



CORPS

NEWS

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Conservation Corps

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Team Stihlhead, L to R:
Russell Buce, Satchel
Steele, Arturo Zazueta,
Amelia Bethke, Allyson
Miller, Brady Lester
Photo courtesy of
Stephanie Jackson

WCC Earth Day Relay

In April, Rob Crawford and Kristian Tollefson hosted the First Annual Earth Day relay on Lake Padden. If you missed it, here is your recap on an exciting day when 6-member teams competed in a 32-mile race featuring 2 miles of kayaking, 2.6 miles of running, 12 miles of road biking, 3.4 miles of mountain biking, and 2 miles of canoeing. The teams included Anthropocene from Tollefson's crew, Bellevue Professionals from Yanez's crew, PCD Pirates from McMillen's Crew, The Mighty Ducts from Dobey and Westra's crew, Stihlheads from a combination of Shirk and Manza's crew, and team Type-O, consisting of Headquarters Staff.

Despite the atrocious weather at the start of the race, WCC competitors were optimistic as kayaking commenced around Lake Padden. It was a great race but only one could be victorious. As the kayakers finished their lap and ran up the beach toward the runners, Anthropocene had the lead. Team Bellevue Professionals followed in second and PCD Pirates in third. When it was time for the runners to pass off to the road bikers, Anthropocene held a narrow lead over Stihlheads and the Bellevue Professionals fell to third.

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Volunteers Blaze A Path on the Oyster Dome Trail

By: Kristian Tollefson, WCC Supervisor 2012-2013 Skagit County



Above :Volunteers work to clear trail. Photos courtesy of Kristian Tollefson

On Saturday, April 20 2013, our WCC crew, one of three in the Northwest region, held a volunteer work party on the Oyster Dome trail on Mt. Blanchard. Every year, the WCC charges its members with the responsibility of organizing and implementing a service project. The volunteer event held on April 20 was a continuation of a larger trail building project to establish a sanctioned trail from Chuckanut Drive to the famous Oyster Dome Overlook. This was the second year that our crew held this event. By all standards, the day was a total success!

The work party was to begin at 10:00 am, meeting at the Samish Overlook parking lot. However, volunteers from the Pacific Northwest Trail Association and the Skagit-Whatcom-Island Trail Maintenance Organization showed their enthusiasm by arriving at nine o'clock instead. We gathered to hold a thorough safety meeting before the two groups descended on to the trail with the full accoutrement of trail maintenance tools. They were the first 30 of 62 volunteers to show up that day. They took to the trail with an unprecedented force, brushing and grading their way toward the trailhead near the Oyster Bar on Chuckanut Drive.

Subsequent groups of volunteers trickled in, each given a safety talk, and assigned hand tools. With a WCC member assigned to each group, we were sure to meet our trail specifications. Our goal was to widen the existing trail back to Department of Natural Resources trail standards and to brush away any hazardous limbs and shrubbery. We stopped short of constructing any new trail, leaving planned reroute projects for a later date. By noon, the last of

the volunteers were on their way down the trail and the work party was finally in full swing. A magical cacophony of clinks and whacks rang unharmonious on the western slopes of Mt. Blanchard. For several more hours the old trail grade was transformed into a sturdy new path with an appropriate width and precise out-slope.

At two thirty or so, volunteers began to make the slow climb back up the hill towards the Samish Overlook; and to their surprise, our seasoned Camp Cook was waiting for them, with a grill full of hamburgers and hot-dogs. On a separate grill, vegan dogs and tofu burgers were also sizzling away. In total, we consumed 110 bun meals and to my knowledge, no soul left the Overlook hungry. Treating our new trail allies to lunch was a small price to pay for their hard work, especially when we consider that they maintained over a mile's worth of trail. More importantly, each of the 62 volunteers gained a sense of awareness and appreciation for the effort

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On right: members of the Skagit County crew stop to smile for the camera



By Jasmine Davis, IP WCC Headquarters

Before environmental regulation, companies released black clouds of toxins into the air while dumping hazardous waste into our waterways. Industrial pollution went unnoticed and without serious consequences or effective legal reprimand.

At the beginning of the Vietnam era, anti-war protests made headlines while the health of the environment was falling to the wayside. Air pollution in Los Angeles, New York, and other urban areas were at dangerously high levels for human health and safety. The political agenda had other priorities, and protecting the world's natural resources was not one of them.

Slowly through the 1960's, environmental awareness began to gain momentum. Many credit Rachel Carson, author and biologist of *Silent Spring*, for highlighting the environmental effects of DDT. Released in 1962, it was a bestseller, raising awareness and discussion around environmental concerns.

