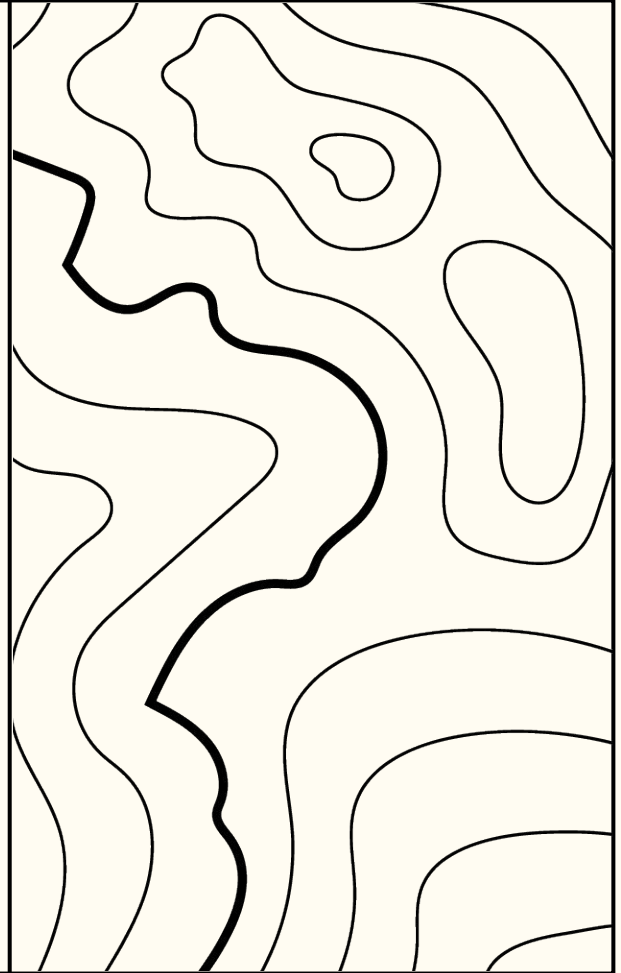


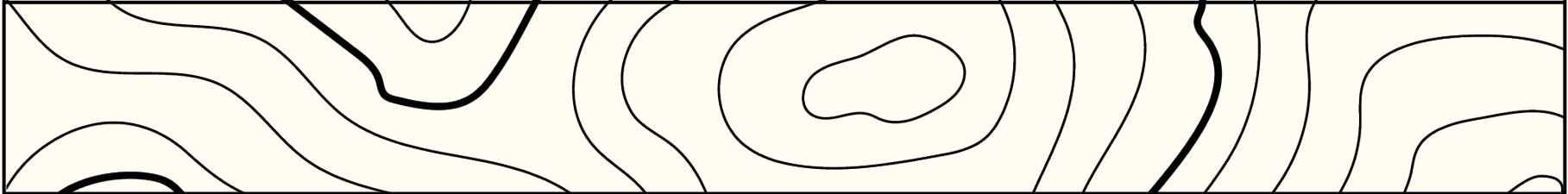
Benefits of Utilizing Mental Health Clinicians in partnership with outdoor & field-based programs

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Mental Health Therapist & Consultant
Lauren Glass Consulting, LLC



Who am I?!

- Licensed Professional Counselor-Colorado
- Masters of Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- First part of career worked in outdoor recreation & conservation seasonally and as a manager - trail crews, conservation corps, youth climbing, backpacking, skiing....
- Mental Health Consultant with a variety of outdoor nonprofits and programs



