

CORPS NEWS



Left to right: Owl photographed by Davis Harsh of the CLC Crew in Discovery Park, Magnolia, Seattle; Sea Lion with Fish photographed by Matt Kostle of Liz Esikoff's King County DNRP Crew at Piner Point, Vashon, WA; Salamander photographed by Paul Son of Kris Buitrago's King County DNRP Crew at a Port of Seattle mitigation site near Auburn, WA

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WCC WELCOMES NEW ADDITIONS

Washington Conservation Corps is expanding! Five new crews include a trail crew sponsored by the City of Bellevue, a Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) crew based out of Tacoma, a spike crew near Mount Vernon, a Thurston County crew and a Mount Saint Helens trail crew in Morton.

Patrick Robinson, a former crew member and assistant to King County Crew Supervisor Peter Nevin, now supervises the new Bellevue Trails Crew. So far the crew has been involved in making aesthetic improvements to some high-usage trails in Bellevue, including the Coal Creek Trail System.

Sean Smith recently returned to Western Washington after spending time as an environmental education instructor in Pennsylvania. He has also done work for the Department of Fish and Wildlife and two salmon hatcheries. His new Tacoma crew has been working on trail construction Near Mount Rainier National Park.

Vanessa Lott, former Mount Rainier Trails Crew Supervisor, has moved North to lead the new Skagit Spike Crew. The crew has done a variety of things includ-

ing restoration for Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group and trail and campground work.

Tricia Bays, a former WCC member under the supervision of Ted Dewees, has returned to lead the new Mount Saint Helens Trail Crew. The crew has been working on the Cold Water Lake Trail System at Mount Saint Helens Volcanic Monument. **Continued on page 7**



The new Bellevue Trails Crew, left to right: Ryoji Murakami, Stephanie Eckard, Megan Chapman, Supervisor Patrick Robinson, Thomas Mallory and Daniel Hilberg



PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS: “BEFORE & AFTER”



Cold Creek project site, near Cottage Lake, WA, before and after plantings by the King County DNRP Crew — Photos submitted by Paul Son

THE STORY BEHIND THE PHOTOS

Kris Buitrago’s King County DNRP Crew spent close to a month working at the Cold Creek project site, which began as a field of Reed Canary Grass. The crew applied landscaping fabric and cardboard to over 64,000 square feet and replanted the area with 7100 native trees and shrubs!

In just 3 days time, Justin Zarzeczny’s Olympic National Park Crew removed and rebuilt an old staircase that had become dangerously sloped and wobbly after years of use. They were able to salvage some of the materials from the original staircase, which provides access from the Kalaloch Campground, near Forks, WA, to the beach. Additions also included a full-length railing and rock bracing along the sides.



Kalaloch Campground south beach access before and after rebuilding the stairs — Photos submitted by Justin Zarzeczny’s Olympic National Park Crew

SOUTH SILVER SPRINGS: A LABOR OF LOVE

Article by Shira Geiger-Gevirtz

By far the Pierce County Crew's favorite site, the newly channeled wetland off of Springs Site Rd, has truly been a labor of love. South Silver Springs, as it is known to us, was a blank canvas. Constructed just one month prior to when our crew began, the newly excavated channels, each lined with substrate conducive to salmon spawning, were all that was present on the site when we arrived back in October.

We started by harvesting willow stakes and planting them along the rocky shore. Then, while decked out in our recently acquired waders, we carefully planted groups of four different emergent species. Each little clump of wetland sedge or rush was dibbled down into the dirt and anchored fast with a bamboo skewer. After installing twenty-five hundred of these, our crew was ready to face the next challenge that South Silver Springs would present to us.

In November we competed with 120 goats to finish removing blackberry and teasle from the areas that would later be planted as a riparian forest. While they chewed and rubbed against our freshly planted willow stakes on one side of the wetland, we razed huge stands of



Ross Drury and Supervisor Kristian Tollefson of the Pierce County Crew balance on stakes at South Silver Springs

invasive species with our trusty machetes and Pulaskis. When the land was cleared and every stolon raked into a massive pile, we tore the blackberry hearts from their comfortable homes, some residing deep in the ground. We may have left those days looking like we had tried to drown a cat, but it was extremely satisfying work.

By the end of November, Chum were already beginning to run their newly created habitat, distracting us from our planting routine, but reassuring us that our efforts were not in vain, and that our labors were in fact necessary to create this viable ecosystem.

We saw them swim upstream, dig their redds, fight with one another, spawn, and then eventually die. They left us with a completely unmistakable odor and an awareness of the continuity of life and death.

From December through March, we continued the process of planting and

mulching. As we gathered steam, our plants stretched to further and further limits of the wetland, and our shoulders grew to the strength of oxen as we carried twelve gallons worth of mulch to each plant. We enlisted the help of the Tacoma Crew, their auger, and then eventually the Yakima Crew, as we finished our final shipment of bare-roots.

Today the site looks like a disco party, with brightly colored flags marking each planting, and each planting area assigned a distinctive color. It is hard to imagine that when we began, South Silver Springs was nothing

more than teasle, blackberry, and rocks.

Now, with over 6,000 native emergents, shrubs, and trees in the ground, our site is bound for success. We value the lessons it has taught us, and look forward to what the future has in store for our budding wetland.



