



Washington Conservation Corps Corps News



April 2005
Volume 1, Issue 3

Important Dates:

- April 22: Earth Day
- May 30: Memorial Day
- June 20-July 21: one week of North Cascades Training, by location
- July 4: Independence Day

Highlights:

- WCC Crews Expand Their Service Pg. 2
- Komachin Middle School Teams Up with the WCC to Get Things Done . . . Pg. 2
- Different Sort of Army . . Pg. 3
- New Experiences, New Direction Pg. 3
- Reflections on WAFA . . . Pg. 3
- Leave No Trace Pg. 4

If you require this publication in an alternate format, please contact Ecology's SEA program at (360) 407-6096, or TTY (for the speech or hearing impaired) 711 or 800-833-6388.



Corpsmembers Rewarded for Outstanding Efforts



Port Angeles Crew: Ryan Swindler (sup), David Hooker, Isaac Miles, Andy Mahlum, & Michael Hartzog

Congratulations to **Ryan Swindler's Port Angeles Crew** for receiving the Crew of the Quarter award for Winter 2005. Ryan's crewmembers come from diverse backgrounds but they have one thing in common: the desire to make their crew the hardest working crew in the WCC. Several have chosen the WCC as a path to move their lives in a positive direction. Everyone they have worked with in the Olympic National Park has commented on the teamwork and strong work ethic of the crew. Not only have they become a positive, powerful, motivated crew but the sheer quantity and quality of work they perform is amazing. Thanks for the great effort!

The WCC would like to congratulate the **King County Crew of Brendon, Russell, Kimberly, Katrina, and Damien** for being selected as Crew of the Quarter. Being without a Supervisor is a difficult task for a crew, but this group has met the challenge head on. They have all stepped up to take on extra responsibilities and have shown that they all possess true leadership qualities. Cody Toal of King County DNR says, "I would like to congratulate the crew for their selection as WCC Crew of the Quarter. I am pleased to see their positive actions have been recognized and I can think of no team of people more

deserving." Special thanks go out to Brendon Smith who, as acting Crew Supervisor, has ensured the success of the project work through timely completion and continued high quality. Thanks to you all!



King County Crew: Brendon Smith, Russel Shurtz, Kim Martin, Damien Dombrowski, & Katrina Folwell

Erin Meyer has been awarded "Corpsmember of the Quarter" for winter 2005. Erin has taken a leadership role in several projects at the Stilly-Snohomish Fisheries Enhancement Task Force, including: salmon carcass distributions, planting projects, and environmental education programs. According to her sponsor, Erin has a "very sunny disposition" and is able to "break down scientific information" for the young students that she often works with. Erin's efforts also benefited another organization that was lacking a volunteer base when she organized a large planting event from start to finish; attracting 55 community volunteers. Outside of work, Erin has been actively involved with the YMCA in Everett; working with the First Place School and the Invest in Youth Campaign. Well done, Erin, and keep up the great work!



Erin Meyer

WCC Crews Expand Their Service

Several WCC members in and around Bellingham will be competing in the 82-mile Ski to Sea relay race on May 29. The Ski to Sea race was started in 1973 by the local chamber of commerce to highlight recreational opportunities in Whatcom County. The race consists of seven legs, in which team members will downhill ski/snowboard, cross-country ski, run, cycle, canoe, mountain bike, and kayak from the slopes of Baker to Bellingham Bay. Bellingham crew members and IPs from Padilla Bay and Snohomish County all plan to participate, most for their first time.

Peter Nevin's King County Crew volunteered with the Pierce County Veteran's Services to assist with the Stand-Down service event to benefit homeless veterans. Stand-Down is a grassroots, community-based intervention program designed to help the nation's estimated 275,000 homeless veterans "combat" life on the streets. Homeless veterans are brought together where they have access to a variety of services, including: hair cut, dental work, clothing, a shower, and life counseling services. Approximately 100 veterans attended the Tacoma event. For more information on Stand-Down, please visit <http://www.nchv.org>.

Renee Mason's Mount Rainier Crew initiated a food drive in March that raised over 700 pounds of food. Personal hygiene products and cash donations were also collected during this event. The crew went door-to-door and staffed a collection table at local grocery stores. The Ashford Fire Department assisted the crew by advertising the food drive on their reader board.



