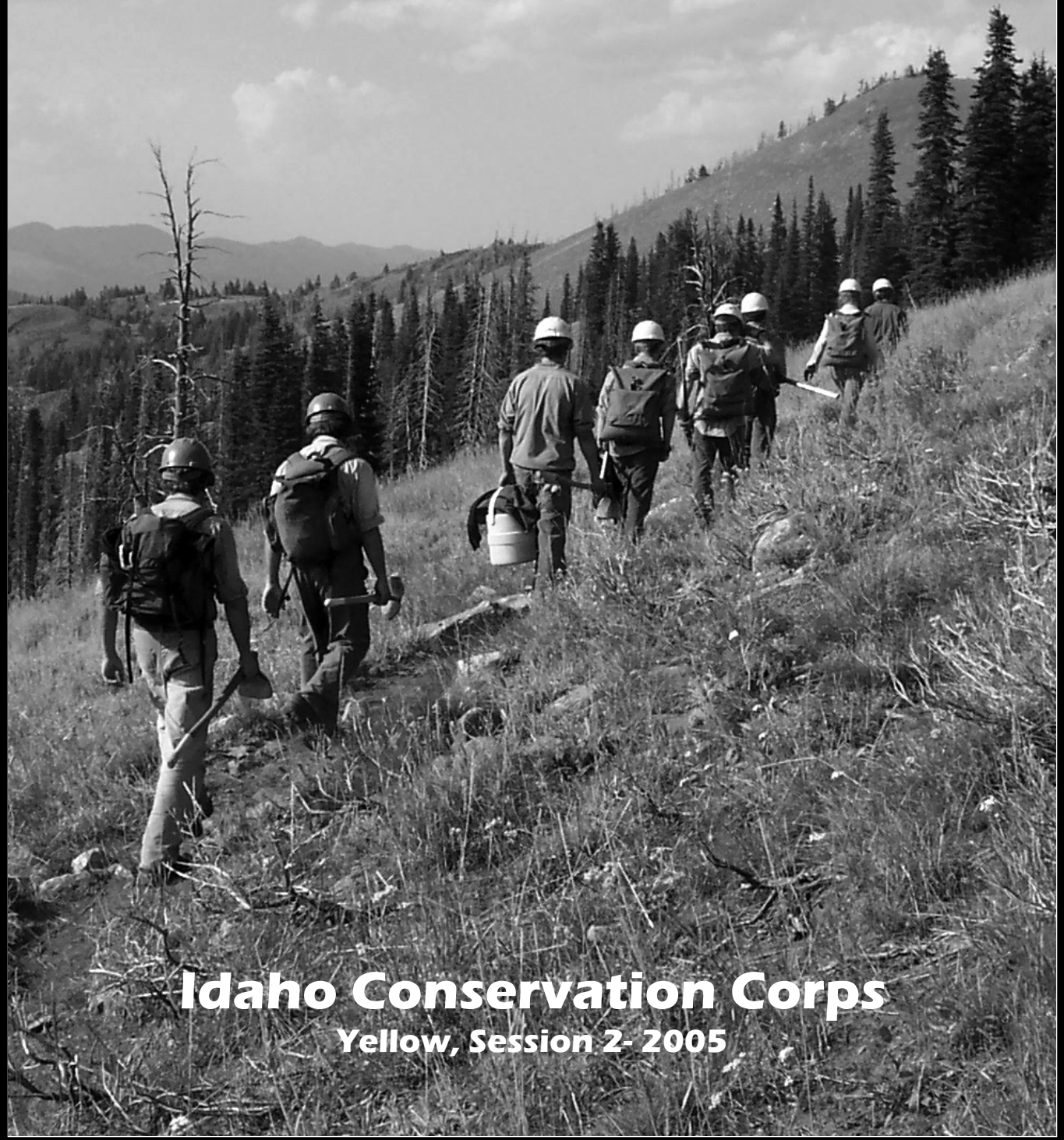




Crew Journal



Idaho Conservation Corps
Yellow, Session 2- 2005



Dear NYC graduates,

It is human nature that as time goes by, memories fade and our perception of history changes. Tall tales grow taller, and in the retelling details are lost and added. In your hands is a written record of your crew's trials and tribulations during the summer of 2005. It is a testimony of your successes, challenges, experiences both good and bad as well as some that were weird and wacky. As you sit back in the comfort of your home and relive some of those memories I encourage you to add your own notes on how you felt, what you saw and what you did.

