



VOLUNTEER MANUAL

Dear ITA Volunteer,

Thank you for signing up for a trail project with Idaho Trails Association! Our mission to keep Idaho's hiking trails open for all would be impossible without the hard work provided by our volunteer trail crew members.

We hope that after volunteering with ITA you feel as though you are not just part of clearing one trail in one place but are part of a greater effort learning new skills and experiencing the sense of community and accomplishment working on a trail provides. We love it when our volunteers are inspired to return, explore a new area, become crew leaders themselves, and feel empowered to do more for our public lands and trails.

This manual is designed to help you feel prepared for a trail project and to help you navigate ITA policies and procedures. Safety is our number one goal and a prepared volunteer is a safe volunteer!

This is the first edition of the Volunteer Manual, published in the spring of 2025. As we continue to learn and grow, our policies and procedures may adapt and change. Please check back each year for the most up-to-date information, documents, and manual updates.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to your crew leader or ITA staff at trails@idahotrailsassociation.org. ITA wants volunteering to be a fun and safe experience for all!

Happy Trails,

Your Friends at Idaho Trails Association

Volunteer Responsibilities

Pre-Trip

- Read through and familiarize yourself with your project description and all email communication from crew leaders.
- Communicate with your leader before the trip. Part of their job is ensuring you're prepared; they may ask you to confirm you are getting info by responding to their email or text message.
- For difficult, or extra logistic heavy longer trips or youth trips, there may be a pre-trip Zoom meeting organized by your crew leader.
- Prepare physically! Go for walks/hikes pre-trip.
- Break in/test out your boots! Blisters from new boots are one of our most common injuries. Soles falling off old boots (seriously!) is also common. Both can make a trip miserable.
- Pack up! Use the packing lists and info from your crew leader to pack appropriately.
- Talk with your crew leader or ITA staff about questions and concerns – We're here to help!

Project Work

- Arrive on time, packed, boots on, ready for the day!
- Sign paperwork as instructed by the crew leader before starting hiking/work
- Listen to the safety meeting given by your crew leader.
- Ensure you have all proper PPE and gear, use as directed!
- Work to your comfort level and ability! It's not a competition.
- Communicate any issues with the crew leader.
- Talk, learn, teach others! The teamwork and camaraderie are one of the best parts
- Take photos and videos- help us tell the story of trails!

Follow-Up

- Submit feedback/ photos to the links your crew leader sends out by email.
- If you had fun, tell a friend! Word of mouth is how most people hear about ITA for the first time. Help us spread the word!

Before a project

How much work experience do I need?

None! We welcome all volunteers from beginners to experienced trail bosses. We have trips for all experience levels and recommend if someone is unsure if volunteering on a trail project is right for them to pick a car camping or one-day project, or a project rated easy or moderate. On all projects, we will provide the tools and training needed and encourage people to work at their own pace. For those participating in multi-day projects that involve backpacking or pack support, ITA recommends that volunteers have some previous backpacking experience.

How is project difficulty rated?

We have two difficulty ratings on every project: one for the difficulty of the hike and another for the difficulty of the trail work. Both will have a short explanation as to why the rating was assigned. Please consider each of these ratings and your fitness level when deciding which project is right for you!

The hike rating is determined with the distance, elevation gain, and pack weight all taken into consideration. The project descriptions often have a linked map, where you can see the elevation profile of the hike. 3/5 is the average, or what is considered a “typical hike” on an ITA project.

Work difficulty rating is based on the type of project work, and where the work is relative to camp or the trailhead- On most projects, there are a variety for trail duties and volunteers can try new tasks based on comfort and ability level. Everyone is encouraged to work at a safe pace. 3/5 is the average, or what is considered a “typical ITA project”, suitable for most people.

Know Your Project

ITA provides project descriptions on our website, and crew leaders will send out additional information before the project via email. Crew leaders are working with Forest Service Staff/Land Managers, packers, and cooks to firm up details. Usually, that info gets out to volunteers two weeks to a month before the project starts. Please read these emails in their entirety! Email is the most efficient way for crew leaders to communicate with the whole crew.

Project descriptions come together in the winter, and while we try our best to get as much info as we can there will be times where projects need to shift in location or priority. Changes will be communicated to you by email as soon as possible.