GOALS

The WHY

The HOW

Considerations for your organization

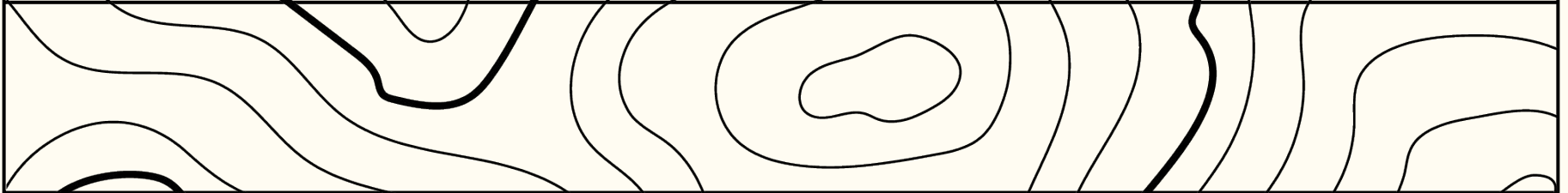
Stories- impacts



the “WHY”

Unique stresses of the outdoors

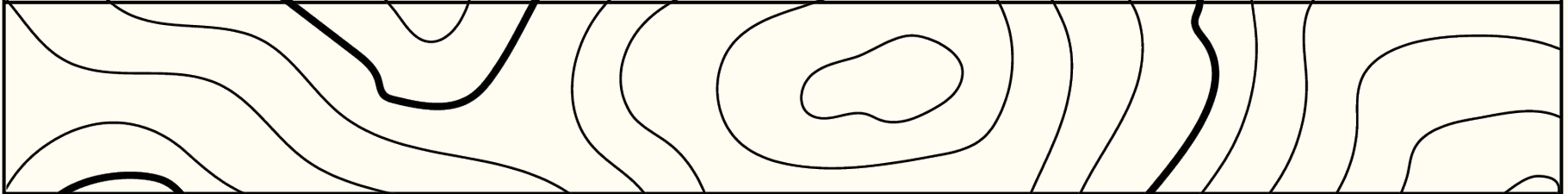
- Seasonality
- Financial stress
- “All on” “all off”
- Separation from community and other supports
- Uprootedness, frequent transitions
- Remote nature, isolation
- Physical stress
- Use of “extreme” coping- substances, “sending it” etc.
- Associated stigma with mental health at work (decreasing?)
- Identify based work- “who I am”



the “WHY”

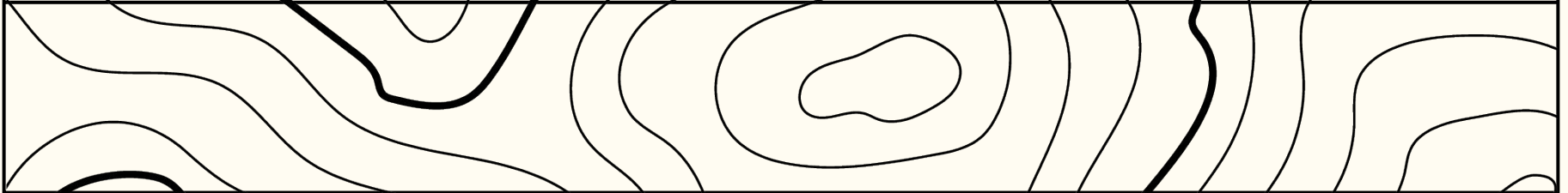
Deepening organizational resilience

- Anecdotal reports of increase of mental health incidents occurring in the field
- Behavioral issues often exacerbated by or directly caused by mental health challenges and stress
- Trauma Informed Care: “What happened to you” vs. “What’s wrong with you”
- Mental health concerns beyond scope of staff to handle
- Critical incident response- psychological first aid
- Mental health as an overlooked aspect of equity within programs





“Crew leads are often put in tricky situations as authority figures to our members. It’s easy to feel like we need to be therapists to our members when we’re living with them and become familiar to their struggles and go through hard things with them. Because being therapists to our members is a recipe for disaster, it is really essential that there’s a resource provided to mitigate that. Crew leads also have a really draining job and because most of our lives are so nomadic and seasonal, it’s really nice to have a therapist available.”- Crew Leader, Southwest Conservation Corps



the “WHY”

