

## Floating Wetlands Improve Water Quality Along Little Bear Creek

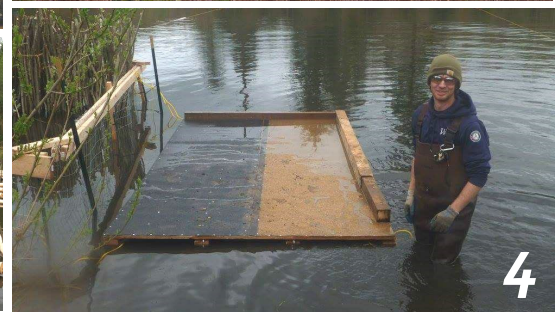
By Camille Smith, King County DNRP Crew AmeriCorps Member

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On March 22, 2016, one of the King County DNRP crews, led by Ashley Gould, began a floating wetlands project at the Brightwater Treatment Plant near Woodinville. The willow stakes used in construction naturally provide shade for improved water quality in Little Bear Creek.

We began the project by constructing the rafts for the wetlands. The floating wetlands were made up of three logs connected in the shape of a triangle, each with three willow stakes drilled through bored-hole openings. We launched the rafts into the water using a repurposed boat trailer, towed them by rowboat and chain-linked the triangle-shaped rafts into position. We divided the triangular rafts into groups of six and tessellated the resulting groups of rafts across the lake to float within cable lanes. The willows in the rafts will grow hydroponically, creating shade for riparian habitat in the creek. We worked closely with our project manager, Matt MacDonald, which was a first for us as a crew. It was exciting to be directly part of both the problem-solving and decision-making processes while helping with such a complex project.



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Please send your stories (800 words or less), photos, and updates for publishing to Sadie at [Sadie.Normoyle@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:Sadie.Normoyle@ecy.wa.gov)

Photos submitted by Camille Smith.  
1. WCC AmeriCorps members help build the wetland rafts.  
2. Crew members from King County DNRP after completing the project.  
3. The completed floating wetlands project.  
4. Alex Wilson installs the wetlands.  
5. Two crew members helping construct the wetlands.



# WCC Photo Contest No. 2: Native Plant Appreciation

It's time for another WCC Photo Contest! In honor of Native Plant Appreciation Week, April 23 to May 1, we put out the call for photos with your very favorite native plant, tree, or shrub. Do you always choose *Thuja plicata* when planting trees, or volunteer to put some bareroot *Rubus spectabilis* in the ground? Based on the creativity of our sandwich board photo contest entries, we can't wait to see what's in store this time!

We will display and vote for the winning photo entry at June Elective Training, June 6-9. We love all submissions, but if you'd like your photo to be entered into the contest please make sure to:

- Include WCC and/or AmeriCorps logos in the photo
- Identify your featured native species when you submit your photo (via social media or by email)

You can tag #WCCNativeSpecies on social media entries, or email submissions to [Sadie.Normoyle@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:Sadie.Normoyle@ecy.wa.gov)



The Tahuya/DNR Trails crew is kicking off the contest with this beautiful photo of Dogwood, Evergreen Huckleberry, Salal, and Bracken Ferns. Photo by Magen Leaver.



## Food Bank Garden Updates

On Wednesday April 20, the City of Olympia crew visited the Department of Ecology to help with several Earth Day projects. One of the projects was tilling and weeding the food bank garden to prepare it for spring planting.

The crew tilled the fields, weeded dreaded thistle, and helped to mow the perimeter of the garden. Next month, the garden will have its annual spring planting party on Saturday, May 7, from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome to come volunteer at the planting party.

Thanks to the help of the City of Olympia crew, the garden is ready to be planted.



(Left) Mary Powell from the Nisqually Crew and Supervisor Geoff Baran of the City of Olympia crew help weed thistle and shot-weed from the garden before tilling. (Right) Peter Nevin, Logistics Coordinator, tills the field in preparation for spring planting.