King County Crew: Jenny Knowles, Chris Rehbein, Emmet Leversedge, Peter Nevin (sup), Giovanna Marcus & Meryl Kamowski



Julie Bloom, Jason Taylor, Renee Mason (sup), Jordan Erickson & Amie Dore

Komachin Middle School Teams Up With the WCC to Get Things Done!

The science teachers at Komachin Middle School have taken a hands-on approach to environmental education. For the past four years, Komachin students have teamed up with the WCC, Nisqually Wildlife Refuge, and community volunteers for large scale planting projects that benefit the environment and provide learning opportunities for students. This year was no exception; it all culminated in two days of planting along the Western Bluff of McAllister Creek on March 3rd and 4th. Before coming to the planting site, students were shown a video on proper planting techniques and learned about various ecosystems in their Life Science class. Nearly 770 students cycled through over the course of two days, during their science block. The block schedule at Komachin is conducive to this setup, allowing enough time for travel to the site, a brief overview, and plenty of planting! Over 2,000 trees were placed in the ground.

Students also assisted two WCC crews throughout March in building an outdoor learning center and "rain garden". This facility has been in progress for three years and is currently funded by an OSPI Learn and Serve Grant. The project has grown to include trails, raised beds, and now, rock walls are being placed to act as seating for outdoor learning activities. Once completed, three of the main ecosystems found in Western Washington will be located at the school; lowland, montane and subalpine forests. This wildlife habitat will act as a setting for teaching students about restoration and conservation.



(L-R) Codi Fiman, Ali Mattinson, Kimberly Vivian, Brandon West, Tashi Kerr, Matthew Hubbard, & Caitee Borges



WCC members Ryan Price and Melody Abel place finishing touches on a dry creek bed



Beth Loudon

A Different Sort of Army

Article by Beth Loudon, Skagit crew member

I thought the WCC was the “Hot Shot” of AmeriCorps, so I was surprised to learn how relatively unknown the WCC actually is while surrounded by 720 other AmeriCorps members at the S.E.R.V.E.S conference in Ocean Shores. I was constantly answering questions like “Who are you guys?” or “What kind of work do you do?” In return, I found myself asking the same questions, and discovering that there were AmeriCorps members from all angles of our state working to solve problems that I didn’t even know existed.

At the conference, I joined hundreds of others in attending seminars on various subjects, from volunteer management and disaster relief, to workplace communication and grant writing skills. I heard it said that, at this point in the AmeriCorps year, morale is running low and burnout is a plague amongst the members. The Washington Service Corps holds this conference each year in hopes that the various classes will help alleviate the difficult issues members are facing, and inspire them to finish the year in a strong and satisfying manner. In truth, we have all wondered at some point during our AmeriCorps year why we are settling for a job that pays so little when we could be making twice as much, for less work, somewhere else. Many believe that the world is so hopelessly messed up, how could we make any sort of difference at all, and even if we do, will it matter? Will anyone notice?

There are numerous programs out there, but nothing that I can think of has accomplished so much for so little a cost as AmeriCorps. How little a percentage of the government budget we take up, and how much we have accomplished in the wake of the human experience. From cleaning the streets and planting the forests to fighting illiteracy in schools or building homes for low-income families, AmeriCorps members are stepping forward to fight problems on a societal level that often go unnoticed. We are also fighting ignorance. The people that I talked to at the conference all had plans for their education award, and if every state in the nation has as strong an AmeriCorps force as Washington State, then we are surely building a nation that is educated, inspired, and ready to face the problems that ravage our home front.

Some say that we are a domestic peace corps. I say that we are more than that. We are a different sort of army in the whirlwind of contemporary world problems, and after being lost in a crowd of 720 others, all sharing the same motivation, I can honestly say that I have never been more proud to be given this chance to serve my country in a manner I truly believe in.

New Experiences, New Direction

Article by Steve Whetherhult, Olympia crew member

You are on a day hike with some friends and an hour into it, your buddy sees a rock face that he must climb. About thirty feet into the climb, you watch in horror as he slips and plummets to the ground. Rushing to his unconscious body, you notice a gash on his temple and blood seeping through his pants on the inside of his thigh. As you lean over to check his breathing, he vomits. What do you do, hotshot, what do you do?