Citizens were being educated on the effects that humans were having on our natural resources. People began to realize that air and water pollution influenced daily life from public health to conservation. From 1963 to 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law nearly three hundred conservation and beautification measures. In 1970, it became evident that a social movement was in progress.

After witnessing the Cleveland chemical fire on Cuyahoga River and the Santa Barbara oil spill in 1969, something needed to change. Well-known environmental legislative advocate, Senator Gaylord Nelson saw an opportunity. In the fall of 1969, at a convention in Seattle, WA, Senator Nelson announced his idea for Earth Day. Attempting to channel the energy from the anti-war protests, Nelson wanted to launch a grass roots movement.

He hoped to force the government to put the environment on the political agenda. His idea for Earth Day was a "national teach-in on the environment". In January 1970, Nel-

Earth Day 2013

What are you doing to protect the planet?



son placed an ad in the New York Times stating that the coast-to-coast demonstration would take place April 22.

Over 20 million Americans participated in rallies across the nations for Earth Day. The grassroots efforts were effective and, in December of 1970, resulted in the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This was followed by numerous environmental legislation measures passed throughout the decade, including the Clean Air Act, Water Quality Improvement Act, Endangered Species Act, Toxic Substances Control Act, and Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.

Since 1970, Earth Day celebrations have stretched across the globe, bringing people from all lifestyles together. There are ranges of earth day events from an international scale to the local communities in Washington. We all make a difference on a daily basis but Earth Day gives us a chance to recognize and celebrate each achievement.

Tell Us About it:



Do you have a story from your Earth Day event?

Leave a Comment or post pictures on our facebook page:

www.facebook.com/washingtonconservationcorps

Earth Day Events in the WCC

Upper right: Group photo of volunteers, employees and WCC members at Edgewater Park

All across the state, communities participated in Earth Day Celebrations, including our very own crews and IPs. Due to the high number of events, we are highlighting just a few of the activities that our Ameri-Corps members participated in this April .

The DNR In-Stream Restoration Crew from Skagit County and Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFEG) IP, Tristian Weiss, spent a day at Edgewater Park in Mt. Vernon for an Earth Day Celebration, hosted by SFEG. In attendance was U.S. Rep Suzan Delbene, who helped welcome the volunteers. The crew planted native plants, picked up litter, and completed community outreach. In total, volunteers planted about 1,000 trees at the park.



The Crew continued their Earth Day efforts, doing similar work at Cornet Bay in Deception Pass State Park.

Middle: DNR Aquatic IP, Geoffrey Mayhew teaches local children at Salt Water State Park



The Individual Placements from DNR's Aquatic Reserves celebrated Earth Day through education and outreach at an Ameri-Corps Event. The IPs provided introductory lessons on marine ecology of the Puget Sound to children ages 5 to 14 years old. They set up four interactive stations focusing on invertebrate ID, eelgrass habitat, creosote logs, and a drawing area where children could walk along the beach and explore. By the end of the day, they had met and talked to over 400 students, all excited and educated about the marine environment on our local Puget Sound beaches.

The Urban Forestry DNR crew in King County collaborated with the City of Renton for Arbor Day as an Earth Day Celebration. Over 150 volunteers participated in planting native trees and shrubs along the newly constructed May Creek Trail as part of this event. Previously, the WCC crew spent a month at May Creek removing invasive species, in preparation for this event. The Urban Forestry crew was able to set up a booth for education and outreach purposes. In total, volunteers planted over 1,000 trees and shrubs and, after a hard day of restoration, city employees served the volunteer's lunch.

Lower Right: Urban Forestry Crew member, Michaela Lovelady, plants native shrubs with volunteers in Renton, WA



Earth Day Events Cont.



Upper Left: Wenatchee, Ellensburg and Yakima crew join for Earth Day

The crews and IP in Central Washington had the privilege of joining with Mid Columbia fisheries, Mountains to Sound Greenway, NOAA Fisheries, and the

Below: Snohomish County member, Malorie Macklin, teaches kids about watershed pollution

Yakama Nation for Salmon Education Days at the Holmes Property. This educational event catered to teaching Ellensburg elementary students about the importance of salmon in the Pacific Northwest ecosystems.

In total, 350 students participated in five different stations: a Salmon life cycle game, macro invertebrates identification, a nature walk, Erosion Explosion, and water quality, with a salmon release. Each station demonstrated how human impact is the largest threat to not only salmon, but to all organisms within the salmon ecosystem. During the salmon release, each student was able to release one to four smelts into the stream at the Holmes Property.