# WCC Alum Thriving at King Conservation District

By: Laura Schlabach, WCC Outreach Coordinator

King Conservation District (KCD) offers multiple environmental and agricultural programs and services to landowners and residents around King County, in addition to sponsoring two WCC crews. WCC alum now make up over a quarter of their permanent staff! Here's a peek into the awesome things these seven WCC alum are up to now in their positions at KCD:

As Resource Specialist II, **Adam Jackson** manages KCD's urban restoration projects, working within cities to assist private landowners with property-related restoration or noxious weed control. He meets with landowners to discuss stream or wetland plans, figure out noxious weed control, or decide which native plants to include in a restoration plan. Adam started off as KCD's volunteer program coordinator in January 2009 and served as a WCC corps member from 2005-2007.

As Land Owner Incentive Program Coordinator, **Rachel Konrady** helps landowners implement best-management practices through the cost-sharing incentive program. Her involvements vary from agriculture, aquatic or forest-related projects to guiding policy work. Rachel started as a volunteer program coordinator for KCD in 2012 and served with WCC from 2009-2012, spending 1.5 of those years as the WCC KCD crew supervisor.

As Operations Project Coordinator, **Shanna Hobbs** spends her time juggling four different project types: accounting, supporting the KCD board, closing out grants, and cleaning up the program's GIS database. Shanna started as KCD's project assistant last September and moved into her current role in February. She served as a WCC corps member from 2013-2014.

As Education Programs Coordinator, **Kristen Reichardt** is expanding KCD's education programs and focusing on youth storm water education. A few of her current projects are developing a new urban landowner shoreline curriculum for fresh water, and revamping marine shoreline landowner curriculum. Kristen joined KCD staff in October 2015 and served as KCD's WCC Individual Placement from 2014-2015.

As Project Assistant, **Ann Horner** supports the operations team, handling details and project execution in addition to administrative projects as needed. Ann served as a WCC corps member from 2014-2015.

Other WCC alum and current KCD staff include Sarah Tomt, Wetland Plant Cooperative Contractor (WCC Supervisor 2012-2015); and Nikki Marschke, Volunteer Programs Coordinator and Conservation Projects Assistant (WCC IP 2013-2014).



WCC alum and current KCD staff members, left to right: Shanna Hobbs, Kristen Reichardt, Rachel Konrady, Adam Jackson, and Ann Horner. Photo by Laura Schlabach.

*"I would not be here if not for WCC. It lives in your heart - the team aspect, the 'getter-done' attitude. You look at a challenge and think, 'All I need to do is find the right tools and the right people,' and you can make things happen and see the results of your labor. It's a type of accomplishment that I hadn't had in my life before."*

-Rachel Konrady, WCC member and crew supervisor 2009-2012;  
KCD Land Owner Incentive Program Coordinator



# Missouri Disaster Response: Serving in the Second Wave

By Elise Landreaux, Snohomish County Native Plants Individual Placement AmeriCorps Member



The second wave of WCC AmeriCorps Members return home from Missouri. Photo by WCC.

Like many Individual Placements (IPs), I report to an office each day, am tasked with a wide variety of individual projects, and spend minimal time in the field. As the assistant to Snohomish Counties Native Plant Program, I serve between the sponsor and WCC crew. I manage our native plant nursery, aid in logistics and communication behind projects, maintain office organization and filing, coordinate volunteer days, and provide assistance to other watershed stewards within the county. In February, however, I accepted the opportunity to serve in Missouri as a member of the second wave of disaster response.

In late December, an unusual amount of rain hit Missouri, resulting in severe flood damage across

thousands of homes and businesses. On January 2, 2016, the state received an Emergency Declaration, and six Washington Conservation Corps crews deployed to aid with the relief efforts. In late January, the response was extended an additional thirty days, allowing additional Washington Conservation Corps members the opportunity to relieve the majority of members sent on the first deployment. I was able to serve in this second wave, putting my daily office position on hold for 30 days in order to assist with relief efforts.

During this response, Washington Conservation Corps AmeriCorps members assisted in tandem with the St. Louis AmeriCorps Emergency Response Team and NCCC, establishing an independent operating base in the St. Louis area. Members served both in the field, assisting with home repairs in areas affected by floodwaters, as well as in office based positions, establishing the internal framework that made such operations possible.