For more on how projects are planned, [check out this blog by our Executive Director, Melanie Vining](#)

What’s the difference between car camping and backpacking or being packed in by pack string?

When we say car camping, we mean the volunteer crew will be camping where they park, usually at the trailhead of the trail they are working on or a campground nearby. Volunteers are only limited in what they bring by what can fit in their car! Also referred to as Front country camping. Backpacking means volunteers will be carrying all their own personal gear (sleeping bag/tent, clothes), food, and ITA tools to hike into the project site, where they’ll camp. Some trips make one base camp for the week and others move camp as trail work progresses. Volunteer gear is limited by what can fit into a backpack. Pack support means a pack string of mules/horses (or llamas or goats!) will be available to carry some or all the gear into the backcountry camping location near the project site. Sometimes support will be available on fully supported projects to carry on all group food and gear. Sometimes volunteers will have to carry some personal items (clothes, sleeping bags) due to limited weight/space available on mules. Crew leaders will provide more information about exactly what can be packed, and what needs to be carried.

[How to Pack When You’re Getting Packed into a Project](#)

I haven’t hiked or backpacked in a while; what do you recommend I do to prepare?

A volunteer trail project is much more fun when you are prepared physically. If you are not used to backpacking or it’s been a long time, we suggest preparing by hiking with a weighted pack starting 6-8 weeks ahead of the project. Hiking a local trail or even paved streets (hills are best) wearing a simple day pack with 20-30 pounds can work wonders getting all those hiking muscles in shape. Be sure to wear the boots you plan to wear on the trip and get your feet in shape too! Being in hiking shape also helps one to have the endurance to both hike and work on a project.

What should I pack?

It depends! Crew leaders will send out a packing list and more context before each project. ITA provides hard hats, extra safety gear, and all tools. If the project is overnight or longer, you will need to bring all your own camping supplies. Sturdy work boots with ankle support that are also comfortable to hike in, not running shoes, are an important piece of safety gear. Please ensure all boots are broken in before a project— nothing ruins a person’s day like painful blisters!

- [Gear Checklist for One-Day Projects](#)
- [Gear Checklist for Youth Car Camping Projects](#)
- [Gear Checklist for Backpacking Projects](#)
- [Gear Checklist for Fully Supported Projects](#)
- [Gear Checklist for Car Camping, Self-Supported Trips](#)

ITA has a limited supply of backpacks, sleeping pads, and tents available to loan. Alert ITA staff immediately if you need to borrow gear. We also have a scholarship fund to help volunteers purchase gear they need for a trail project. Check out the [Splattski Outdoor Access Fund](#) for more information!

Pro Tip: Camping for a night in your backyard is a low-risk way to make sure your gear will work for you and has all the pieces!

What about the weather?

Idaho seasons can be fickle and full of surprises. We watch weather forecasts and plan ahead, but volunteers should come prepared for heat, cold, wind...even snow in July (it’s happened before!) Always bring rain gear and a warm layer even if there is no rain in the forecast. **Pro Tip:** Have a set of clean clothes in your car for after the project. If you don’t need them as a backup set in an emergency, it’s nice to feel clean-ish for the drive home!

Backpacking

Backpacking adds an extra layer of complexity to projects. The ability to travel light and self-contained is important to the success of these projects. Even if you’re a seasoned professional, please read all information from your crew leader. If you plan on backpacking for the very first time on an ITA project, we recommend looking for projects labeled as “Backpacking 101” which are beginner friendly. Please let your crew leader know if you’re unsure of your gear or ability; they are here to help!

- [Backpacking 101 webinar part 1](#)
- [Backpacking 101 webinar part 2](#)
- [Beginner Backpacking Hikes](#)
- [Backpacking Food Information Sheet](#)

Required and Provided PPE

Working on trails with hand tools has inherent hazards. To minimize those hazards, ITA provides volunteers with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and requires certain standards of dress while working in the field. This is also a requirement from our land manager partners. Please listen and respect your crew leaders when they ask you to wear PPE, even if it feels like too much, their job is to keep you

safe. Failure to wear PPE is a risk to both the volunteer and ITA as a whole since if someone gets hurt because they were not using PPE, our land manager partners may not ask us back.

Here is a short list of equipment and clothing that ITA requires for field volunteers.

