

2012 Public Lands Transportation Scholar Program

Park and Contact Information

Type of Unit

Santa Catalina Ranger District, Coronado National Forest

Project Title

“Implementation of the Sabino Canyon Recreation Area Trails Enhancement Design and NEPA for the Sabino Canyon Scenic Trail.” This is a Transit in the Parks Program (TRIP Phase II) project on the Forest.

The Scholar will work as assistant project manager and Forest Service liaison with the VOLPE National Transportation Systems Center to implement this Transit in the Parks Program Project in Sabino Canyon.

Project Abstract

The primary focus for the Scholar will be working with Forest Service engineers and recreation professionals in concert with the VOLPE Center to implement the design, engineering, and environmental analysis (NEPA) required to significantly improve access, circulation, visitor experience and visitor safety by planning for the construction of an interconnected, hard surfaced, accessible trail system in Sabino Canyon.

A secondary focus will be to have the scholar review, evaluate, and make supplemental recommendations from the “Transportation Analysis and Feasibility Study: Sabino Canyon Recreation Area”. This analysis was developed by the VOLPE Center in 2010 for projects and planning elements that could be reconsidered in future Sabino transportation planning projects. The Scholar will begin conceptual formatting and development of a Phase III Transit in the Parks proposal for construction of the Sabino

Canyon Scenic Trail in 2014.

Project Description (250 word limit)

Sabino Canyon Recreation Area is one of the premier natural areas in southeastern Arizona. Sabino Canyon is located with the Santa Catalina Ranger District, on the edge of Tucson's expanding urban residential development. Visitation often reaches nearly 1 million people a year and at peak visitation 2500 people a day are in the canyon, walking, bicycling, hiking, running, or riding the shuttle system. The Coronado National Forest renewed transportation planning efforts in 2010 receiving funding for the first of two "Transit in the Parks Program" projects for alternative transportation planning projects.

Furthering the planning effort in Sabino Canyon will be the first priority for this Scholar. We believe it is an excellent opportunity for recent graduates to attain real world experience by working with the Forest Service and the Nationally acclaimed VOLPE Center. The Scholar will be expected to work as a project liaison and assistant project manager in daily concert with the Forest Service and the VOLPE Center implementing our \$540,000 Transit in the Parks Ph II project.

Secondly, the Scholar will have the opportunity to review the "Sabino Canyon Recreation Area Transportation Analysis and Feasibility Study" (TRIP Ph I) completed in 2010 and make recommendations for modifications to themes and goals and evaluate whether additional elements could be explored at Sabino Canyon and brought forward into the Recreation Concept Plan. Additionally, the Scholar will have a chance to incorporate their learning in the Phase II project, into developing a rough draft project proposal for the Phase III TRIP funding for construction of the Sabino Canyon Scenic Trail.

Project Products and Benefits

The scholar will work closely with the project engineer and recreation staff officer acting assisting in project management. This is a opportunity for the individual to

have a positive impact on the layout, design and environmental analysis for a trail that provides access for over 1 million visitors to Sabino canyon.

Project Information

Project Contributions

We anticipate the Scholar will be responsible for daily, on the ground design and planning recommendations to the Forest Service and VOLPE Center team. The Scholar will be working closely with forest service representing the agency as lead field liaison responsible for coordinating with the transportation planning consultant, developing design and environmental analysis for the Sabino Canyon Scenic Trail.

Specifics might include daily interagency communication; site specific field inventory, analysis and design recommendations illustrated on maps; project administration correspondence; and monthly/weekly Project Team video conference calls. The Scholar will report directly to Forest developed recreation staff officer and be expected to work closely with the consultant as a liaison officer coordinating project layout and environmental analysis.

Project Partners

The Coronado National Forest is working with the VOLPE Center who will provide design and environmental analysis for a 3 mile parallel, multiple use public access path 8ft width into Sabino Canyon. The project will also involve working closely with stakeholders such Catalina Foothill School District, Pima County Department of Transportation, Friends of Sabino Canyon, Pima Association of Govts., Southern Az Hiking Club, Southern Arizona Rescue Association, Sabino Canyon Tours, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs of the City of Tucson, as well as various other nearby resorts, bike clubs, and hiking clubs.

Project Requirements

The Scholar will have office space, and all logistical support provided by the Forest Service. The agency will provide funding for rental housing up to \$15,000 for the duration of

the Scholar's tenure.