

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY PROJECTS ABOUND

By: Zach Medici- King Conservation District Crew



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WCC AmeriCorps Members pose by the completed shed built for the Children's Therapy Center on MLK Day. Photo sent by Matthew Evinger.

For our MLK Day service project, Brian Frankowski's WCC AmeriCorps crew and our crew helped build a storage shed for the Children's Therapy Center in Kent. It was a very nice day for construction, dry with even a little sun here and there. When we got to the children's center they had donuts and coffee waiting for us, which of course was appreciated by everyone.

Once the project was started it moved along quickly. Our contact, David, used to build homes for a living, so he definitely knew what he was doing and was able to convey his plans to us. A few of us had

construction experience as well, so things went very smoothly. We completed the framework for the walls in no time, and before lunch we were already working on the siding.

At lunch, Children's Therapy Center provided an organizational overview. They help children with disabilities of all sorts, ages 1-3 years old, with everything they can. They help with physical therapy, help kids walk and move around, help them do kid-things, and help with speech therapy, and teaching them to eat. Some of the kids have been fed through a tube their whole lives, and it's great that Children's Therapy Center helps them out. It was about this time that I also noticed that the kids had made a "thank you" sign for us, and that was really cool.



Storage shed in progress with the help of Brian Frankowski and Matthew Evinger's crews. Photo sent by Matthew Evinger.

After lunch we kept on chugging away, and

spent the majority of the afternoon on the roof. We were able to get all the roof joists on, but the darkness was closing in and we had to call it a day. We cleaned up, shook hands, and took off into the night.

All in all, it was a very fun experience. I know my crew definitely enjoyed the chance to enhance our carpentry skills and take on a great opportunity to serve.



SEND US MATERIAL TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

Please send your stories (800 words or less), photos, and updates for publishing to Sadie at

Sadie.Normoyle@ecy.wa.gov

MLK DAY PROJECTS ABOUND (CONTINUED)

By: Shawn Cowley— Snohomish Conservation District Crew



Our WCC AmeriCorps team woke up to a cold morning with fog lurking all over. We got dressed, put on murky boots, and headed out for a day like no other. This day we have been planning for quite some time. Martin Luther King Day is a day of remembrance, in what can happen when we believe in our dreams, and what this world has changed into. It's a day to remember that if we believe in our dreams we will become great, through our dedication and through service. MLK Day is a day to remember Martin Luther King: a great man, humble, who sacrificed a lot for equality and acceptance. As we go about this day of service we remember what it means to share the love of others and give back to the community.

Our MLK project started in Lake Stevens at the local food bank, with our fellow members from our sister crew and WCC AmeriCorps Individual Placements. We helped move the food bank into a new storage building and helped with projects such as putting up a gate and moving food and furniture in and out of their storage unit.

This will be the first year that the food bank will be putting on a fundraiser function because they have outgrown their current space and need to upgrade. What is even more inspiring is how the entire food bank is thriving with the help of just 60 volunteers, mostly over the age of 50. There was so much to sort through, organize and help with, they used us to their full advantage. We managed to complete everything and we were greatly appreciated. From securing the building of mice by sealing all the holes around the siding with steel wool and caulking, to thinning and pruning the native landscape to get a clear view of the building it was all hands on deck. We also installed a gate for the food bank.

The day ended as the sun came down. We looked back to see the progress we made and were all very pleased with what had we accomplished. We do this from our hearts and compassion. It was a good reminder that we do this for the sake of Martin Luther King, and may he show us what it means to give back.

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

-Martin Luther King Jr.



"It is such an honor to [serve] somewhere and help people other than yourself, the best achievement anyone can possibly do. To be able to say, "Yes, I was a part of that" it touches something else entirely. It comes from the heart and spirit of MLK day" — Shawn Cowley. Photo sent by Shawn Cowley



"These small steps led to a big step up in terms of quality for the food bank's storage building. This shows how a few people coming together can make a big difference in the community. Volunteering not only improves the community, but also rewards the giver" – Ashley Shattuck
Photo sent by Shawn Cowley



The President of Lake Stevens Food Bank told the volunteers that "it would have taken him and his staff a hundred hours to accomplish what we did in a day". Ishta Tyler said, "In the end, I walk away feeling just as grateful (as Mitch), because we too had the opportunity to help a group of compassionate people who have done so much for their community." Photo sent by Shawn Cowley



IP SPOTLIGHT

By: Michelle Gostic- Department of Ecology Coastal Monitoring Individual Placement



Michelle collecting topographic data at Leadbetter State Park on the Long Beach Peninsula. The GPS receiver attached to her back takes an elevation measurement every second. She is holding a GPS controller that directs her to the coordinators of designated profiles that are monitored seasonally.