Personal Protection Equipment provided by ITA

- *Hard hat (provided by ITA)*: Required to wear if near felling, bucking, or limbing (includes you or someone nearby using a saw) and when working overhead (using loppers, etc.). Required to wear when working in close proximity to others using/swinging tools or in areas with snags. Optional to wear when hiking.
- *Eye protection (provided by ITA if the volunteer does not have their own)*: Required to wear when working with any type of saw or striking tool or brushing. Sunglasses are acceptable eye protection but may not be glass unless shatterproof.
- *Gloves (provided by ITA if the volunteer does not have their own)*: Required to wear when using any tool, with the exception that gloves are optional to use when chopping using an ax or Pulaski. Required to wear when swamping (moving brush or limbs for someone cutting).

Required clothing provided by volunteers

- *Long pants*: No shorts. Leggings do not count as long pants as they are too thin to protect your legs from stobs, sharp branches, glancing blows from tools, etc.
- *Ankle-high boots*: No sandals, wading shoes, or running shoes. These do not have to be heavy, all-leather boots but must be more substantial than a running shoe.
- *Long-sleeved shirt*: Required to carry and wear when using a cross-cut or folding saw. Recommended to wear in brushy conditions.
- *Closed-toed camp shoes*: For overnight/camping projects. Many injuries happen in camp.

Pro-Tip: A buff or bandana as a headband can help hard hats stay on!

Splattski Fund

If you need gear/boots/food for a project and need help purchasing necessary equipment that will allow you to participate on a project, please apply for ITA's Splattski Fund.

The trails world lost a true friend in February 2022 with the sudden passing of John Platt. John was passionate about sharing the outdoors with anyone and everyone and would give of his time and resources freely to help others discover the joy of being outside. In this spirit, a generous friend and donor has committed funds through the Idaho Trails Association to assist anyone in need of gear to use on an ITA project.

Anyone who would like to sign up for an ITA trail project but needs help with anything from hiking boots to tents to sleeping bags may fill out our online form with their name, address, phone number, email, the ITA trip or trips you'd like to sign up for, the specific support that would allow them to participate, and the amount requesting.

- [More info about the Splattski Fund](#)

Food Reimbursement

ITA is committed to reducing barriers to participation in our projects and will reimburse food for overnight volunteer projects for those who need assistance. Please fill out the [Food Reimbursement form](#) on our website and include a copy of any store receipts with the items purchased for trip circled. We cannot reimburse food costs without receipts. We will reimburse up to \$15 per day volunteered for food. We will mail you a check once approved.

Does ITA provide transportation?

Unfortunately, ITA is unable to provide transportation for liability reasons. However, when you register for a trail project, there is a box to check if you are interested in carpooling with other participating volunteers and we will put you in touch by email. It is up to volunteers to organize meeting times, meeting locations, and other transportation logistics. We will only share your e-mail address if you indicate in your registration that you agree. We never share your phone number with anyone without your permission. Remember, if you are a rider, please be courteous and offer to chip in on the cost of gas! If you do not wish to carpool, we will provide you with directions to the project work site.

Deposit fees and refund schedule

Some of our longer projects require you to pay a refundable deposit to join the trip. We've had trouble with people backing out of trips at the last minute and this can really affect the productivity of the overall project. By charging a fee, volunteers are less likely to cancel their reservation. Refunds will not be given to volunteers that do not show up or cancel their spot due to scheduling conflicts. Exceptions will be made for medical reasons or unforeseen circumstances. Please let us know if you have canceled your reservation and would like to receive a refund.

If you require assistance in paying for this fee, please contact us at trails@idahotrailsassociation.org and we will waive the cost. We want trail projects to be accessible for everyone! Refunds are after a project is completed in batches, once a month during the trail season. Feel free to reach out if you require a refund sooner.

Who is my Crew Leader?

ITA crew leaders are typically volunteers, just like you! They give their time and energy to coordinate project logistics and volunteers, to ensure safe and successful trail maintenance projects across the state. They are qualified with a minimum of first aid and CPR, with most having a Wilderness First Aid certification. Leaders are trained through the US Forest Service saw program as "B" level crosscut sawyers at a minimum, with some at the "C" level. All have been through our CLEM program- Crew Leader Education and Mentoring- to prepare them to lead ITA volunteers in the field. We also do our best to send a "deputy" crew leader on each project; two leaders is policy on youth projects. Leaders are passionate about trails and coordinating a safe and fun project adventure for all volunteers! Crew leaders will be listed in the information for each project, and you can read more about each crew leader in their [bios here!](#)

Want to learn more about becoming a crew leader yourself?