Budding willow stakes on the stream bank at South Silver Springs

"Now, with over 6,000 native emergents, shrubs and trees in the ground, our site is bound for success."

WCC CELEBRATES EARTH DAY



NOSC IP Aliina Lahti with her interactive leaf sculpture

Earth Day 2011 fell on April 22. Several WCC crews and Individual Placements put together projects to bring together communities around Washington with the common goal of celebrating, restoring and educating people on our local environmental issues. Read their stories here:

ness of local watersheds.

ELLENSBURG

Ernie Farmer's Ellensburg Crew took a break from their usual work to participate in an environmental education event at a local elementary school. The crew set up four stations for

SEATTLE

The Seattle City Parks crew took leadership over a large restoration project involving over 100 volunteers. Their help was a special request from a City employee. A large section of densely overgrown blackberry was removed and a section of hillside trail was cleaned and refurbished. The crew was given responsibility for the entire volunteer crowd, including 50 members of City Year, relatively new to environmental work, and over 50 middle school students. Leading work they would normally do themselves was new, but a satisfying way of sharing their passion for environmental progress overcoming obstacles. The day's value was more than accomplished labor, but life-long lessons in leadership and patience.

PORT TOWNSEND

North Olympic Salmon Coalition (NOSC) Individual Placement Aliina Lahti orchestrated an interactive art project with local students, artists, and community members. The completed leaf sculpture (see photo above), made of collected natural items, represented the life cycle and journey of a spawning salmon. Participants were able to walk through the veins of the leaf and interact with this work of "Eco Art", which promoted aware-



Ellensburg Crew Member James Pruitt helping school children release salmon from Dixie cups

"Leading work they would normally do themselves was a satisfying way of sharing their passion."

3rd-5th graders to talk about trees, birdhouses for ducks, the salmon life cycle, and watersheds and soils. WCC member Melissa Kuhn was surprised, saying, "some of the kids, especially the 5th graders, were really smart and already knew a lot about what we were telling them." The kids asked a lot of questions and everyone had a good time.

The Ellensburg Crew also assisted with the Yakama Nation's Salmon Release Day at the Holmes property in Ellensburg. Elementary school students released salmon from their classroom tanks in Dixie cups, with the help of Ernie's Crew. The kids had watched their fish grow as part of the "Salmon In The Classroom" program.



Volunteers plant a Douglas Fir at the joint Earth Day and Arbor Day celebration hosted by the Stilly Snohomish Fisheries Enhancement Task Force

community members. The restoration work party removed invasive blackberry, spread mulch and planted over 300 native trees and shrubs!

EVERETT

Snohomish County Native Plants Individual Placement Jacob Zarate coordinated a stream restoration project at Allen Creek, involving the Snohomish County Crew, students from Everett Community College and over 200 community volunteers. The Snohomish County Crew Members gave plant demonstrations and safety talks and then led volunteers in the restoration. Emily Whitney, the Snohomish County Marine Resources Individual Placement, staffed a Surface Water Management booth to educate

ARLINGTON

The Stilly Snohomish Fisheries Enhancement Task Force hosted two different Earth Day events. The first, held on April 9, involved 70 volunteers who planted over 700 trees along the South Fork Stillaguamish River at Country Charm in Arlington, WA. This is one of the key habitats where Chinook salmon runs are most endangered. Individual Placement John Newberry served as the project manager, recruiting volunteers, ordering and staging all of the

trees and shrubs, finding sponsors for food and donations, and being the liaison for the band Pearl Jam, who ended up buying all of the plants for the site. During the event, John and the Task Force employees instructed the volunteers on how to plant the trees and shrubs properly and also described the benefits of restoration. For their second Earth Day event, **(Continued on next page)**

"What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?"

—Henry David Thoreau



Melissa Kuhn, of Ernie Farmer's Ellensburg Crew, answers children's questions at an Earth Day educational station



Allen Creek volunteers assist in restoration at an event led by IP Jacob Zarate and The Snohomish County Crew

which was on April 16, John helped stage over 1200 trees and shrubs, and prepared the site by mowing over 1.5 acres worth of reed canary grass. During the event he augured over 100 holes for the volunteers that were planting. He gave tutorials on the proper safety procedures and planting techniques and enjoyed a reward of salmon during the BBQ.

WCC ALUMNI—WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Since 1983, Washington Conservation Corps has had thousands of members. Ever wonder what they moved on to do after WCC? Here is one of their stories:

JESS WASICEK, '08-'10

Jess started out as a corps member on the Cascade Land Conservancy (CLC) Crew under supervisor Josh Kraetsch . She then followed Josh to the King Conservation District (KCD) Crew for a second year as his assistant supervisor.

In the spring of 2010, Jess began gaining interest in National Parks and started talking to current and former rangers to get an idea of what was involved in their jobs. She shadowed a ranger at Olympic National Park for a day and decided to begin the in-depth application process.

Jess was accepted to the Law Enforcement Academy in Mount Vernon (one of only 9 in the country that do parks-specific training). For 4 months she studied every aspect of the future job: everything from firearms and crime scene investigation to defensive tactics (a physical combat class) and criminal law. Luckily, Jess had already obtained Wilderness First Responder (WFR) certification and a wildland fire Red Card through WCC, both required components for all applicants.