Erin Martin, IP with Snohomish County Surface Water Management, spent her time coordinating volunteers in preparation for Allen Quilceda Watershed Action Team Earth Day event at the Qwulooft Restoration Project. Over 70 participants planted trees and spread mulch, and as many as 150 participating in other activities; Martin was very thrilled with the success of the event. With the help of the Snohomish County Crew, booths were set up and displayed for children to learn about their local watershed in fun and interactive ways.



In Whatcom County, the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) led a habitat restoration project along landing strip creek. NSEA has been at this particular site for 3 years. Volunteer work parties have planted over 40,000 trees and shrubs with over 500 volunteers participating. This earth day, with crews from sponsors NSEA, and the City of Bellevue, 250 volunteers came to plant, place tubes, cages, and spread mulch. Together they were able to plant 1,000 trees including the one-millionth tree planted in Whatcom County along their streams.

Lower Left : Whatcom County member, William Russell Buce III, helps local volunteers plant trees

Lower Right: NSEA member, Amelia Bethke, carries empty pots



WCC Olympics

The 9th Annual WCC Olympics will be held at the June elective training. The WCC Olympics will be held at training so that all members will have the opportunity to participate as individuals and as part of a team at to compete for bragging rights.

Individual Events:

Hard Hat Frisbee Golf – Using a hard hat, you will compete for the lowest “strokes” along a 9 – 18 hole Frisbee Golf Course.

Boot Toss – In a single elimination bracket format ,you will compete by tossing knee high boots in order to get closest to a shovel or post in the ground.

Chainsaw Challenge – A timed event in which you will be blindfolded and challenged to take the chain sprocket apart and put it back together (without the bar and chain).

Team Events:

Rain Gear Relay – Your team will be divided, approximately 25 feet apart. One person begins by putting on the rain gear, (jacket, pants, and gloves) and running to your other team mates’ line. Then, the rain gear will be transferred to the next teammate. This will continue until all teammates have raced in the raingear.

Tug of War— This event was the highlight of last year. Eastern Washington members dominated the podium. The Westside crews will be looking for redemption this year.

CorpMember vs. Staff and Supervisor Tug of War – Simply the biggest bragging rights!

Spirit Award:

Best Team Cheer – During opening ceremonies, each team will be announced. This is your chance to scream, yell, cheer, dance, whatever. You will be judged by a panel on loudness, creativity, and enthusiasm.

Best Team Banner – Your team will need to create some sort of banner to display at opening ceremonies and throughout the competition. This can be anything—a composite of stuff you found at project sites, butcher paper, a quilt, just a few examples. Fly your freak flag!

Deadline to sign up is May 30th, contact WCC Supervisor Kris Buitrago at kbui461@ecy.wa.gov

WCC Earth Day Relay Cont.

By the time the road bikers completed their lap around Lake Padden, Stihlheads had the lead. Bellevue Professionals followed in second and The Mighty Ducts in third.

After completing the mountain bike leg, Stihleads held the lead, Bellevue Professionals in second, and Anthropocene in third. As the canoers crossed the finish line, Stihlheads came in First place, Anthropocene in Second and, unexpectedly, Type-O came from behind and finished third.

Oyster Dome Trail Cont.

that is required to maintain our trails. It would be nearly impossible to have such wonderful trail systems without volunteers like those who worked with us on the 20th.

Our Crew would like to thank all who attended, and special thanks to Rick Foster and Christ Thomsen at the DNR for their logistical support and help in planning the event. We would also like to acknowledge Duane and Joan Melcher for their continued effort in organizing volunteers and putting them to work on all the trails in the Skagit-Whatcom-Island area. I can only hope that the young folks that we employ at the Washington Conservation Corps will age with as much commitment and dedication to stewardship as Duane, Joan, and all the members of SWITMO and the PNTA have proven with their hard work! Thank you again to all that joined us! We look forward to seeing you at next year’s event!

By: Bridget Mason, WCC Coordinator



Photo by: Bridget Mason

For the past decade, my co-worker, Roland McGill, Crew Coordinator, has reminded me to “get out there on a *Crupina* spike”. I always agreed with him, but knew that 8 days away from cubicle land would be hard for me to pull off. This year, the Individual Placements (IPs) in our program asked me about this thing called “*Crupina*” at an IP meeting that I hosted back in December. Some had heard about the infamous *Crupina* spike from past members and a few had served on a crew the previous year but never had the chance to go. Their enthusiasm and desire to go prompted me to make room in my schedule for trekking to Lake Chelan.