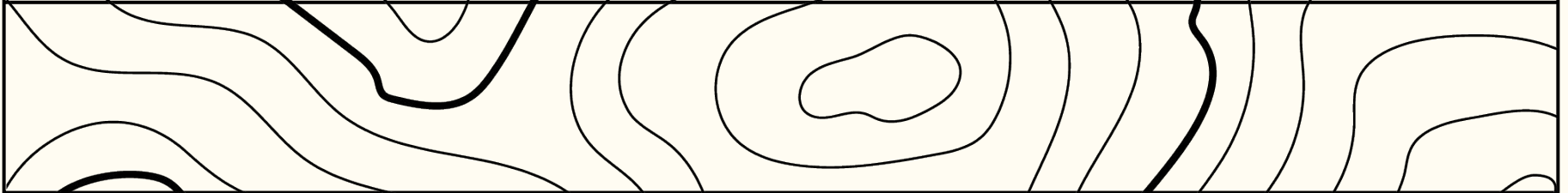
Impacts on outdoor programs

- Increased retention rates of participants or staff
- Benefits for employees, attracting participants or staff
- Decreased burnout
- Occupational hazards of people focused work
- Potential future financial strain, impact on future partnerships
- Increases equity & accessibility of programs, decreases barriers to access
- An “EAP” that understands your program culture





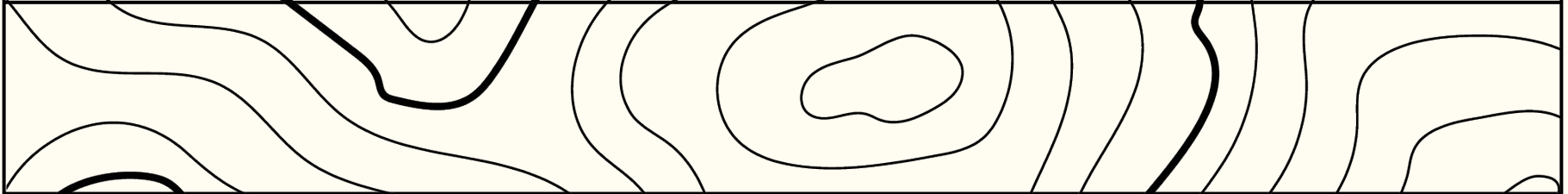
“Our MHC fills a unique role for our organization, one of which our Coordinators and Managers are not properly trained for (nor should they be). Our staff is not equipped to handle certain incidents, and because of this, they were working long hours, taking on unnecessary stress which would lead to burnout every season. Not only is the MHC able to take a large workload off of our staff, because of her training she can properly respond to these types of incidents. This role has shown staff, leaders and members that SCC is a people first organization and that we are truly invested in their personal development and want to see them succeed in and out of the Corps.”- Program Director



the “HOW”

Who is the right partner?

- Who knows the unique culture of your organization or program?
 - Who will create trust and buy-in
- What type of training is missing from our program?
 - Review incident reports or intake forms
- Previous experience at your organization and/or a history of outdoor work
- Someone local or someone with the right expertise?



the “HOW”

- Psychological First Aid
- Trauma Informed Care
- Communication
- Restorative Justice
- Communication
- Resilience, seasonal wellness, boundaries
- Youth specific

