

# Washington Conservation Corps

## CORPS NEWS

Volume 10, Issue 1

November 2013



Autumn Vine Maple leaves outside WCC Headquarters. Photo courtesy of Janna Ryan.

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## WELCOME TO A NEW SERVICE YEAR!

### By Janna Ryan, Outreach & Development Coordinator

This October, 275 AmeriCorps members pledged to take up the cause carried forth by 30 years of WCC Alums: to preserve and restore Washington's greatest assets. In over 16 counties, these members are going to war on weeds, tackling trails, decimating debris on beaches, valuing volunteers and schooling students.

If you are one of them, here is my advice to you as a former member: take every opportunity you can to learn, grow, and try new things. Make new friends at training. Bond with your co-workers. Laugh when it rains. Watch the seasons unfold and find something beautiful to admire every

day. Before you know it, this term will be over—so make it a good one! Are you a returning member or WCC Alum?

Post your advice to this year's crews and IPs on our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/washingtonconservationcorps](http://www.facebook.com/washingtonconservationcorps)

SEND US MATERIAL  
TO BE PUBLISHED IN  
THE NEXT  
NEWSLETTER!

Please send your stories, photos, and updates for publishing to Kate Nagel at [kate.nagel@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:kate.nagel@ecy.wa.gov).

## 2012-2013 WRAP-UP

### Success at Middle Fork Trail

By Jesse Rogers, WCC Supervisor-Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust

We completed our final project of the 2012-2013 Ameri-Corps service year on the Middle Fork Trail off the Snoqualmie River. Our mission was to first deconstruct an old puncheon/boardwalk that was sinking, rotting, and otherwise, in total disrepair. Then, we were to construct a new turnpike in its place. Because this area is rather wet, trees are more likely to fall, breaking the boards on the puncheon. There is also much more maintenance required with a puncheon.

Although the numbers (in terms of miles of trail completed) are small, the effort was huge! Our sponsor called the completion of this project his "pie in the sky dream". We did not realize at the time that completion of this project was considered a long shot. Everybody buckled down to get the work done.

The trail work included:

- Deconstructing the puncheon
- Moving and consolidating old wood decking

- Brushing back the overgrown trail corridor
- Re-routing the trail
- Reusing the stringers from the boardwalk for constructing the turnpike
- Collecting rocks (basketball size and smaller) to fill in the bottom layer of the turnpike
- Collecting dirt to cover the rocks
- Surfacing the turnpike,
- Digging drainage to facilitate the large amount of water that falls on this area

Lastly, we "re-vegged" the work site; planting ferns and other native plants. Once that was complete, we needed to make it look like we were never there - gathering leaves, sticks, and other natural materials to cover the exposed dirt.

The 200 feet of new turnpike is beautiful. It will provide a better experience for hikers and less maintenance for the trail crew. This was a sweet way to end our service year.

### Food Bank Garden ends the year with stunning totals!

By Kate Nagel, WCC Outreach Assistant and Garden Coordinator IP

Thanks to the hard work of my predecessor, Mari Novak, and a group of dedicated volunteers, the Department of Ecology's Food Bank Garden brought in the largest yield in its three-year existence. Volunteers harvested almost 1,400 pounds of food during the final harvest event held on Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>. Included in the totals were 1,012 pounds of potatoes, 372 pounds of squash and 8 pounds of beets.



Lettuce ready to be delivered. Photo courtesy of Ecology Food Bank Garden.



Potatoes from the October harvest. Photo courtesy of Kate Nagel.

This season, the garden provided over 2,000 pounds of produce for donation to the Thurston County Food Bank. The crop included lettuce, tomatoes, beets, basil, garlic, leeks, carrots, parsley, squash, potatoes, cosmos, marigolds, and sunflowers.

Heather Sundean, produce manager at the food bank explained, "The produce donated from Ecology's garden is always gorgeous – it is obvious when you see it that a great deal of care went into growing it, packing it, and delivering it to the Food Bank's doors."

Congratulations to Mari and the volunteers on a great year of gardening! I hope to be a part of an equally impressive yield this year.

## WCC AWARDED FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE

By Bridget Mason, WCC Coordinator

The WCC recently received two awards for outstanding leadership and innovation.