Leaders do not have to be experts at trail work, backpacking, or be uber-fit lumberjacks who can chop logs off trails all day! The most important qualities are a basic level of experience with trail work, good communication skills, and camping or backpacking experience (depending on the trip you lead; our trips vary from one-day projects in the Boise Foothills to extended backpacking adventures).

Leaders typically (but not always) start out as ITA volunteers who realize they love the work and camaraderie of a trail project. Once someone expresses interest, we ask that they go out as a “deputy” leader, shadowing and assisting a more experienced leader to give them a chance to observe and ask questions.

Learn more here! <https://idahotrailsassociation.org/become-a-crew-leader/>

During a Project

Safety Meeting

Each project, no matter the size or scope, starts with a pre-trip safety meeting, or “tailgate” safety meeting. Each meeting will be unique to the project, but all will cover job safety, tool safety, personal safety, and ITA’s harassment policy. Longer projects may also call for a separate “camp safety” talk. We know that’s a lot to take in! Throughout the project, your crew leader or experienced volunteers may offer respectful safety reminders to folks, like reminding them to wear their hard hat or how to safely carry a sharp tool. Assume the good intentions of your leaders and other volunteers. They are here to teach and want everyone to be safe and feel responsible for both.

What do I have to carry for the hike into camp and to the work site?

ITA trips vary widely, from camping at a trailhead where volunteers have access to their cars, to backpacking into a project carrying gear and food, to having horse or mule packers carry most of the gear and tools in. On this latter type of trip, the horse or mule string will carry in group gear (food, camp kitchen, tools). Depending on the number of animals they have, there’s a good chance they’ll also be able to carry some personal gear such as tents but volunteers should be prepared to carry all their personal gear. When hiking from camp to the worksite, be prepared to carry your lunch, water, rain and/or cold weather gear, personal protective equipment, and tools such as saws, axes, and shovels.

Project Work

Volunteers will often hike into the project, carrying day packs and trail tools. Trail maintenance projects involve primitive tools such as crosscut saws, axes, Pulaskis, hand saws, shovels and loppers, on which you will be trained and supervised by an ITA crew leader. Sometimes the work starts right away; sometimes it’s a few miles in. Depending on group size you may break out into smaller groups too.

On one-day projects, we’ll meet at the trailhead early and work all morning, stopping for breaks as needed. Some are just half days; others we break for a half hour lunch before continuing work in the afternoon.

On longer trips camping or backpacking trips, the crew will wake up for coffee and breakfast and hit the trail at about 8am, working until about 4 (with breaks!) before heading back to camp. We encourage hard work but also want people to work at their own pace and be safe; not everyone will work at the same pace, and this is OK! There is time for a snack and to relax before helping with camp chores and enjoying dinner together.

Food

On fully supported projects, ITA will provide food for the duration of the project. Your crew leader will specify the first and last meals, but typically dinner on the first night to lunch the last day are covered.

ITA cannot usually accommodate food allergies or dietary preferences. On many projects, we must be careful with the volume and weight of what can fit on mule loads. Food is also planned, shopped for, and packed by a volunteer, with limited capacity to make tailored menus for each project. Food is cooked by a volunteer cook with limited resources in the backcountry. Participants can bring their own food or supplement food if needed. On pack-supported trips, we will do our best to haul in that separate food as long it's a reasonable amount (i.e., no heavy, large separate coolers).

[Click here for a Sample Menu](#)

Typically, on fully supported trips, a volunteer camp host/cook will also join the project. The cook will oversee morning coffee, breakfast, getting lunch fixings out for the crew to assemble trail lunches each day, appetizers before dinner, dinner, and dessert. They will need help from the crew with some meal prep, dishes and cleanup, and other camp chores.

Pro Tip – Pack an extra meal to leave in your car in case of delay leaving a project but keep all food in a mouse proof box or cooler, especially if your car will sit at the trailhead for a week!

After work, will I have time off to explore the backcountry?

Volunteers have free time at the end of each workday to hike, fish, relax or enjoy the backcountry however they'd like. Many weeklong or longer projects include a rest day where volunteers can enjoy the backcountry all day! Check trip project descriptions to see if your trip has a rest day.