Currently Jess is applying to National Parks all over the country in hopes of securing a position as a ranger. She's looking forward to the variety of work she'll be doing—a park ranger must “wear many hats”, as Jess puts it. National Parks' Rangers are not only law enforcement officials, but also medical, fire-fighting, search and rescue, public relations and environmental education professionals.

Jess can't wait to get back outside and spend time in some of the National Parks: “I can't really go wrong with whatever park I land at.”



Former WCC Member Jess Wasicek at Mount Rainier National Park

*“I can't really go wrong
with whatever park I
land at.”*

NEW ADDITIONS—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Adam Hein joins our program after working for a non-profit in Idaho, doing conservation and restoration work. He now supervises the new Thurston County Crew, who has been doing knotweed control on South Prairie Creek for the Pierce Conservation District.

Liz Anderson, formerly a corps member and assistant to Andy Wargo on the City of Bellingham Crew is back to supervise the second Bellingham Crew. After her time as a WCC member, Liz supervised backcountry trail work for the Northwest Youth Corps, and traveled around Canada (where she is from) and Alaska. Her crew has been controlling the spread of a wide variety of invasive plants, including Japanese Knotweed and Yellow Iris.

Rachel Konrady, a former crew member on both the King Conservation District (KCD) and Wenatchee Spike Crews, now supervises the KCD Crew. The crew has been restoring property for landowners in and around King County, including some work on Vashon Island.

Tom Schweiss returns to WCC after serving as a corps member on Justin Zarzeczny's Olympic Spike Crew and two years with AmeriCorps St. Louis. Tom has taken over Vanessa Lott's for-

mer position with the Mount Rainier Trails Crew.

Rob Miller was a WCC supervisor for DNR for 10 years. He is now supervising one of the Spokane Crews, who is working for the Bureau of Land Management, improving or constructing campgrounds in and around Spokane.

Kathy Marshall will join our program in July, after 15 seasons as a WCC DNR supervisor based in Ellensburg. Her crew has been involved with campground maintenance, wildland fire prevention and support and flood response.

Davis Harsh and Jesse Rogers have joined our program as supervisors for the Mountains to Sound Crews. Davis served as a WCC member and assistant supervisor on the Cascade Land Conservancy Crew under Cary Hofmann. Jesse has been a WCC supervisor for DNR, and worked with the Student Conservation Association and the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps. The crews have been controlling knotweed along the Raging River.

Please assist us in welcoming these new supervisors and crews to our program!

HISTORIC PHOTO CHALLENGE: THEN & NOW

Washington Conservation Corps follows in the tradition of the historic Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). In response to the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt brought forth the New Deal to create jobs for Americans while addressing our country's needs. The CCC operated from 1933-1942 and was responsible for work including trail systems the WCC still maintains.

Here is a challenge for our Corps Members: Recreate this photo with a modern twist! See if you can capture the spirit of the CCC, but wearing a shirt this time... not to mention Personal Protection Equipment! Men and Women of all shapes and sizes are encouraged to participate. Let's see how creative we can be!



“A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself. Forests are the lungs of our land, purifying the air and giving fresh strength to our people.”

—Franklin Delano
Roosevelt

CONSERVATION EDUCATION: THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Article by Kameron Harper

Here at the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group (SPSSEG), we do many different types of environmental restoration and enhancement projects. One very important aspect that we try to incorporate into our responsibilities is giving back to the community by conducting education and outreach events. Every year, during the months of October and November, SPSSEG staff members and volunteers work diligently to provide an educational tool for students and members of the community to come learn about salmon and their habitat, and much more.

The Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail is a wonderful educational experience for people of all ages to learn about how their actions and decisions directly impact natural processes; in this case, salmon runs. Students get the opportunity to view the salmon lifecycle, as they journey back up their natal stream to their spawning grounds and complete their migration. This program allows people to experience a natural phenomenon as it takes place and aims to get them to become proactive in making a change toward a more sustainable future.

It is really incredible to see firsthand the many different areas of education that this trail relates to. Students learn about the biological characteristics of the salmon and their habitat by understanding why they return to their natal streams, their spawning behaviors, the nutrients they bring to the forest, and more. They can also learn a bit about the politics that are involved in working with landowners, Pacific Northwest Indian Tribes, and state agencies to enforce the protection of wild salmon. In addition, the Kennedy Creek Trail teaches about environmental science and sustainability by showing how important it is to protect nature and its

contents. Lastly, this trail is a great way for students to learn about human influences on environmental processes; and how their everyday actions and decisions can have a huge impact.

Environmental education programs are beginning to sprout up all over. They are infused within many curriculums for all ages because people can see that if we can't come up with a single solution for such a complex issue (environmental degradation) then we have to start somewhere, and work our way up. It is much easier to teach young children how to live their lives being conscious and aware that they are connected to the environment than it is to get someone to change their current habits and the way they live their lives. Although many people feel that individually they can't make a difference big enough to matter, the truth is that even small changes over time can make all the difference in the world. What needs to be realized is that if everyone holds this negative disposition, progress becomes stagnant. We have to start somewhere; the Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail is just a small community based program that offers many different aspects to be pondered. Environmental education is one huge step in the process toward a more sustainable future.

“Environmental education is one huge step in the process toward a more sustainable future.”