You are at a work site, an hour from help. A lightning storm has rolled in and you turn in time to see your over excitable co-worker climbing a tree for a better look! As you're yelling after him, lightning strikes the tree and he is thrown to the ground. You run towards his lifeless body and, while there is no serious bleeding, your friend is not breathing and has no pulse. Fortunately, you know CPR. After a few minutes of CPR, your friend comes to, but is speaking utter nonsense. Is he in shock? Does he have increasing intracranial pressure? Perhaps he ate some type of hallucinogenic mushroom he failed to tell you about?

Continued on last page

Thoughts on Training

While walking along through the trees,

My friend fell down to his knees.

How much did you drink?

Twelve liters I think.

So I gave him some crackers and cheese.

-- Adam Morris-Cohen, IP at Padilla Bay, reflects on lessons about electrolyte sickness from Wafa training



Steve Whetherhult

New Experiences, New Direction

(Continued from page 3)

These are just a couple of scenarios acted out at WFAA training this March-fake blood and all. The staff of The Wilderness Medicine Training Center also had us clean a wound in a pig's foot to simulate a real human wound, inject saline into our thighs and arms, and use every day items (like maxi pads) to treat injuries. Highly informative and entertaining, I would recommend this class to anyone who spends time outside the city confines.

Though I had never considered a future in First Aid prior to joining the WCC, I now eagerly await Wilderness First Responder training, then Wilderness EMT, and after that, the WORLD! If you can say nothing else about the WCC; when it comes to providing worthwhile training, direction, and purpose, the military ain't got nothing on us.



The blood is not real: David Coffey and Jesse Liller treat Matthew Smith's fictitious injuries.

Leave No Trace

Article by Cassie Toll, Wenatchee crew member

WCC crews often travel into the back country, where it is important to remember the principles of "Leave No Trace". The idea behind Leave No Trace is to educate outdoor enthusiasts so that they can continue to enjoy nature without leaving a huge impact on the environment. These principles are essential to the survival of native plants and animals, and it also ensures continued human safety and enjoyment of these areas. Here are some steps to take to leave no trace:

Plan ahead, be prepared. Get all required permits. Try to use areas at times of low use.

Travel and camp on durable surfaces. Use existing campsites or areas without vegetation. Move tents often to prevent damage to vegetation. Always stay on the trail!

Dispose of waste properly. Pack it in, pack it out. Use biodegradable soap and bury all human waste in a 6-8 inch hole, away from water sources and campsites.

Leave what you find. Do not construct any structures and replace all rocks, sticks, etc. when moved.

Minimize campfire impacts. Use a camp stove and candle lantern. If a fire is made, use a fire ring and keep the fire small. When allowed, use only dead trees and brush as fuel and be sure the fire is completely out, when leaving.

Respect Wildlife. Maintain safe distances from wildlife. Keep food, scraps and scented products securely stowed (bear canisters or bear wires are often times required in wilderness areas).

Be considerate of others. Leave pets and radios at home. Minimize noise. Camp in small groups, away from other campers and respect private property.

For more information on Leave No Trace, please visit www.leavenotrace.org.

Washington Conservation Corps

PO Box 47600
Olympia, WA
98504-7600

PHONE: (360) 407-7248

FAX: (360) 407-6902

E-MAIL:
kdan461@ecy.wa.gov

Photos, Suggestions, and Stories Wanted!

Please call Bridget Mason at (360) 407-6706 or email brim461@ecy.wa.gov

Did you know? We are on the Web!

See us at:
www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/wcc

About Our Organization

The Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) was established in 1983 as a job training program for young adults between the ages of 18-25. The WCC is a program offered through the Washington State Department of Ecology and continues the legacy left by the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s.

The program provides work experience and skills for projects that support conservation, rehabilitation, and enhancement of Washington's natural, historic, environmental and recreational resources. Today the WCC has nearly 150 members working on various projects in every part of the state. WCC partners include Federal, State, Local, and Tribal organizations.