As you embark on your next adventure, whatever it may be, remember the things you did here. Remember the challenges you faced and that nothing is impossible. All you need is a fistful of gorp, a PB&J and some good friends in your bump line. Make it happen!

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryan Ojerio'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Ryan Ojerio
Program Manager



National Forest: Colville
Ranger District: Colville
Project Name: Little Pend Oreille Hazardous Fuels Reduction

Week 1: July 31 – August 6

Monday: This weekend the crew did some serious preparation for some serious work, and some serious riding in the van. On Saturday we learned some of the basic skills needed for camp life (pitching tents, safety regulations, daily routines, etc), and Sunday saw us buckling down for the 10-hour ride from Idaho to our first worksite in Colville, WA. During the ride we all got to know each other, and everyone agreed the crew was perfect. We spent Monday dragging fallen sticks and branch cuttings into burn piles, and will continue this project for 2 weeks. –Isaac

Tuesday: This morning I was awoken by a watch. Quite a change from the norm. It made me realize the versatility and practicality of dual functions. Like the blender/kerosene lamp combo. The day went by pretty uneventfully, though we saw the neighboring convict work crew for the first time. It struck me as strange, that while 5 out of 6 of the men were frowning, 1 jolly fellow was ambling along with his head held high. What separates these men and why does this fraction convert to the rest of the nation? Perhaps the answer will come when I return to the culture that is responsible. –Anthony

Wednesday: Happy, happy hump day! Today the journal wasn't done during chore time, so I get the privilege. My day began with a warm sleeping bag but I had to get up. Elaine and Brian made pancakes and then we went to work. After seven hours of slash pile love, lots of singing, and Yellow happiness, we came back to camp. We played Enemy/Protector, which was hilarious, but then I got a bloody nose which was sad. Dinner was delicious—garden burgers and hash browns. We even had dessert! -Jani R.

Thursday: We learned to stack sticks, stack sticks, and oh yeah, stack sticks. We also learned how to play a bunch of awesome Big Funs. I also think our crew learned a little lesson in acceptance and tolerance of people that are different from us. I'm sure we learned a lot more but that's all I've got. – Kayleigh K.

Friday: Today we went to the fire department place and we took showers. After the showers we went to Colville and hung out at Wally World. Some of the crew members ate at McDonald's. I didn't. Stoney bought some clippers and we all got Mohawks. James (that's me) was the first to get it. His was obviously the best, hehe. The girls took about 14 hours each. Anthony also bought some spray-in sun dye. Beth decided to dye her hair too. –James

Sunday: This weekend was rockin'! I woke up at like 9am, in time for pancakes made by Elaine. We then packed up and headed for Colville. We did laundry, visited a fair, ate huckleberry ice cream and just generally chillaxed. After that, we headed for the border. That's right, we went to Canada. We didn't have all the ID necessary to cross, so after spending a hot half hour in the van, waiting in line, we parked at the US border place and walked to the border. Took lots of pictures and headed for Sullivan Lake. There was lots of swimming, lots of meeting of weird, random people, and lots of mellowness. That night was spent eating hoagies and s'mores, and sleeping under the stars. Today we drove home and an awesome dinner is being cooked as I write. –James

National Forest: Colville

Ranger District: Colville

Project Name: Little Pend Oreille Hazardous Fuels Reduction

Week 2: August 7 – August 13

Monday: There are sooo many bees where we are camping and working. At least every day we find a damn bees' nest. I hate bees. I hope they burn in hell. Today we worked an 8-hour day, you know, the usual. I am sooo excited about the 3rd week. We finally get a backcountry project. It is very hot. I stink like a bum but not like alcohol. Dinner is gonna be good. Yaaaya! –Brian B.