The WCC accepted the first award at the AmeriCorps launch event in October. Returning members and staff joined Nick Mott, WCC Program Director, to receive this award from America's Service Commissions. This award recognizes the WCC's outstanding leadership, both in times of disasters and in our day-to-day environmental service activities.

Later that same month, Valerie Green, General Counsel with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), and Debbie Schuffenhauer, Executive Director of the Washington Commission for National & Community Service (WCNCS), presented the WCC with the 2013 CNCS Service Impact Award. This award recognizes the WCC for

leadership in disaster services. It acknowledges the critical role our AmeriCorps members and Crew Supervisors have played in a long list of national response efforts since 2004. This list includes multiple 30-day deployments to major disasters, including Hurricane Katrina, the Joplin tornado, and Hurricane Sandy.

Through our CNCS/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Response Cooperative Agreement, the WCC is able to rapidly deploy anywhere in the US. Nick Mott says he is incredibly proud of the WCC, adding, "The strength of our Program is illustrated by all of our crews—both those on disaster deployments and the ones who remain back at home. When we send a crew across country, we know there is an equally great crew at home—filling in, wherever needed, to get things done."

*"These AmeriCorps...are champions. I'm in awe of their hard work and dedication. What an example of youthful enthusiasm. My faith in young Americans is restored. Powerful display of teamwork and selflessness."*

*-Donald Caetano, FEMA  
Region II External Affairs  
Director*



WCC members and staff who served on Hurricane Sandy Response last service year accept the ASC Outstanding Service Program Award at the AmeriCorps launch in Seattle on Oct. 18th. Photo courtesy of Denise Berns (WCNCS).

## MEET THE STAFF



Back row: Janna Ryan, Jeanne Koenings, Kevin Farrell, Bridget Mason, Jason Ouellette, Roland McGill, Gen McMoore, Ted Dewees. Front row: Toyah Ross, Stephanie Jackson, Marcee Peterson, Kate Nagel, Shawn Zaniewski.

Stephanie Jackson, Crew Coordinator, is the lead on our military veteran initiative. She has over fourteen years of environmental regulatory experience within the U.S. Army, U.S. Department of Defense, and at Ecology. She graduated from The Evergreen State College with a degree in Environmental Studies and joined our staff in June 2012.

Roland McGill, Crew Coordinator, manages disaster response operations. Roland graduated from The Evergreen State College and has worked in the natural resource field for 30 years. He has been a forester for the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), a wildland firefighter for the U.S. Forest Service, a crew supervisor for the WCC, and in his current position, as a crew coordinator, for 13 years. Along with his longstanding commitment to the WCC, Roland served in the U.S. Army for 3 years.

Jason Ouellette, Crew Coordinator, has worked in the WCC for 17 years. He began his public service as an AmeriCorps member, and then became a crew supervisor. After several years in this role, Jason joined our headquarters team, coordinating logistics, and then managing our training program. He became a Crew Coordinator in 2011.

*“The structure of the WCC is something very special and I know that our recovery efforts would not be the same if it weren’t for them all being here.”*

*-Courtney Chibbaro,  
Volunteer Coordinator,  
South Seaside Park*

### WCC Program Director

WCC Program Director, Nick Mott, has been working in the corps arena since 1975, joining our headquarters team in 1991. Nick has led several initiatives to improve the services we provide to our members and communities. He has developed community college partnerships, established fee-for-service criteria to enable program expansion, expanded service opportunities for military veterans and designed and implemented new initiatives on disaster response.



### Crew Coordination

Kevin Farrell, Crew Coordinator, graduated from The Evergreen State College with an emphasis in Natural Resource Management. He has over sixteen years of natural resource experience, nine with the WCC, where he has held positions as a crew supervisor and project coordinator.

### Development, Outreach, and Budget

Bridget Mason, Program Coordinator, manages our budget, administers grants and agreements, coordinates our IP program, and teaches courses within our training program. She served as a WCC member for 2 years while completing her undergraduate degree at the University of Washington Tacoma (UWT). Bridget acted as our Outreach and IP coordinator from 2003-2008, added training responsibilities in 2009, and accepted her current position in 2011.