Having grown up on the north shore of Long Island, my curiosity about the coast sparked at a young age. After high school I attended Cornell University where I studied environmental engineering. My favorite class as an undergraduate was Introduction to Coastal Engineering, which focused on the various forces that shape the coastal landscape. Following my graduation this past May, I bought a one-way ticket to Seattle to explore the Pacific Northwest. While searching for something to replace my waitressing gig, I stumbled upon the Washington Conservation Corps website. I was excited to find out about the Coastal Monitoring IP position, which was so closely aligned with my interests, I decided to apply.

I now serve with the Washington State Department of Ecology Coastal Monitoring and Analysis Program (CMAP). CMAP surveys shorelines throughout Washington State to better understand physical changes along the state's beaches and nearshore zones. By employing three data collection methods, CMAP is able to capture changes in bluffs, beach topography, and nearshore bathymetry (underwater topography) to monitor erosion and sediment movement throughout the Puget Sound and along the outer coast. During field surveys, the team is split into two groups: the boat crew and the ground crew. The boat crew collects data on bluffs and bathymetry, and the ground crew - or "topo team" - covers the beach face in between. Our boat is equipped with a lidar (laser) scanner, which scans the vertical bluffs onshore and a multibeam echosounder (sonar), which scans the sea floor. I'm usually part of the topo team, and at low tide we strap on wetsuits and GPS backpacks to collect topographic elevation data.

Ideally, the topographic data gathered will overlap with the laser and sonar data, allowing a complete 3D model of the shoreline to be constructed. During data collection, the GPS receiver attached to my backpack records the elevation of the ground that I walk on every second. One way that the topo team collects topographic data is by walking profiles – starting in the dunes and walking in a straight line perpendicular to shore until we are waist-deep in water at low tide. By walking the same profiles each season, we can measure how the beach face is changing. Other times, we will attach a GPS receiver to an ATV and drive it back and forth across the beach, creating a surface map to complement profile data.

CMAP's longest lasting monitoring effort began in 1996 and has included seasonal surveys of over 100 km of shoreline extending from Fort Canby up to Point Grenville. This stretch is referred to as the Columbia River Littoral Cell (CRLC) and is of special interest because it represents the extent of shoreline to which sediment from the Columbia River is deposited. Data collected is used by coastal communities and policy makers to inform management decisions and by scientists and other groups to implement restoration and protection efforts. For some projects CMAP collaborates with other government agencies. For example, CMAP has been working with USGS to document morphological changes at the mouth of the Elwha River resulting from the 2011 dam removal project. CMAP also monitors coastal features for the US Army Corps of Engineers, such as the Ediz Hook sand spit in Port Angeles and the Shoalwater berm near Tokeland.

The Coastal Monitoring IP position provides a great balance between field work and time in the office. When not in the field, I aid in data processing and analysis, equipment maintenance, and database management. Additionally, I am making progress on an independent project to characterize beach sediment grain size throughout the Puget Sound via photogrammetric methods - a project that I inherited from my IP predecessor Jaime Liljegren. In April I will present a poster displaying our research at the Salish Sea Conference in Vancouver, BC.

My advice to other WCC members is *carpe diem!* If you are thinking about pursuing a job shadow or an informal interview, there's no time like the present. With better weather on the horizon, time is going to fly by, so don't put off taking advantage of all the opportunities that WCC has to offer.

SEAGRASS, MUSSELS, AND "NICKELBACKS"

By: Sadie Normoyle– WCC Outreach Assistant Individual Placement



Melissa Sanchez, Gaius Horton, Sadie Normoyle, and David Schroeder celebrate being done with the seagrass monitoring project for the night at Anderson Island. Photo Credit to Jaime Liljegren.

My Washington Conservation Corps position doesn't involve the typical "get muddy, build a bridge" type of projects that the WCC is usually associated with. As Outreach and Sustainability IP, I can be found doing outreach for the WCC, helping prepare samples to test for compliance in the Children's Safe Products Act, or gardening in Ecology's Food Bank Garden. When I found out I could tag along with the Department of Natural Resource (DNR) Aquatics IPs, I jumped at the chance to get into the field and get some mud on my pristine WCC T-shirt.

While the DNR IPs have many projects they are helping with, I was tagging along on their seagrass study at Anderson Island, which gets checked every few months. Our day, or should I say night, began at 7:00 pm. We loaded up the truck full of gear, waders, buckets, and sleeping bags and headed off to the ferry that would take us to Anderson Island. Wasting no time once we got off the ferry, we set out towards our project

site to avoid missing the narrow window of low tide that is perfect for monitoring seagrass.