The first IP all-star team joined in the *Crupina* battle for the final tour at Lake Chelan of the 2013 season. The two crews we worked alongside included Dave Coffey’s Tumwater-based spike crew and a crew of assorted members from King and Pierce Counties led by Kris Buitrago. We got to know each other the first day as we participated in an 18-person fire line - cutting, bucking and shuttling 8-days worth of firewood from the nearby woods to our camp in just over an hour.

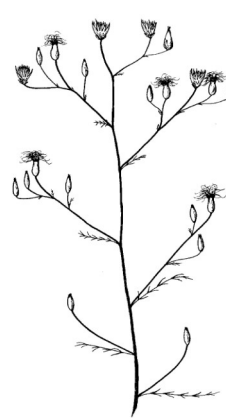
From there, our task was to divide and conquer – or at least control – the Class A* noxious weed, *Crupina Vulgaris*. Lake Chelan is currently the only place in Washington that *Crupina* is located and, with vigilance, the US Forest Service hopes to keep it this way. Ten of us became “sprayers” and the remainder acted as “pickers”. It is not glamorous work, yet all the members present had jumped at the chance to spray or pick this herbaceous weed for 8 days straight.



Common crupina blooming
© www.stammer.nl

Anyone who has gone on this spike will tell you that there is more to a *Crupina* spike than the work. It is the camping, the laughing, and the campfire stories. It is the close encounters with ticks, rattlesnakes, and falling snags. It is commiserating over blisters, bug bites, boots, blustery weather, and big hills. New to this year is the added bonus of WCC members acting as our personal chefs for the duration. The chef team for our tour consisted of Andrew (Ellensburg), Josh (Ellensburg), and Ali (Maury Island).

Our meals were spectacular – pizza, fried chicken, crab cakes, portabella mushrooms, steak, build your own omelet bar, chili and corn bread, just to name a few. All on a spike budget and prepared by campfire or propane grill. We appreciated the freedom to relax after a 10-hour day spent hiking the steep hillsides along Lake Chelan as our chefs constructed a giant, nutritional meal for 20 plus people.



<http://mtwow.org/Crupina-line-drawing.html>

motivate us throughout the day. From there, the pickers and the sprayers either hiked or caught a boat up-lake to our *Crupina* patch for the day.

Crupina is just one of the many spike opportunities in the WCC program. If you plan to go on a spike, please be prepared – ask your supervi-

Each morning, we awoke to a hot breakfast and pre-packed lunch sacks with two sandwiches plus plenty of snacks to

*Class A noxious weeds are those noxious weeds not native to the state that are of limited distribution or are unrecorded in the state and that pose a serious threat to the state.

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Crupina Continued

sor or the coordinator in charge for a list of things to bring. Do not forget a positive attitude and a hunger for adventure.



WCC Members prepare to spray herbicide with Tyvek® suits. L to R: Avery Lohoff, Ian Pierce, Anna Lund (IP), Ryan Waldow, and David Pierre

Crupina: Special notes and things to bring

Compiled by Roland McGill

- Sunscreen and bug repellent
- Water bottles (there is a large filtration system at camp)
- Personal toiletries that include toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, and wipes (there are solar showers available)
- Proper footwear (very steep country with rocky terrain)
- Personal tent, pillow, and sleeping bag thick enough to ward off cold. Temps may fall into the 20s (a snoopy bag from 4th grade will not suffice)
- Rain gear, Gloves, hard hat, safety goggles and/or sunglasses
- Layers—long sleeve shirt, beanie/wool cap, and extra socks
- Earplugs for the 6th day when you have already heard Coffey's stories...twice
- Headlamp/flashlight
- First aid kit, especially for blisters, and any medicine needed
- Change of shoes for around the campfire so you don't have to wear your stinky, blister inducing boots
- Daypack
- Books and games for after hours

Other Notes:

- Phones do not work until you get back to Chelan - there will be a satellite phone for emergencies only
- Watch where you step and check yourself for ticks daily
- Bring extra snacks and breakfast/lunch for the first day
- The first day begins at 4:30 a.m. or earlier (depending on your meet-up location). The last day will end late in the evening (you may not leave the Lake until 6 p.m.)
- Pack neatly for ease of loading/offloading from the boat, but bring enough to be comfortable

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We reached 800 likes and we're going for 1,000. Tell your friends and family to visit our page and thumbs up!!



Above: Western rattlesnake common to Eastern WA

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/snakes.html>

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