Policies and Procedures

Safety

ITA takes safety seriously. We conduct our work in a manner that reduces risk to our crew leaders, members, volunteers, and users of the trails where we'll be working. Safety is our number one priority.

Crew leaders have access to manuals and checklists to help prepare for projects carefully, identify hazards, develop mitigating plans, and respond to emergencies. ITA staff provide safety plans, staff an emergency phone during the season, and provide guidance to crew leaders in case of emergency.

Our safety culture is based on a genuine concern for our volunteers and the public. At any time if you're uncomfortable with a task, speak up. Safety is more important than productivity or "completing" a project. Every time.

Harassment

ITA provides an environment for our employees, members, volunteers, contractors, suppliers, and the public that is comfortable, safe, and free from harassment of any kind. We value community and inclusivity and believe that diversity is at the heart of public land stewardship, and that trail work is the ultimate common ground on which people of all backgrounds can sweat and laugh together. Violations of this policy will not be tolerated. Respect for fellow humans is very important to us.

Crew leaders are trained to resolve any problems as best they can. In extreme cases where a resolution cannot be found, this may include choosing to ask a volunteer to end their project early.

Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other verbal or physical contact when such contact creates an unwelcome or intimidating environment for the recipient. Harassment does not have to be sexual in nature; it can take many forms: religious, racial, political, or other forms that make the recipient feel uncomfortable or intimidated. It may be, but is not limited to, spoken words, signs, jokes, pranks, written notes, electronic communications, intimidation, physical contact, or violence.

It is the recipient of words or actions who determines if harassment has occurred. The intent of the offender does not determine if their words or actions constitute harassment. Any person involved in an ITA activity who believes that she or he has been subjected to harassment of any kind has the responsibility to report the harassment immediately to the ITA person (staff, board member or crew leader) in charge of that activity. On a field project, that is the crew leader. If the person who feels they have been harassed is uncomfortable reporting or discussing the harassment with the crew leader (whether because they feel the leader committed the harassment or for any other reason whatsoever), ITA requests that the person report the harassment to the ITA executive director or the president of the ITA board of directors by contacting trails@idahotrailsassociation.org.

ITA is committed to taking all reasonable steps to prevent harassment and will make every effort to address and correct any harassment that may occur promptly and completely. However, ITA cannot take prompt and effective remedial action unless each volunteer assumes the responsibility of reporting any incident of harassment immediately.

No volunteer in any ITA activity will be retaliated against for reporting harassment. This no-retaliation policy applies whether a good faith complaint of harassment is well-founded or ultimately determined to be unfounded. No ITA employee, director, or crew leader is authorized or permitted to retaliate or to take any adverse action whatsoever against anyone for reporting harassment or for opposing any other discriminatory practice during our activities.

Every report of harassment will be investigated promptly and impartially, with every effort to maintain confidentiality. The complainant and the accused will be informed of the results of the investigation.

Prohibited Items

Please be familiar with these policies before your trip; they are meant to keep everyone safe and allow for a fun trip at the same time.

1. Alcohol: If you are an adult participating in a volunteer trip, you are welcome to bring a small amount of alcohol on the project ONLY if it is consumed responsibly, after work hours, and in a manner leaving you able to work the following day. No glass bottles are allowed.
2. Firearms: Firearms and other weapons are absolutely prohibited on volunteer trips. Crew leaders may carry bear spray and have some available for others. Animal packers are the exception to this rule and typically carry a firearm in case they must dispatch an injured equine.

3. Marijuana and other drugs: While marijuana is now legal in some states, it is still ILLEGAL in Idaho and on federal lands including Forest Service lands. Other illegal drugs are also prohibited on ITA trips. Anyone participating on a trip is a Forest Service volunteer under a working agreement. Drug use violates that agreement and could leave you liable for any injury, loss or other issue that occurs.
4. Fireworks: Fireworks are prohibited on ITA projects.
5. Smoking: Smoking may be prohibited or limited due to fire restrictions in the area.:

Leave No Trace

As stewards of the land, ITA follows the seven principles of LNT. This reduces our impact on the land and improves the experience of our volunteers and other recreational groups. ITA crew leaders should be familiar with the seven LNT principles so that we can help volunteers better understand and follow them:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces
3. Dispose of waste properly
4. Leave what you find
5. Minimize campfire impacts
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors

Part of our mission is to help education about land stewardship, including Leave No Trace principles. We assume volunteers have good intentions and want to be good stewards of the land, and crew leaders are there to provide guidance.