SeagrassNet is a scientific global monitoring program used to look at the status of seagrass in various parts of the globe. Started in 2001, the program's goal is to spread scientific awareness to better understand and preserve seagrass and its habitat. Seagrass is essentially what it sounds like, an underwater plant that often grows in thick mats or meadows in saltwater. Seagrass provides key coastal habitat to numerous species and filters nutrients, sediments, and toxins, similar to coral reefs! The other part of our project was Mussel Watch. Mussel Watch uses mussels to study toxins in our coastal ecosystems by looking at the amount of contaminants absorbed by the mussels within a few months timespan.

With our gear in tow we trekked to the beach, in the "backyard" of a vacation house. During the winter the tide is lowest at almost midnight, which meant that our search for the seagrass markers had to take place as late as possible. The group was split into two projects at the beginning - seagrass and Mussel Watch. We began the seagrass study by locating the three permanent anchors along a transect (a designated straight line across the shore, along which the seagrass is observed and measured). We laid a 50m tape measure along the anchors so that we could measure samples at different distances. Once the tape was tied down we took a sampling quadrant (a square with a metal frame) and laid it at designated distances along the transect. Once the quadrant is laid down I would take a photo of the sample area, and then we identified the seagrass species within the square, if any was present. We counted each shoot of seagrass by hand that appeared within the quadrant and recorded the number to compare to past and future studies. Next, we collected a biomass core sample from each quadrant to take back to the lab. Where seagrass was present, we measured the distance of the seagrass beds in order to see if they are growing or receding over time.

The Mussel Watch study was a quicker process. We easily located the mussel cage on the beach and started taking photos of the cage in order to document its condition. We opened the cage, retrieved the mussels and placed them into bags, which went into a cooler of ice. The cold temperature keeps them alive as they are taken back to the lab.



Gaius Horton and David Schroeder attach the measuring tape to the first anchor along the transect. Photo Credit to Sadie Normoyle.

SUPERVISOR'S CORNER- Dave Coffey and Madeline de Mahy

What is a favorite moment or memory of being a WCC supervisor?

Dave Coffey, Thurston Spike Crew Supervisor: What came to mind was Crupina. It's being with others. It's a nice time for local crews to come together. Projects in Chelan are some of my best memories. It's good for the corps members, too, because without cell reception, you have to talk to each other.

Madeline de Mahy, King Conservation District Crew Supervisor: For some reason, I tend to remember the harder days more readily. The first that comes to mind is a project at Cherry Valley Dairy in Carnation. This particular December day later went on record as the darkest day of the year. Through a miscommunication with the other crew, some of us ended up without our rubber boots. Needless to say, the planting area became a planting lake, wet on so many levels. Luckily, for a few hours, we were able to take cover under a tractor shelter, making our hundreds of blue tube plant protectors. Equally as memorable was an epic dodgeball game at Cispus.



Madeline (1st year supervisor) at a volunteer event at Juanita Creek. Photo sent by Madeline.

Which hand tool is your favorite, and why?

Dave: I like the MacLeod. It's the universal tool. You can rake, you can turn it on edge, you can use it to dig a trench. You can also chop roots with it.

Madeline: A well-sharpened, well-oiled pair of hand pruners are infinitely useful for restoration work: sectioning off ivy roots, cutting blackberry canes, root pruning, opening bushy corridors. I like to keep a pair in my pocket on site.

Briefly describe your path to WCC.

Dave: I was a logger by profession. I started working for Simpson Mill as soon as I turned 18, and I did that for seven years. When I moved to Lewis County, I worked for Weyerhaeuser for 16 years total as a logger. I applied for a job with WCC, and here I am. I'm an outside kind of guy.

Madeline: I've been a Crew Leader with the Student Conservation Association from 2010-2015 (with some breaks), including one year with EarthCorps in 2012. I have always been familiar with WCC and collaborated on projects with crews in the past. It's an honor to be a part of such a reputable organization.



Dave (almost 25 years as a supervisor) sits in a pile of *Crupina vulgaris* during a Chelan spike in 2014. Photo by WCC.

If you could have a superpower what would it be?

Dave: Flying.

Madeline: Without a doubt, flying.

Seagrass Article Continued...

Throughout the night I had many firsts. First time doing a midnight scientific study of any kind, first time wearing waders, and first time actively looking closely at seagrass. Through the frozen toes and numb fingers we all managed to keep the mood up and trade jokes. One of the crew members had a portable speaker under his waders so we had music to listen to while measuring our samples. At one point the band Nickelback was brought up in conversation, which led to the unique moniker we gave to local wildlife. A frequent visitor we renamed was a small fish we originally identified as a Snake Prickleback (though further reflection later led to it being properly identified as a Black-Belly Eelpout). Throughout the night we renamed this small little fish a "Nickelback". For the rest of the study you could hear all of us exclaiming, "Look out! There's another Nickelback! Don't step on it!"

Back in my cubicle, working on newsletter edits, I am so grateful to have gotten the chance to go out and get my hands dirty. The Washington Conservation Corps is full of so many diverse projects and corps members; I am happy to have experienced a bit of what other Individual Placements do! Hopefully next time I can tag along with a crew and see what other sorts of animals we can nickname.



