to outdoor education expeditions across the American Southwest, including in frontcountry and backcountry settings (depending on the group), and at CGE's Basecamp
- Manage risk in line with CGE's practices and policies; provide medical care within trained scope of practice
- Participate in the maintenance and repair of our gear fleet
- Teach LNT principles and environmental ethics to groups of youth
- Drive large vehicles (pickup trucks, 15-passenger vans) on a variety of roads
- Attend, support, and assist with meals, nightly campfires, games on the field, staff meetings
- Collaborate to create a positive environment conducive to learning, growth, and fun
- Maintain professional relationships with CGE partners & community members including land managers
- Work with Program Director to order supplies and manage a budget
- Facilitate hand-on exploration for small groups of trekkers
- Collaborate with other specialists and staff to create engaging learning projects for trekkers
- Support Basecamp culture by leading chores, providing supervision during "down times," and fully participating in planning and executing each day

Qualifications:

- Applicants must be at least 21 years of age by the position start date and possess a valid driver's license. Must have a clean driving history and be able to meet the criteria for CGE vehicle insurance coverage.
- Experience as an educator, leader, risk manager, artist, scientist, and/or adventurer.
- Wilderness First Aid (WFA) or ability to acquire within 30 days of hire; WFR/WEMT preferred.
- Standard or waterfront lifeguard certification preferred.
- Strong organizational skills; experience with Google Drive preferred.
- During the summer, must be able to live at our Basecamp near Thoreau, NM, or travel "on the road" with a group, practicing community mindfulness.
- Ability to communicate effectively and professionally with a wide range of audiences (fellow staff, community members, students, etc.).

We believe outdoor education takes many different forms; your unique skills and experiences will be considered and valued!

Dates: Staff may work multiple seasons and may be. Contract dates by season are as follows: March 3th to May 30th for Spring 2025 season; June 1st to August 10th for summer 2025 (view summer position Descriptions [here](#);) August 18th-November 1st for fall season, with the possibility of additional work in the winter and beyond. Preference will be given to staff able to work multiple seasons, with the possibility of additional work in the winter and beyond) Preference will be given to staff able to work multiple seasons.

Work Location and Schedule: Thoreau, NM, with potential travel throughout the state, including periods of time camping in frontcountry and backcountry settings. Basecamp Specialist will be based mostly out of our Thoreau Basecamp with some exceptions.



Leadership or Supervisory Duties: This position is expected to provide leadership and mentorship to staff members and trekkers.

Criminal Background Check: CGE requires criminal background checks and recent driving records from all employees.

Physical Requirements: Ability to hike up to 10 miles a day on uneven surfaces and carry a pack up to 50 pounds, sleep in a tent or open-air cabin accessed by stairs, work at a desk, talk on the phone, and use a computer.

Compensation: Salary ranges from \$1,750 to \$2,500/month with additional pay based on years of experience, seasons contracted, and applicable credentials. Room, board, and laundry provided at Thoreau Basecamp throughout the summer. \$250 travel stipend available if traveling more than 500 miles. Various Pro Deals available to all staff.

Inclusive and Welcoming Environment

CGE is an equal opportunity employer and does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender identity or expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, spousal affiliation, mental or physical handicap, serious medical condition, or military status in any of its activities or operations. Moreover, Cottonwood Gulch Expeditions believes in the learning, growth and healing that can take place outdoors. We also recognize that access to programs like ours—along with access to any green space, clean air and water, and healthy food—continues to be a privilege rather than a right. CGE recognizes that in outdoor spaces, the voices and work of people of color, people from working class backgrounds, Indigenous people, women, and LGBTQ+ individuals have been often overlooked and marginalized. Therefore, we encourage applications from people in these groups, and all people, regardless of background.

Please apply through Campminder using this [link](#) on our website