A team of 12 members and myself served as a smaller operation in southwest Missouri, based out of Springfield and Caseville. Our team covered twenty counties in the area, collaborating closely with local organizations such as Red Cross and Catholic Charities as we wrapped up project orders and canvassed neighborhoods, assuring we reached each affected homeowner. On this response, I served on a field team, mucking and gutting, hanging drywall, removing debris, and performing mold remediation. Just as in St. Louis, a few of our team members also took on heavily based office positions, forming the internal structure of operations and liaison duties. This allowed our team to function as an independent and productive unit while also serving as a community partner with local resources.

Upon returning, I find it very difficult to express exactly how influential participating as a member of this operation has been. I think a lot of it comes down to the barriers that are broken when you are serving individuals who immediately trust and accept both physical and emotional service without any resistance during a disaster response. This allows for a truly genuine, and in some cases raw, connection established through service, which is unique to any of my prior short-term service based positions. In addition I found similar, distinctive relationships and interactions within our specific southwest team, much like the relationships I assume are gained within crews throughout the year. I felt very fortunate to both observe and become a part of this, as this is not necessarily a component of my daily position in the office.

Overall, I think one of the bigger lessons I am taking away from this response is how important it is for me to constantly step outside the sphere of my daily routine if the opportunity presents itself. Every aspect of my life was turned over during this response as I adapted from an individual office position to a heavily driven team environment, forcing myself to step down from leadership positions and instead observe, trust, and follow operations from the bottom. By doing this, I gained a tremendous amount of personal insight as well as understanding of the framework of disaster, leadership, and what it takes to form a functional team, especially under stressful environments. I'm very fortunate to have been offered the opportunity to serve in this response, and I encourage other members to accept opportunities offered through WCC, taking a step or two outside that comfort zone.

# Supervisor's Corner: Rob Crawford

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

It is hard to single out a favorite moment. I tend to focus on the memorable experiences shared with members and supervisors in our program. I remember the hardships of my first project as a supervisor planting willow whips in a rock quarry with water up to my knees each day. One month later and two members down, my crew moved up to Skagit County. I remember my first Crupina tour with the great Dave Coffey and (former supervisor) Bob Milner. I remember all the early days of National Disaster Response with (current logistics coordinator) 'Fast Teddy Dewees' (Florida 2014 and Katrina 2015). Some of the most stressful responses have provided some of the most vivid memories (Joplin 2011, Superstorm Sandy 2012, Oso 2014). I remember all the mentors I have had over the years with WCC staff, supervisors, sponsors and members. I have fond memories of the special events we have had over the years with the formation of the WCC Olympics and the Celebration for Dave Coffey for 20+ years of service. Some of my favorite memories of members are the successful updates and job reference requests I receive from time to time. This reminds me of the seeds our program gets to sow into the future development of members. My most recent memory is of my disaster buddies – thanks for all the support, Ernie, Luke, and others I've served with.



Sauk River Knotweed Surveying for the Nature Conservancy and Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group.

## Which hand tool is your favorite, and why?

It is a toss-up between the Pulaski and McLeod. In my early grubbing days with WCC I would always select the Pulaski for projects. Now that my body is aging I am leaning toward the tools with longer handles. The McLeod is great for raking blackberry canes, scraping sod, moving dirt on trails, and mop up on fires. It is just the right height for my elbow after a long, hard day.

## Briefly describe your path to WCC?

After graduating from Central Washington University in 1998 with a Bachelor Degree in Biology, I happened to do a job shadow with Russ Caniff, Biologist with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. He was in charge of the Brant and Snow Geese population studies on the Skagit River Delta. He introduced me to Russ Wright, the Department of Fish and Wildlife WCC Supervisor. I was hired as a member of the Fish and Wildlife Northwest Region crew for seven months, from August 1998 to February 1999.

