



Lead Trail Specialist

Reports To: Executive Director

Status: Full-time, Exempt, Salaried

Location: Field-based; must reside within the Alliance service area (Northwest North Carolina)

Compensation: \$60,000 - \$65,000 annually, commensurate with experience

Benefits: 401(k); Health, Dental, Vision, Long Term Disability coverages; PTO and Holidays

Organization Overview

The Northwest North Carolina Mountain Bike Alliance (Alliance) is a volunteer-led, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and chapter of the Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association (SORBA). Our mission is dedicated to increasing access to the social, physical, and mental benefits of mountain biking in the Northwest North Carolina region. We are committed to advocating for, building, and stewarding well-planned, accessible, and progressive trail systems for riders of all abilities and backgrounds.

The Alliance is currently building a full-time working staff to design, manage and implement trail improvement and relocation projects in the Grandfather District of Pisgah National Forest as part of a Federal Helene Recovery Initiative. The Initiative is funded by Congressional appropriations to enable partner organizations, including the Alliance, to rebuild recreation infrastructure in National Forest areas damaged by Hurricane Helene. This five-year program launched in September 2025, and the Alliance intends to sustain staff operations beyond the initial program as funding allows.

Key Responsibilities

The Lead Trail Specialist directs the technical planning, construction, and long-term maintenance of trail systems on U.S. Forest Service lands within the Alliance service area.

1. USFS Operations and Project Management

- **Agency Collaboration:** Act as the primary technical liaison with the U.S. Forest Service

(USFS); collaborate with agency staff to develop new trail construction and maintenance plans and contracts.

- **Strategic Oversight:** Champion the technical health and long-term sustainability of trail systems exclusively located on USFS lands.
- **Bid Management:** Lead the RFQ (Request for Qualifications) process for trail projects and perform detailed analysis of contractor bids to ensure selection based on quality, cost-effectiveness, and alignment with USFS requirements.
- **Contract Compliance:** Manage project timelines and inspect contractor work to ensure all new trails and maintenance adhere to USFS specifications, NEPA requirements, and contract terms.

2. Trail Development and Planning

- **Field Design & Mapping:** Lead the field design, mapping, and flagging of new trail systems and reroutes on USFS lands; create comprehensive construction documents and internal GIS planning maps.
- **Technical Documentation:** Ensure all mapping and design data meets the reporting standards required by the USFS.

3. Maintenance and Field Operations

- **System Assessment:** Assess overall trail system health, prioritize maintenance backlogs, and prescribe technical solutions.
- **Resource Management:** Manage the maintenance budget; oversee the purchasing, inventory, repair of Alliance tools and equipment, and management of the use of rental equipment. Ensure leased vehicles are properly maintained and manage operator authorization. Lead, direct and assist the Trail Specialists in trail construction and maintenance operations using hand tools and powered equipment.

4. Volunteer Coordination and Leadership

- **Project Scheduling:** Lead and work with the Volunteer Coordinator to identify, plan, and schedule appropriate projects for volunteer work days and summer working staff.
- **Technical Oversight:** Provide high-level safety oversight and technical direction during large-scale volunteer events.

5. Field Presence and Resource Stewardship

- **Public Interaction:** Maintain a presence in the field during high-use periods to ensure visitors use trails and resources appropriately.
- **Conflict Mitigation:** Monitor visitor parking and interactions with local residents to minimize conflict and ensure resources are enjoyed appropriately.

6. Grant and Administrative Support

- **Grant Collaboration:** Research, write, and report on trail-specific grants in collaboration with the Executive Director and Board of Directors.
- **Data Management:** Oversee the collection and management of trail use data from counters to support grant reporting and project planning.

Qualifications and Requirements

Preferred Professional Qualifications

- **Experience:** Three to five (3-5) or more years of professional experience in trail design, construction contract management, or USFS collaboration.
- **Technical Skills:** Advanced proficiency in GIS or trail mapping software; extensive knowledge of sustainable trail building techniques.
- **Certifications:** Current Chainsaw Certification (bucking/limbing/felling) or the ability to become certified; First Aid/WFA certification.
- **Local Knowledge:** Familiarity with the trails, regional landscape, and land management agencies within the Alliance service area.

Essential Requirements

- **Passion:** Passion for mountain biking, outdoor recreation, conservation, and environmental stewardship.
- **Physical Ability:** Ability to ride, hike, or walk to access and navigate the trails serviced by the Alliance. Ability to perform heavy trail hand work and operate power tools for extended periods. Ability to routinely lift and carry up to 50 pounds.
- **Work Environment:** Ability to work in a mountainous environment in inclement weather, including rain, snow, and extreme temperatures.
- **Flexibility:** Ability to maintain a flexible work schedule, including working weekends and holidays to monitor high-use periods and lead volunteer events.
- **Travel:** Ability to travel regionally within the service area.

How to Apply

- Submit a cover letter, resume, and three professional references as a single PDF named 'Lastname_LTS.pdf' to jobs@ridenwnctrails.com by May 31, 2026. Please reference the job title in the subject line of your email.

Alliance and SORBA are equal opportunity employers.