Janna Ryan, Outreach and Development Coordinator, completed her BA in French Literature and Language at Whitworth University in 2006. She went on to start an environmental education program at the Southwest Boys and Girls Club in Seattle and then served as a Peace Corps Volunteer from 2008-2009 in Mauritania, West Africa, as an environmental educator. Janna became an AmeriCorps member with the WCC in 2009, completing two terms. She joined our staff in 2011.

Jeanne Koenings, Funding Coordinator, has worked for Ecology for eight years on a variety of projects. These include securing federal grants to buy sensitive wetlands and waterfront lands, using MTCA (toxics) monies to fund DNR's removal of creosoted pilings and beach debris (sometimes using WCC crews), working to acquire the shoreline around Port Gamble Bay, purchasing sensitive properties on Vashon and Maury Island, and seeking long-term funding for WCC.

Kate Nagel, Outreach Assistant and Garden Coordinator IP, graduated from Western Washington University with a Kinesiology degree in 2012. After working as a Personal Trainer and Activities Director, Kate decided to explore her love for the environment by working as an intern at Thurston County Solid Waste. After enjoying waste prevention outreach, she knew the WCC would be a great next step in her career. Kate is very excited to be working with the rest of the WCC team.

### Tools and Logistics

Ted Dewees, Tools and Logistics Coordinator, maintains our tools and equipment

and teaches rigging and backcountry courses in our training program. Ted served two years as a member in the WCC, left to continue his education, and then returned to lead WCC crews for 5 years on environmental projects and disaster response. He spent 2 months in Mississippi and Louisiana, responding to Hurricane Katrina, and one month in Missouri after severe ice storms. In 2008, Ted accepted a crew leader position with Mount Rainier National Park where he worked as part of the helitack crew and on search and rescue. Ted returned to the WCC in 2010.

Shawn Zaniewski, Tools & Logistics Coordinator, began his time with the WCC in the spring of 1997 as a corps member and was an Assistant Supervisor the following year. He became a Crew Supervisor in 1999 and led a spike crew for the next thirteen years. He received his Bachelor's of Science degree from The Evergreen State College in 2010. In July of 2012, Shawn became an After Hours Spill Responder (AHSR) with Ecology's Spills Program. Shawn joined our headquarters staff in January 2013 and continues acting as an AHSR.

### Administrative Support

Marcee Peterson, Gen McMoore, and Toyah Ross are our administrative team who provide a support structure for our members, supervisors, and administrative staff.

Marcee is our office manager and came to us from the Water Quality Program at Ecology. She has been with the WCC for 5 years.

Gen joined our team in 2011, coming from the American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency. She holds a Bachelors degree in Business Administration with a concentration in E-Commerce Information Systems.

Toyah joined us in September 2012 after graduating from South Puget Sound Community College.

*“Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”*

*-Margaret Mead*

## MUCK TRUCKS ARRIVE!

Kevin Farrell, Crew Coordinator, recently secured a generous \$10K grant from the Polaris Trails program to purchase four new Muck Trucks. Muck Trucks are a type of motorized wheelbarrow. They are fitted with a throttle lever to control speed and a parking brake for making rapid stops. Their carrying capacity is also triple that of a regular, non-motorized wheelbarrow.

These muck trucks were just delivered here to WCC Headquarters and will be making their way out to ORV trail crews in Walker Valley, Elbe Hills, Reiter Foothills, and Capitol State Forest in the coming weeks. By using mechanized wheelbarrows, construction and maintenance timeframes will be greatly reduced through crew efficiencies. The result will be shorter trail closures and more riding time for the ORV recreationist.

We are sure they will soon be named by our members, as most of our equipment is. Email us the clever names you come up with: [wcc.update@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:wcc.update@ecy.wa.gov).



## PLANT OF THE MONTH YARROW— *ACHILLEA MILLEFOLIUM*

By Kate Nagel, WCC Outreach Assistant and Garden Coordinator IP

Yarrow belongs to the Sunflower family (Asteraceae), and blooms April-October in the Pacific Northwest, but its wispy feather-shaped leaves are easily recognizable, year-round. It is not a fussy flower – flourishing in both dry and wet climates. You can find this delicate-looking flower in open locations such as meadows, slopes, and clearings. It might look delicate, but it is hearty. Due to this heartiness, Yarrow is great for erosion prevention in damaged areas. Yarrow quickly spreads through self-seeding and is an aromatic perennial; its distinctive, sweet smell attracts pollinators.

