

PROFILES IN CITIZENSHIP: HOW TO KEEP THE REPUBLIC



Andy Schmidt

Jaime Schmidt

Jaime Schmidt is a passionate and devoted outdoors woman, a steward of the recreational trails that bring enjoyment to so many, and a conservator of the environment she loves. She's also a federal bureaucrat. If you were thinking that means having a stuffy job, chained to a desk, think again. As the National Trail Information Coordinator for the U.S. Forest Service, Jaime focuses on trail management. "Trails are wonderful," she explains. "They're wild, and they wind through beautiful places. So I feel incredibly lucky to be able to do what I do in my life and for a living." We interviewed Schmidt in the summer of 2014. Here is some of what she had to say.

On keeping the republic

"We're all part of the Republic; we're each fortunate to be part of this Republic and we have a responsibility to contribute. . . . For me, it's about the concept of citizen advocacy and citizen stewardship—to contribute to the greater good. And I think that we have a responsibility to do that, as opposed to the opposite of simply watching or criticizing."

On stewardship:

"Stewardship is recognizing and enjoying the opportunities and responsibilities we've inherited. For me, it's the great public lands and natural resources, clean air and healthy water, our trails and wilderness areas, our wild and scenic rivers. And knowing that, while we've inherited these resources, we also have a responsibility to take care of them and help make decisions that inform wise choices for their future management. We each have a responsibility to do something positive toward our future, whatever it is—our work, choices we make in the things we buy or don't buy, how we spend our weekends, how we vote. For the future—for our children, but also for the country and for the globe. That's the big piece. That's the hard piece. That's the important piece.