Students from Mountain View Elementary on a field trip to the beach at Tolmie State Park with Kameron Harper, the SPSSEG Individual Placement

WCC RECOGNITION

Seattle Parks—Nominated by Kevin Farrell

Melissa Bennett's crew is being recognized for many reasons. Here are a few of them:

Natalie creates a volunteer calendar for the crew. To further her career, she has met with several agencies to gain better perspective on how to get into the industry.

Becca has made professional connections through volunteering at her synagogue in her spare time, and working in the WCC which have helped her to establish a foundation in Wisconsin. Becca volunteers regularly at Northwest Harvest and other events.

Rebecca takes part in crew volunteer events, but is most appreciated for her exceptional skills as an assistant supervisor. She is very knowledgeable of both native and invasive plants.

Although Liam has the longest commute on the crew, he finds time to be active in the musical community, studying, practicing, and even participating in a street festival; all the while working on his parents' cabin, and writing stories. Liam also volunteers despite not having missed any work.

Hunter has grown the most during his time in WCC. He has moved out of his parents' house into an apartment of his own, and has been accepted into the University of Montana. He gives up most of his weekends, volunteering 10-20 hours at a time. Hunter shows great initiative and drive in fulfilling his commitments.

The crew credits Melissa, saying, "She pushes us to better ourselves and our communities with every action we take."

Great job to Melissa and the crew – your hard work and commitment to serving your community are appreciated!



Melissa Bennett's Seattle Parks Crew on a tour of a steel mill recycling plant: Liam Fitzgerald, Rebecca Sheridan, Hunter Pauli, Natalie Tacconi and Becca Stombaugh

"She pushes us to better ourselves and our communities with every action we take."

Port Hadlock—Nominated by Jason Ouellette



The Port Hadlock Crew always works very hard to produce a quality product for their sponsor. Their projects this quarter have ranged from smolt trap installation and removal to intensive maintenance of large scale plating sites. The crew is extremely versatile as they act as scientists monitoring endangered salmon one day, and the next day, hang in the trenches and show the gumption to get the dirty work done and done right. As a whole they have a positive can-do attitude.

Two corps members **(continued on next page)**

The Port Hadlock Crew: Owen French, Christopher Viciano, Austin Garcia, Lynda Brazen and James House with their home-made flag and home-made cut-out of crew member Katie Moyer (travelling in India)

have been volunteering with WDFW on their own time. Other corps members have been helping at a community garden on the weekend. One of the crew members has even gone out on volunteer patrol with the Port Townsend Police department. The crew recently marched in the Rhododendron parade with their sponsor, NOSC, and pulled a giant mobile salmon sculpture behind the work truck.

A recent impressive accomplishment was when the crew was asked to haul trash out of a ravine which was acquired by the Jefferson Land Trust. In one day the crew hauled nearly 2 tons of trash up a very steep embankment. Not once was there a single complaint—in fact, the crew seemed to enjoy the challenge. If you would like to see the crew in action check out their blog at porthad-lockwcc.blogspot.com.

Olympia Spike—Nominated by Roland McGill



The Olympia Spike Crew: Jeremi Sanders, Dave Coffey, Ryan Bacon, Andrew Durham, Jake Hanson and Peter Sandas

Congratulations to Dave Coffey and his crew for their exceptional efforts these past several months. Dave missed most of the time this past quarter recovering from knee surgery (no, there is no relationship to Dave's absence and the high performance of the crew) and the crew responded with a performance worthy of recognition.

The crew worked for six different sponsors during the 3 month period and excelled at every opportunity. Jake Hanson, Dave's assistant supervisor, stepped up to lead the crew and Jeremi, Andrew, Ryan and Pete were tireless in their efforts to get the job done. Dave's crew has been showered with praise from sponsors on

every project they have engaged in this year...even the most scrutinizing. They are also a pleasure to be around and truly enjoy their work. Thank you!

“Her initiative and enthusiasm have shined since her first day on the job.”

Snohomish Marine IP—Nominated by Bridget Mason

Emily Whitney is the WCC's Individual Placement of the Quarter. Recently, her sponsor, Kathleen Hermann, Marine Resource Steward, had this to say about her incredible work: “Emily has been a great addition to the Snohomish County Marine Resources Program. Her initiative and enthusiasm have shined since her first day on the job. Emily has taken a leadership role in all her projects, and consistently goes above and beyond what is asked of her.”

In Emily's first week on the job, Emily attended a conference on Orcas Island. “Attending” the conference quickly turned into helping to “coordinate” the event as she arrived to find the facilities were ill-prepared for the coming conference attendees. Emily did this with a smile!

As another example, Emily recently filled in for Kathleen, when she was asked to give two presentations at two different locations at the same time. Emily did such a great job that several impressed people have contacted Kathleen to ask to have Emily back!