Used for thousands of years for native medicinal purposes, the Swinomish, Quinault, Skagit, Snohomish and others used this plant in a variety of ways. Although there has been little scientific research done on the medicinal benefits of Yarrow, the plant has been known to have anti-inflammatory properties as well as aiding in wound care and illnesses such as fever and colds. The leaves and flowers of Yarrow are good on salads and make tasty teas. In a pinch, you can substitute crushed yarrow leaves for commercial bug repellents.

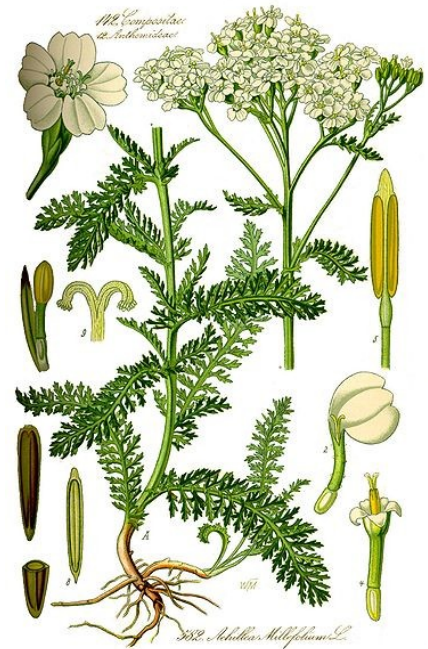


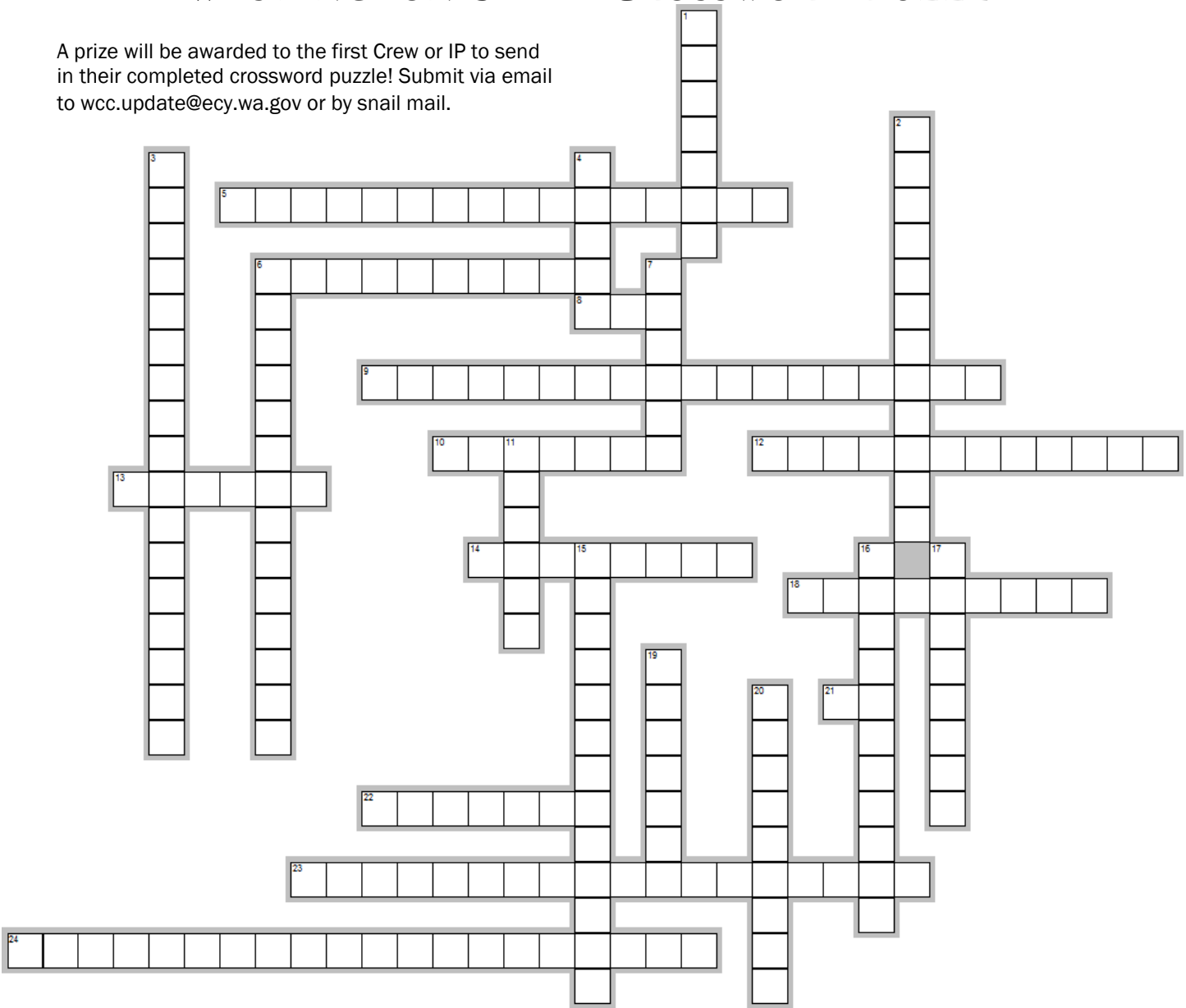
Photo courtesy of wikipedia.org

*“The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The next best time is today.”*

*-Chinese Proverb*

# WASHINGTON STATE CROSSWORD PUZZLE

A prize will be awarded to the first Crew or IP to send in their completed crossword puzzle! Submit via email to [wcc.update@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:wcc.update@ecy.wa.gov) or by snail mail.



## Across

## Down

5. State bird of Washington
6. Threatened grassland dweller, Golden \_\_\_\_\_
8. Number of US states named after a former president
9. Number of state parks
10. Largest Washington city
12. What dance represents Washington?
13. Native American name for Mt. St Helens
14. Washington has more \_\_\_\_\_ than the other 47 contiguous states combined.
18. State insect
21. Abbr.
22. Capitol
23. Western Hemlock
24. Washington's state grass

1. In 1974, the smallest city to host a World's Fair
2. Famous native guitarist
3. Washington's flower
4. Border opposite the ocean
6. State gem
7. Who is on the flag?
11. Famous Washington crop
15. Northwestern most point
16. Location of state vegetable
17. River that makes up most of Washington's southern border
19. High point
20. The Washington state fish



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*WCC crews remove invasive species at Maury Island, January 2013*

