



River Helper Coordinator Position Description and Qualifications

ROLE: The volunteer River Helper Coordinator solicits, organizes, and educates the River Helpers about guiding each participant during her final retreat day fishing. The River Helper Coordinator keeps the Retreat Leader and Program Coordinator updated with details about the River Helpers.

QUALIFICATIONS: A River Helper Coordinator should:

- Be an experienced fly angler with knowledge about the fishing location.
- Understand the qualities necessary to be a good River Helper and be able to communicate and motivate volunteers.
- Be comfortable and have some knowledge about women with breast cancer.
- Have contacts or relationships with local anglers or guides who are qualified to be River Helpers.
- Possess personal, organizational and electronic communication skills adequate to coordinate, triage, motivate, and manage River Helpers.

TIME COMMITMENT: River Helper Coordinator must spend as much time as necessary to assemble a group of qualified River Helpers. The Coordinator needs to confirm that the River Helpers are qualified anglers and have the necessary personal skills to fulfill the role. Personal skills include patience, interest in teaching others, and ability to be a good listener.

The River Helper Coordinator should ask a series of questions when speaking with prospective River Helpers to determine whether or not the applicant is qualified to fulfill the role.

In addition to their angling abilities, it is important to find out if they are comfortable guiding a woman with breast cancer. Along with being a caring individual, a River Helper needs to be able to physically support a participant, who could have mobility and/or balance issues, and who might also outweigh the guide. Make certain that they feel confident in their ability to lift a participant up if she were to fall. If the River Helper recently sustained a back injury and cannot lift a 50lb box, they should not be guiding a participant.

It is important to establish the emotional and physical well-being of new and existing River Helpers prior to the retreat. Once the group is determined, the Coordinator creates a spreadsheet with contact information of prospective River Helpers. The Coordinator emails and/or calls the River Helpers to ensure they are committed to attend. Additionally, the Coordinator provides the Retreat Leader and Program Coordinator with the list of River Helpers and keeps it updated with status. Communication is key!

COMMUNICATIONS PRIOR TO RETREAT:

Three (3) months prior to the retreat, the Coordinator contacts prospective River Helpers to confirm their participation by emailing them the River Helper Job Description, Teaching Women with Breast Cancer to Fish and Wading Safely documents. The Coordinator Updates the Retreat Leader and Program Coordinator of status. Ensure that each River Helper has completed a volunteer application and confirm that their contact information is current.

Two (2) months prior to the retreat, the Coordinator communicates with River Helpers to again confirm they will be attending. If not known by the Retreat Leader or others on staff, ask the River Helpers for their height and weight. This is to ensure that they are appropriately paired with a participant. Review how they are to be outfitted, remind them to bring an extra wade staff (if they will be on a river), and that CfR provides rods for the women to fish with. Ask if they have any questions!

If the fishing access is located at the retreat venue, update the Retreat Leader with any details about River Helpers that might need to be communicated to the venue. If River Helpers are having breakfast or lunch with the staff and participants, update the Retreat Leader on those numbers that need to be accommodated.

Note: Sometimes it may be necessary to change the fishing day locale at the last minute due to weather conditions etc. River Helper Coordinator and either the Retreat Leader and/or another member of the fly fishing staff can scout the location the evening before fishing day or even early the morning of fishing day, if needed.

FISHING DAY LOGISTICS: Arrive at the fishing site about an hour before the participants and remainder of staff are to arrive to meet the River Helpers and direct them to where they need to park and gear up. Greet all River Helpers and thank them for their time. Review the River Helper Orientation protocols with them. Share any fishing spots and fly information as appropriate. Ask if they have questions!

Remind them to move about with the participants and not to stay in one spot the entire fishing time. If their participant is catching and others are not, move out and let another River Helper and participant step in. Do not leave their participant standing alone in the water. If they need to leave for a minute, either bring the participant back to shore or ask a CfR fly fishing staff member to stand with the participant. Encourage the participant to hold on to them when moving.

On arrival of participants, pair them with their River Helper and allow the River Helper and participant to put their rod together and tie on flies.

See [Volunteer Guidelines](#) for additional information about volunteering for this position.