Snohomish Marine IP Emily Whitney collects mussel samples in order to monitor marine water quality

DUFFY TRAILS RETURNS



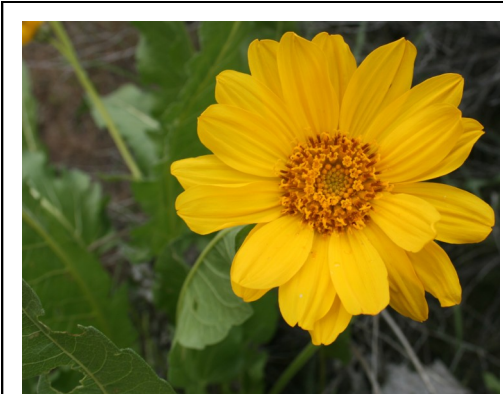
Avid readers of the WCC newsletter may have missed a popular feature called "The Leaflet" by Duffy Trails, who has been a guest columnist for a number of years. For those of you who have missed his witty antics these past several months, here is a letter we recently received from our old friend,

Duffy:

Greetings Leaflet followers. Pardon my absence from the pages of the Corps News, but I have been out rummaging around the great northwest. This time, I am exploring the desert area in and around the Palm Springs of Washington. Some of you may be confused by this and might even argue that there is no Palm Springs in Washington, but trust old Duffy, it said so on the welcome sign. If you still are not sure exactly where this is, I am referring to the great area in and around Yakima.

In preparing for these travels, I will admit that I expected the Eastside of our lovely state to offer fewer options in the wild edibles department but I figured I would have plenty of rattlers to supplant my nutritional needs, if it came to that. Fortunately, I was pleasantly surprised by the abundance of edibles and was able to leave the snakes alone – and, more importantly, they left old Duffy alone, as was my preference.

I began trekking through the Yakima area late last spring. I started by heading East on Highway 12, down along the Tieton River where the hillside was just beginning to come alive with the young arrow-shaped leaves of



Balsamorhiza sagittata, or Arrow-Leaved Balsamroot, photo courtesy of Duffy Trails

balsamroot. This plant is truly amazing; nearly every part is edible, and delicious. I quickly gathered enough leaves for a hearty stew and some taproots to use along my trip as a coffee substitute. Now, I am not, nor ever have been much of a coffee drinker, but I am a heavy drinker of coffee-substitutes derived from our local plant friends.

As I finished my first day along the Tieton River, the sun slowly disappeared, being quickly replaced by clouds of mosquitoes. I was fortunate to stumble upon some **Vanilla Leaf** that I applied to my skin to act as a natural insect repellent. You west-side dwellers might find this trick helpful too. If you are unfamiliar with this perennial, you will find it in moist, forested areas. Some folks refer to this plant as **Deer's Foot**, which is helpful in identification. Looking at the palmate of leaves, fold back the two side leaflets, leaving one leaflet that looks like a deer's foot. I personally think it looks more like a goose's foot, but it is unimportant so long as it helps you discover this helpful plant. The flowers do not have any petals or sepals – just long, vanilla-colored stamens forming a spike. After treating my skin with the fresh leaves, I held onto some for drying. I hung these dried bunches overhead as I turned in each



Linara genistifolia ssp. *Dalmatica*, or Dalmatian Toadflax, photo courtesy of Duffy Trails

evening, enjoying the wonderful vanilla fragrance as well as its repellent abilities.

If you are in a dry area that lacks vanilla leaf, another excellent insect repellent common in the shrub-steppe is **yarrow**. Toss a bundle on top

of your campfire and mosquitoes tend to stay away. Yarrow is also delicious as an herb on top of any dish you prepare in the wild. The benefits of yarrow are extensive and have been known for many years, Achilles is even rumored to have used it to treat his soldiers' wounds in battle, hence the scientific name, *Achillea millefolium*. Aside from acting as a blood-stopping poultice, yarrow can be used as a tonic, eyewash, cold medi-

cine, and the list goes on. I actually prefer to sip it as a tea. To make Yarrow tea, add 1 teaspoon of dried herb to 1 cup of boiling water. It makes a great calming tonic and a perfect ending to a long day on the trail.

As I attempt to live off the land, foraging and learning along the way, I do occasionally come across ethnobotanical claims that do not actually prove true – though I do not dismiss user error as the culprit. It is still worth trying so I'll share this next story with you in case, like myself, you come into an area thick with flies – whether the harmless buzzing kind or the more annoying biting kind. I happened to be surrounded by both types of flies one evening in the Tieton area. I was also surrounded by **yellow and dalmatian toadflax**. As you may know, toadflax came from Eurasia and is considered to be a noxious weed. In my foraging though, I do not discriminate; I try to use as many noxious weeds as I can. The optimist in me likes to find something positive, even in invasive species. I remembered reading about a milk concoction made from boiling toadflax flowers in milk and setting out in saucers to attract and kill flies. The toadflax milk I made showed little success so I resorted to crazed swatting as my method of choice for these pesky critters. Nevertheless, try this sometime and let me know if you find a different result.

My last evening spent along the Tieton, I looked up to **(continued on next page)**

see the drooping flowers of chokecherries surrounding me. It made me excited for the months to come, knowing I would still be in this area through summer and early fall when the berries would be bountiful. Now, I know people tend to stay away from this delicious edible because of the “choke” part of its name, but I have included my recipe for choke cherry fruit leather below for the brave souls out there. Rest assured, the choke cherry is simply a sour cherry, it is not poisonous, and does not actually cause a choking reaction. If you are not a fan of sour fruit, chokecherries should be left alone until they are a dark purple, nearly black.

Choke Cherry Fruit Leather

I suggest a China Cap food strainer for removing chokecherry seeds, but that is up to you if you can handle the small addition of weight in your pack. Otherwise, you may have to improvise. I have found that I can mash the cherries and pick out the seeds by hand (though this can get messy) or even make a mash *with the seeds* and separate them as I eat the leather. At home, a food mill makes for easy preparation. Regardless of how you mash the cherries, thinly spread the mash on a cookie sheet or some other flat surface and leave to dry in the sun. Midway through drying, flip the leather and continue drying – usually one full, sun-filled day. Cut into whatever size strips you prefer and enjoy!