## 2012-2013 YEAR IN REVIEW

By Bridget Mason, WCC Coordinator

This past service year (October 2012-September 2013) was the largest in WCC history. We surpassed all of our programmatic goals in terms of the number of members enrolled, partner organizations served, and activities accomplished in the arenas of environmental and disaster services. We began the year with 51 crews in October and, by June; expanded to 65 crews. In addition, we had 25 AmeriCorps Individual Placements serving at 13 different nonprofit and governmental organizations. Our 350 AmeriCorps members accomplished a vast amount of service, below are just some of the highlights:

- Planted **1.6 Million** Native trees and shrubs
- Improved **1,607 Acres** for wildlife
- Installed **28.2 Miles** of livestock-exclusionary fencing
- Managed **14,752** Volunteers who served a total of **67,242 hours**
- Constructed or repairing **440 Miles** of trails or boardwalks
- Certified **271 AmeriCorps members** in weeklong disaster response courses
- Provided **3,732 Hours** to Washington State wildfire response efforts
- Provided **43,704 Hours** to Hurricane Sandy response efforts
- Provided **3,123 Hours** to Yukon River Flood response efforts
- Opened **322 Miles** of stream habitat
- Taught **14,442 Students** environmental education topics

This year saw the further expansion of the Puget SoundCorps, a partnership among our parent agency, Ecology, and the Washington State Departments of Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife, State Parks and Recreation Commission, and Veterans Affairs. Now in its second year, this partnership dedicated an additional \$4.4 Million dollars in state funding to provide “boots on the ground” to restore and protect water quality in Puget Sound.

## 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 278 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](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/wcc).