A small Black-Belly Eelpout which we originally identified as a Snake Prickleback, and who we later nicknamed a "Nickelback." Photo Credit to Sadie Normoyle.

MLK DAY SNAPSHOTS





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11



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MLK DAY PHOTOS: 1. The City of Olympia and Tumwater Crews after helping out at the Kiwanis Food Bank Garden. 2. The Snohomish County DNR crew and South Salmon Solutions IP helped Catholic Community Services of Snohomish County with various projects. 3. Crew members from the Skagit Spike crew helped out at a homeless shelter in Mount Vernon called the Friendship house, including sorting donated clothing, yard upkeep and trash pickup. 4. WCC crew members from the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association in Bellingham completed a trellis for the Sean Humphrey House. 5. The Olympia WDFW Forage Fish Crew also helped with the Kiwanis Club of Olympia in planting potatoes near the Capitol Building. 6. The Ellensburg crew at the Home Fire Preparedness Campaign after installing smoke alarms in the Tri Cities area. 7. Crew members from Skagit DNR spend MLK day doing various projects for the Helping Hands Food Bank. 8. The Sedro-Woolley Skagit DNR crew built a retaining wall for a local community garden. 9. Crew members from Pierce County and Tacoma help at the Tacoma Rescue Mission. 10. WCC members Robert Lopez, Rebekah Graham, and Thomas Christensen met with Senator Patty Murray after volunteering at the Seattle MLK celebration. 11. WCC members help cut and distribute firewood for the Kiwanis Club.

VALENTINES DAY: 12. The Ellensburg crew poses with a "fiery" heart while on a saws project. 13. The Seattle Forterra crew sent in a WCC Valentine about golden currant bareroots!

PLANT WORD SCRAMBLE

1. EODSWFNRR
2. ASUGRIOFLD
3. KRLHBUYREEC
4. AREDC
5. SCMOOROTHBC
6. YRBRAKCLEB
7. TLENTE
8. ICAATTL
9. NEGOERAPORG
10. WDROEOD
11. LSLAA

1. _ _ _ R _ _ _ _ N
2. _ _ U _ _ _ _ _ I _
3. _ _ _ K _ _ _ _ R _ _
4. _ _ _ A _
5. _ C _ _ _ _ _ _ _ M
6. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ R _
7. _ _ T _ _ _
8. _ _ _ _ A _ _
9. _ _ E _ _ _ _ _ P _
10. _ _ D _ _ _ _
11. _ _ _ A _

Unscramble each word to reveal the name of a PNW plant. Some letters have been placed for you (note the letters used have not been crossed out from the list).

The first person who emails the correct answers will receive WCC swag at March elective training.



Learn more on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/washingtonconservationcorps

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MARCH TRAINING AFTER-HOURS ACTIVITIES

As March Elective Training draws near, keep in mind these fun evening activities!

OPEN MIC NIGHT

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2016

Bring your instrument, creativity, and a sense of humor to this fun evening emceed by WCC Supervisors Alicia Kellogg and Matthew Evinger. Think ukulele duets, dramatic poetry readings, skits, anything you bring to the stage will be welcome and enthusiastically applauded! Sign-ups will take place at training and performances will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis, depending on time.

We want you to be mindful that this event is taking place in a facility hosted by your employer and you will be surrounded by your colleagues and superiors. Please remember to keep your performances appropriate.

BEARD AND MUSTACHE COMPETITION

WHEN: TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2016

Rules: WCC Members and Supervisors are encouraged to cultivate creative facial hair for this event or choose to craft it from whatever material suits their fancy! Contestants will be judged by a panel in the categories of natural facial hair and artificial facial hair. Each contestant will come up on stage state their name, crew or IP sponsor, and tell the story behind their beard or mustache. **A short performance is encouraged.**

Scoring: Judges will rate contestants on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the top score. The 5 judges' scores will be totaled and an overall score given to the contestant. The judges will rate the contestants on beard/mustache length, bushiness, creativity, presentation, showmanship and style. The first place winner from each category will go against each other for our Grand Champion, voted on by audience screaming.

CATEGORIES:

- "Full" Beard
- "Partial" Beard
- "Artificial" Beard
- GRAND CHAMPION

*Prizes Awarded to first place
In each category.*



ABOUT THE WCC

The Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) was established in 1983 as a service program for young adults between the ages of 18-25. The WCC is offered through the Washington Department of Ecology and continues the legacy started by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The WCC has been an AmeriCorps program since 1994. Today, the WCC has around 300 members working on projects in every part of the state. Our partners include Federal, State, Local, and Tribal organizations. For more information please visit our website: www.ecy.wa.gov/wcc.