For further explanation of LNT principles, please see www.LNT.org.

Age Restrictions

Depending on the project, we'd love to see your kids join us in keeping Idaho's trails open! Please check with us before signing up your child as a volunteer to see if the crew leader feels the project is safe for younger participants.

Volunteers aged 17 years or under must be registered by their parent or guardian. Please know, youth volunteers on non-youth projects will be treated like any other volunteer. They are expected to camp self-sufficiently and are responsible for their comfort and well-being on a project.

On non-youth projects, anyone under the age of 16 (15 and less) must be accompanied by an adult. Once a volunteer is 18, they may register and participate themselves.

We host a variety of youth projects each season, open to anyone ages 14-18. More info here <https://idahotrailsassociation.org/youth/>

There is no maximum age! We have people of all ages, and often folks who self-identify as "old timers" join us on projects.

Pets

Sorry, please do not bring any pets. We have found that pets can be a significant distraction and in some rare cases, a safety hazard. Even if you are confident in your own pet's behavior, we must apply the rules fairly to everyone.

Liability Paperwork

Every volunteer must sign the ITA Release and Indemnity Agreement. For volunteers under 18, their parent or guardian needs to sign the agreement before starting the project. This form is completed as part of our online registration for both youth and adult volunteers.

On the day of the project at the trailhead, volunteers will sign Form 301b which is required by the Federal land managers. This form is very important because it provides indemnification for ITA. This form is NOT completed as part of the online registration for projects. This form must be filled out before any work is started, including hiking. In the event a volunteer is injured during the trail project, their medical treatment will not be covered without this form.

Hiking Policy

For safety, ITA asks that volunteers do not hike alone and travel in groups of at least two people. If solo travel becomes necessary in low-risk situations or emergencies, the solo party will communicate with the lead or crew with specifics of where and when they will return. In youth groups, we ask youth volunteers to travel in groups of three.

Late Arrival/Early Departure

This is allowed on a case-by-case basis. Please coordinate with us first by sending an email. This is easier for car camping projects, but for many of our backpacking trips, we require the group to stay together for the entire project. It is ITA policy that we do not allow individual volunteers to hike in or out to a backcountry camp by themselves.

Workers Compensation Policy

For all projects on federal lands (Forest Service and BLM), volunteers are covered by federal workers' compensation for job-related injuries. The definition of "Job-Related Injuries" is not up to the injured person, ITA staff, ITA crew leaders, or our local federal land manager partners. The final decision of coverage is made by the Department of Labor.

ITA recognizes this is frustrating and vague. Should an injury occur, a leader will ask the volunteer if they would like to file for workers' comp. They cannot tell them if their injury will or won't be covered. If the volunteer would like to file, ITA will follow our workers' compensation policy. Ultimately the decision to file or not is up to the injured person. The leader will collect all the information from the form and communicate with ITA staff and the land manager contact for that project.

We can ensure that the 301b form is signed before a project begins, that all volunteers are informed of the potential risks during the safety talk, that proper PPE is always being used, and that all volunteers are working safely. We will document any injury or incident even if it seems minor or the participant elects not to file a claim. **It is VERY important that volunteers follow all safety procedures and wear all PPE during projects. In the event of an injury, if the volunteer was, for example, wearing running shoes and broke an ankle or was not wearing a hard hat and suffered a head injury, they may not be covered.*

Why don't you use chainsaws?

ITA uses traditional, non-mechanized tools for our trail maintenance work, even in non-Wilderness areas. We take no issue with using chainsaws for maintenance on non-Wilderness trails, but ITA found our niche in the trail maintenance landscape sticking to traditional tools. There are other great organizations who do use chainsaws to clear trails! Part of our mission is to provide education on traditional tool use, and we want to keep traditional trail tool skills alive.

Our volunteer crew leaders need to be saw-certified to lead saw work on a project. We find it easier to train more people on just the crosscut saw. Also, chainsaws can be heavy and logistically challenging (chainsaws break down, crosscuts don't, don't have to carry bar oil and gas.) While it seems counterintuitive, ITA is able to have a more diverse volunteer base, support more crews, and ultimately get more work done by not using chainsaws.