With that, I am moving on down the trail, so happy foraging until then. I will drop a note to my old friends at the next hitching post.



Prunus virginiana, or Choke Cherry, photo courtesy of Duffy Trails

TORNADOES ACROSS MISSOURI

During the month of May, several tornadoes passed through the state of Missouri causing millions of dollars in damage and displacing many residents. Two WCC crews led by Mike Stowell (Yakima) and Rob Crawford (Skagit) responded by flying to St. Louis. Their airfare was generously donated by Southwest Airlines. The crews worked in and around St. Louis for two weeks, cleaning up debris and sawing downed and hazard trees.

While working in St. Louis, the WCC crews heard of an F5 tornado in Joplin, cutting a path that was 6 miles long and half a mile wide through the town. That evening they drove nearly 300 miles southwest to their next disaster site. In Joplin they met around 1000 volunteers who were waiting to help with no guidance or direction. The WCC crews and AmeriCorps St. Louis worked through the night and the next day to establish a distribution center, missing persons hotline and volunteer intake center.

The situation in Joplin was considered critical search and rescue status when the crews arrived, so roads were blocked and the National Guard had to be called in to manage the streets, assist frantic family members and property owners, and keep tourists at bay. According to Rob Crawford, at one point it took 30 minutes to navigate a single city block. Most communication systems in the area were down, and even cell phones were hit or miss.

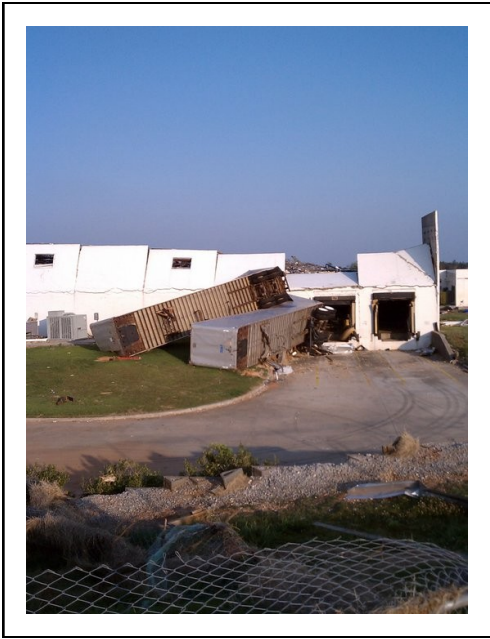
WCC members took the lead and managed between 60 and 100 volunteers at a time in a variety of tasks. This was the first disaster response in WCC history where our organization was the first on the scene—so rapid was the response, in fact, that severe storm warnings had to be taken in order to keep our members safe in the field. Thanks to all who assisted in these disaster responses!



Yakima Crew member Sarah Stover bucks up downed limbs left by the tornado

“WCC members took the lead and managed between 60 and 100 volunteers at a time.”

TORNADO RESPONSE IN ALABAMA



Two semi trailers flipped by the storm outside of the Wrangler Distribution Center in Hackleburg, Alabama, photo courtesy of Nina Rubenstein

A series of tornadoes moved through the Southeastern US from April 25 to 28, killing more than 300 people, over 200 of them in Alabama. Two WCC supervisors (Bob Milner and Kris Buitrago) and 10 corps members from various crews flew to Alabama to respond.

In the small town of Hackleburg, in Marion County, residents were particularly hard-hit. WCC members took turns rotating through tasks including debris removal, roof tarping, chain sawing downed trees, and running the volunteer coordination booth. Tisha Buelto, from Luis Yanez’s City of Tacoma Crew, was impressed by the story of resident Rob Evans, whose property she helped clean up, saying, “he had recently purchased his home and had no insurance on it. He was so positive and giving despite his situation.”

Bob Milner gave a great review of WCC members’ work, saying “The crew members have done an outstanding job to this point... We’ve discovered some hidden talents among our crew members ranging from organizational skills to chain saw skills and leadership positions.”

Despite the blistering heat and humidity, WCC members had to adapt to stay hydrated while eating a diet quite different from what they were used to.

Bob described the food as “fried, brown and a lot of it!” The WCC has left a great impression in Alabama. Great work to those involved!

“This was her first response as a part of our program, but no one could have guessed it.”

FLOODING IN ELLENSBURG

On May 14, flooding in Ellensburg, Washington reached a critical level, requiring the assistance of volunteers. Despite the fact that it was a weekend, WCC members from 4 different crews (Yakima Spike, North Yakima, Ellensburg and Ellensburg DNR) showed up to fill, deliver and place sandbags. Together with community and church volunteers, they formed a task force numbering over 350 people and placed over 30,000 sand bags in just two days. Ernie Farmer’s Ellensburg crew also delivered flood clean-up kits.