Afterwards, I landed a six-month supervisor position in Okanogan from March 1999 to August 1999. Kevin Farrell, Regional Project Coordinator, then hired me for the Ecology WCC Supervisor position in November 1999. We were stationed out of the Mill Creek area mainly on projects for Boeing at Paine Field. The crew moved to Skagit County in February 2000, where I have been ever since.

## Where is your hometown?

Burlington, Washington Skagit County.

## If you could have a superpower what would it be?

Ant Man (I can shrink and disappear whenever I want, but still have superhuman strength).

## Number of years as a Supervisor?

17 years.



Rob Crawford in Saipan during a disaster response deployment. Photos submitted by Rob Crawford.

# Supervisor's Corner: Ashley "Grizz" Gould

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

Most of my favorite moments as a supervisor involve collaborating with my crew to overcome a situation where something did not quite go as planned on a project site, only to be triumphant in the end. There is nothing like thinking you are about to finish an arduous fencing project, only to have your H-brace fail in the waning light of the day. Or, having to go swimming in a beaver pond on a rainy, windy, day in January before 10:30 am, because you dropped a vital tool in the water. Or, taking in the beautiful view of the Puget Sound from your planting site on Vashon Island, only to come to the frightening realization that you are standing in a huge patch of poison oak. At the time, these situations all seemed pretty horrible. But that fence? Boom, it is solid now, the beavers have been deceived, and since discovering Tecnu, poison oak is (mostly) not a problem and over 3,000 bare roots got put in the ground. I also really value the little nature moments that we are sometimes privy to on our sites. For instance, I fondly remember watching spawning sockeye salmon with last year's crew at a site on the Green River and being able to see the individual eggs among the gravel.



Photo submitted by Ashley Gould.

## Which hand tool is your favorite, and why?

I would say it is a tie— the pick mattock and the machete make a great pair, especially in my crew's quest to grub all of King County's blackberry.

## Briefly describe your path to WCC?

I went to college at Western Washington University and studied Recreation and Environmental Studies. I was very interested in environmental education, and did two related internships in college - one with the Bellingham School District, and the other with the Girl Scouts at Camp Robbinswold on the Hood Canal. After I graduated college, I ended up working for Camp Waskowitz, an outdoor school with the Highline School District. In 2008, I was working for the Boys & Girls Club in King County, but I felt like I had been doing a lot of talking about *why* people should care about the environment, but not actually *doing* something to make it any better. Luckily, one of my buddies from summer camp was a WCC member in 2009, and she told me about the WCC. I remember being apprehensive about applying because I was almost 26 and didn't think I could live in Seattle on minimum wage, but she told me that I'd be an idiot if I didn't apply, specifically with King County DNRP. She was right—I knew midway through my year as a corps member that I wanted to be a Supervisor. I moved back to Whatcom County after my term, returned to school for a certificate in Conservation and Wetland Delineation, and held a water damage mitigation job for two years before I got a position as a Supervisor. I really enjoy my job as a Supervisor because I get to teach my crew members about restoration techniques, ecology, tools, and teamwork, as well as continue to build my own skill set and knowledge base, and get my hands dirty serving alongside my crew members to help restore the environment.

## Where is your hometown?

Mount Vernon, WA.

## If you could have a superpower what would it be?

If I could have a superpower, it would be the ability to apparate.

## Number of years as a Supervisor?

4 years.

# WCC Snapshots



1



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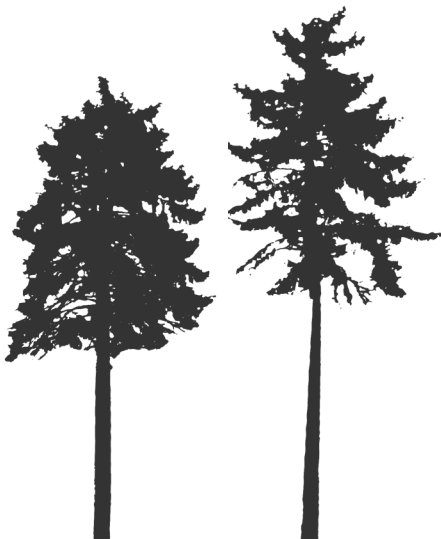
7