Training & Education





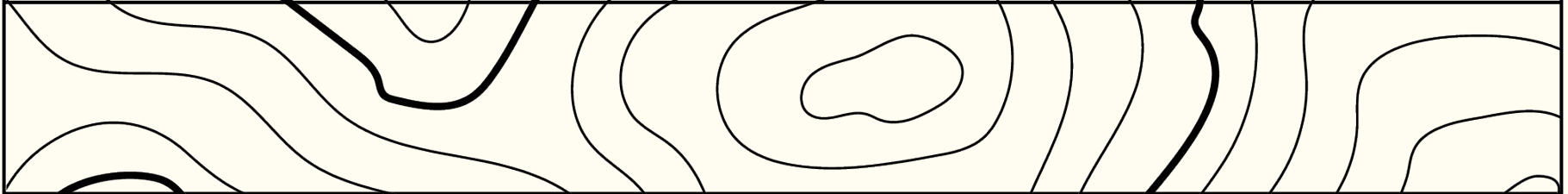
"I loved that my seasonal team got to see that we care about their well-being as a person first. Having a mental health aspect to training set the stage for the season and I was happy to hear the leaders refer back to things they had learned."- Program Coordinator, Washington Trails Association



the “HOW”

Mental health services

- Group debriefs
- Therapeutic consulting- how to support/respond to others
- Therapeutic one on one support (therapy and/or coaching)- support for the person
- “Micro” services- touching base, check ins
- Site visits, field presence, “wellness” support
- Preventative or incident response
- In office, in the field, remote options (phone, texting, video, etc.)
- Accessibility & contact info shared openly within organization





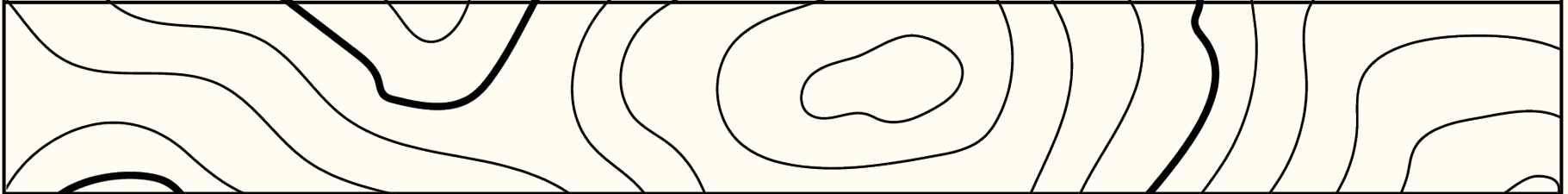
“Hitches are so externally focused, having a mental health consultant allows you to turn inward on your off time and focus on your own needs before going back into the field”- Crew Leader, Southwest Conservation Corps



the “HOW”

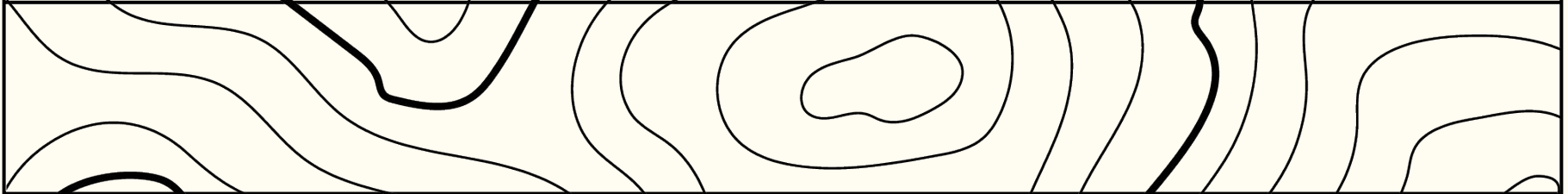
Logistical considerations

- Funding options
- Consider limitations of the person's license- ability to do “therapy” versus coaching/consulting
 - State dependent limitations
 - Licensed or unlicensed?
- Individual provides own liability insurance
- Remote versus in-person
- Utilized “as needed” or integrated into program
- Contractor status, signed agreement



Action Items:

1. Review incident reports and/or intake forms from the last 5 years and identify mental health related trends & themes.
2. Create a survey for current and/or past staff, about desired engagement and support from a mental health clinician.
3. Brainstorm criteria for potential mental health partners. Who would be a good match? Research and reach out to 3-5 clinicians in your area to begin conversations about partnerships. Develop questions that will help you assess if they are a good fit.





THANKS!

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