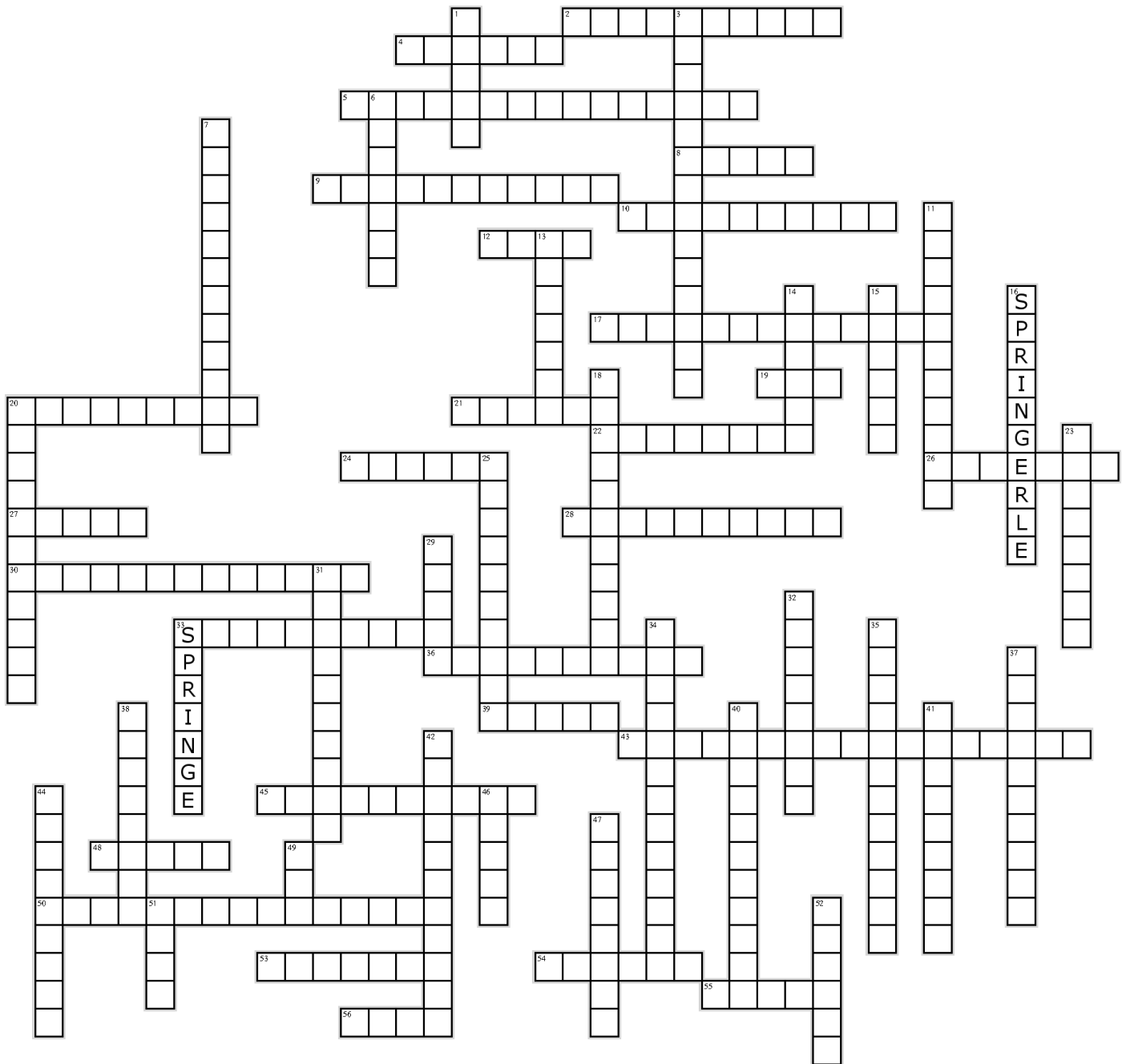
Ernie was pleased with all the cooperation, remarking “I owe a huge thank you to Kathy Marshall, supervisor of the Ellensburg DNR crew. This was her first response as part of our program but no one could have guessed it. Her knowledge of her agency’s resources was invaluable in helping the affected residents of the Ellensburg area. In addition, her crew preformed above and beyond the call of duty.” Thanks to all who gave their time to help the community of Ellensburg in response to the flooding!



Yakima Crew member Trinity Peterson receives sand bags from a fire line of volunteers and places them in the barrier

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

The crossword puzzle below has everything to do with spring in the WCC. Clues that are marked with an asterisk (*) contain the word "spring". Two words have been filled in for you. The first single WCC Crew or Individual Placement to complete this puzzle will receive WCC swag!



EclipseCrossword.com

Across

- 2. Driving force*
- 4. Band of bears
- 5. Dog breed used to flush and retrieve game (two words)*
- 8. 120 servants of South Silver Springs
- 9. Her "birthday" is April 22nd (two words)
- 10. When the Sun, Moon and Earth align, creating extreme highs and lows in water levels (two words)*
- 12. Bivy of badgers
- 17. Young person, in slang*
- 19. Antlered animal
- 20. South African rugby team or gazelle*
- 21. Location of new WCC DNR Crew
- 22. Legless 44 Down of 29 Down or 51 Down