8



9



1. WCC Crew Member Alex Wunder in a hole dug for installing a kiosk in Walker Valley ORV Park. Photo submitted by Kayla Seaforth.
2. The Ellensburg crew served with local Middle School students planting Oregon White Oak and Douglas Fir trees along the Klickitat River. Photo submitted by Ernie Farmer
3. Zach McGill (2013-2015) and Roland McGill speaking at Nisqually High School for Career Day. Photo submitted by Roland McGill.
4. The Ellensburg crew after completion of their planting spike project which revegetated over two miles of abandoned road along the Klickitat River. Photo submitted by Ernie Farmer.
- 5, 7. The Olympia Forage Fish crew helping with State Parks and WDFW Parks installing MRRP Bins along lakes, rivers, and coastal water. Photo submitted by Caleb Dobe.
6. Crew supervisor Caleb Dobe during installation of MRRP bins. Photo Submitted by Caleb Dobe.
8. City of Olympia Crew, led by Geoff Baran, after potting Douglas Fir trees and tilling the Food Bank Garden at the Department of Ecology. Photo by Laura Schlabach.
9. Sadie Normoyle, Outreach and Sustainability IP, at Ecology at the annual Food Bank Garden Plant Sale. Photo by Laura Schlabach.



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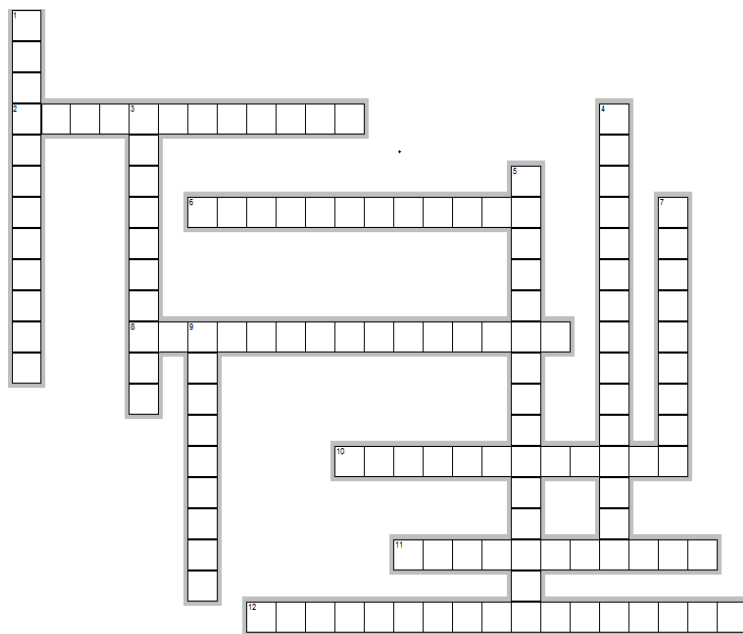
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# Plant Crossword Puzzle



**Across**

- 2. Berry. Has the name of something you use while sewing.
- 6. Evergreen, stiff-branched shrub, leaves like holly, blue berries.
- 8. Small red berry.
- 10. Washington State flower.
- 11. Edible berry, has the name of a fish in it.
- 12. A noxious weed found in Washington that is native to East Asia.

**Down**

- 1. A plant that is spindly, deciduous, and has bright yellow flowers.
- 3. Rubus Fruticosus.
- 4. A tree that gets brownish-red bark that peels as it gets older.
- 5. Tsuga Heterophylla is the scientific name of this tree.
- 7. Name of a fern, blades are elongated and curved.
- 9. Although a common weed, it is edible. Especially in salads!

## Crossword Answers

*(Last Issue)*

**Across**

- 3. APPLES
- 5. HARDHAT
- 7. BLACKBERRY
- 10. RANDLE
- 11. FORKS
- 12. RAINIER

**Down**

- 1. RHODODENDRON
- 2. Wafa
- 4. EVERGREEN
- 6. HENDRIX
- 8. LAURA
- 9. GLACIERS

## About the WCC

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