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>24. One of Washington's largest tribes and site of two WCC Crews</p> <p>26. Baby bunny</p> <p>27. Female <u>8 Across</u></p> <p>28. Cheesecake pan*</p> <p>30. False friend (two words)</p> <p>33. Adolescent arachnid</p> <p>36. Chinese menu item (two words)*</p> <p>39. Flock of foxes</p> <p>43. Eastern Washington weed (two words)</p> <p>45. Gymnastic feat*</p> <p>48. Fair weather clouds</p> <p>50. Coming soon to WCC (three words)</p> <p>53. Location of farthest Eastern WCC Crews</p> <p>54. Dam builder</p> <p>55. Early eel</p> <p>56. Bambi, e.g.</p> | <p>18. Baby butterfly</p> <p>20. Something providing an impetus for change*</p> <p>23. Location of new WCC Trails Crew</p> <p>25. Ed Award benefactor</p> <p>29. It's "knot" easy being green in this group</p> <p>31. The rise of an arch (two words)*</p> <p>32. Mass of mice</p> <p>33. Snare for catching small game*</p> <p>34. A change in weather patterns over time</p> <p>35. View them in Vantage (two words)</p> <p>37. Stream source*</p> <p>38. Spring turned to summer</p> <p>40. Pop and Mom Opossum that went up a hill (three words)</p> <p>41. Teenage (not Mutant Ninja) Turtle</p> <p>42. American rock musician*</p> <p>44. Young of any species*</p> <p>46. Grasshopper's <u>44 Down</u></p> <p>47. Spiraea, AKA</p> <p>49. Before the bloom</p> <p>51. Middle of <u>43 Across</u>; relative of <u>29 Down</u></p> <p>52. Home of <u>26 Across</u></p> |
|---|--|

Down

1. Mama wren
3. Mariners' pre-season ritual (two words)*
6. Sea Urchin larva, AKA
7. Bovine about to give birth (two words)*
11. Home of *The Simpsons**
13. One of WCC's latest disaster responses
14. A pod is a pack of these
15. A surfeit is a set of these
16. German anise-flavored cookie*

CREW MOMENT: GETTING THE TRUCK STUCK

An all-too-often occurrence for many crews: sinking a WCC truck in soft ground. For the Yakima Crew, led by Mike Stowell, it was mud and the truck sank all the way up to the frame. According to Assistant Supervisor Horace Ward, "we ended up using our winch anchored to a sage brush to pull us out." The folly befell the crew at a Bureau of Land Management & Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife site near Creston, WA. *Photo courtesy of Horace Ward*

What other hijinks have you and your crew been up to? Let us know by posting about them on our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/washingtonconservationcorps



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ABOUT THE WCC

The Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) was established in 1983 as a service program for young adults between the ages of 18 and 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 200 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.

BUTTERFLY BUSH: A FALSE FRIEND

Article by Janna Sargent

Buddleia davidii, or Butterfly Bush, a Class B noxious weed in Washington, "colonizes disturbed areas such as riversides, roadsides, railroads, pastures, and recently logged or burned forests," according to the King County Noxious Weed Control Board.

"Invasion of butterfly bush along riversides is especially problematic, because it forms dense thickets, crowds out native vegetation, and disrupts natural succession patterns."

"Mature butterfly bush stands keep out native willows and other woody vegetation that would normally re-vegetate riverbanks after floods."

Many people plant Butterfly Bush as a way to attract the colorful insects that are its namesake. This is harmful because it can easily spread and out-compete valuable native plants, destroying the insects' habitat and food

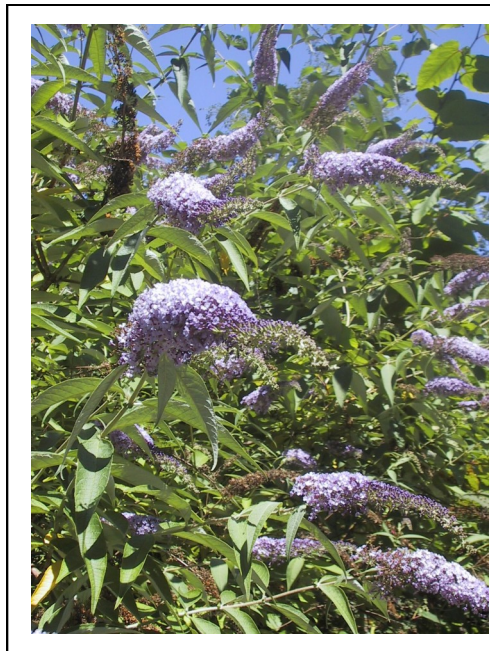


Photo of *Buddleia davidii* courtesy of King County Noxious Weed Control Program

sources.

All it takes to attract butterflies are vivid colors (especially yellow, purple, orange and white) or rich scents such as those made by Rosemary, Lavender, Honeysuckle, and Lemonbalm.

For hosting butterfly larvae, try planting native willows such as Pacific (*Salix lucida*) or Scouler's (*Salix scouleriana*)— they are a great food and habitat source for growing caterpillars.

Other ways to protect butterfly populations include reducing threats such as air pollution, pesticides, and pollen from genetically modified crops (according to a 1999 study published in *Nature*). Because butterflies breathe through holes in their exoskeleton (called spiracles), they are particularly susceptible to airborne hazards.

BETTER FOR BUTTERFLIES: NATIVE ALTERNATIVES

Pictured below are three native butterfly attractors: *Spiraea douglasii*, also known as Spirea or Hardhack, *Phlox diffusa*, or Spreading Phlox, and *Holodiscus discolor*, or Oceanspray.