Tuesday: After another thrilling day in the field stacking brush, the crew returned to camp for an interesting question and answer session with the reserve's wildlife biologist. One of the coolest things he told us was about his adventures attracting bears with sardines. It sounded very... uhh... effective. After the crew had chilled for an hour, we began chores. Conveniently, everyone now knows what needs to be done and we snap into action like a well-oiled machine. I heard rumors of spaghetti tonight, which will run against tough competition with Sunday's stir-fry for the generally-proclaimed "most magnificent meal yet" title. Tonight we will again gather around the fire (all of us sporting super sweet Mohawks) for the nightly SEED. Maybe we'll even get to play a few games, which is one of my favorite parts of the day. –Elaine D.

Wednesday: Last night it was the craziest thing. Michael, our woodsboss, showed up after dinner and SEED. We weren't expecting him at all. The reason he came was because YFC needed some rovers and we had extra, so Mud and Lucas are now in Oregon having an awesome time with Molly, the rockin' woodsboss. Today we were all kind of bummed about it but we worked hard. This morning Stoney let us sleep in a half hour and he made us breakfast. Near the end of the workday, Anthony, Isaac, and I had fun with British accents and now we are preparing for our Secret Santa with Red Crew. –Jani R.

Thursday: Thursday was our last day of slash piling! At the end of our nine hour day, the crew was super pumped and had a blast singing loudly to Queen in the van. We had a truly magnificent dinner with our sponsor at the fire house at 7:00. The burgers, hot dogs, watermelon, and salad topped off the week in grand style. The event we were most excited about, however, had to wait until it was nearly bed time. Our new crew member arrived just as it was getting dark. She had driven 500 miles from Oregon and had endured multiple hours driving around on backroads just so she could join our crew. We are very happy that Jennifer is with us and look forward to getting to know her better. –Elaine D.

Friday: Today we are off to our first weekend site. With an 8 hour drive ahead of us and clean clothes on, it should be a chillaxful ride. We jammed out on some tunes, enjoyed the sights. Before we entered the weekend site we stopped to add a little war paint to our bodies, spruce up our 'hawks, and energize our spirits. Wee haa! Yellow Crew shines! –Stoney

National Forest: Nez Perce
Ranger District: Moose Creek
Project Name- Meadow Creek NRT #726 Maintenance

Week 3: Date Aug. 14th-20th

Monday: After the whole parents day thing which was almost pointless because only 3 or 4 parents actually came, we went to sleep and then around 9 hours later woke up. We came to the Nez Perce National Forest to do the funnest work we've done yet. I think everybody is probably glad we aren't slash piling anymore. That's unless they are insane. We had a 3 mile hike in and we had to hike about 1 mile to our work place this morning...James P.

Tuesday: This week, we are maintaining an awesome piece of trail in the Nez Perce National Forest, we are clearing water bars, brushing and finishing a culvert, widening trail, etc. Today we had a rockin bumpline. I sang really loud and we gave Anthony a root canal. Jennifer (our alternate) and I are talking about tattoos and hummus. Sundried tomato Hummus. Green onion hummus, black bean hummus, jalapeño hummus...Jani

Wednesday: Today when I woke up a few people were in Kitchen and the morning was slow, sluggish and crawling at a 6:00 the start of the day. After a crawling hike and an awesome safety circle with amazing face stretches. The crew worked hard on culvert, finished the retainer wall. We did some bush whacking, topline and burm. The day was sterling bright with wispy clouds and a misty afternoon. The woodsboss came and showed us some technique...Thomas

Thursday: We worked 11 hours today. Weeding, brushing and cutting down until our feet began to rot and bleed. Our tears cut lines in the dirt on our faces and our sweat ate through our hard hats. At least 3 miles of walking up and down that mountain every day, we worked like dogs and we ate like we were gonna die. Every day got harder and we all agreed to quit, then we get up and do it again. But after all the payin it still feels worth it and were ready for more....

Friday: We finished our project by Thursday. The puke yellow sun was intense. We packed in and out 3 miles. Trail maintenance was the prerogative. Much more important than completing the project was the crew's consistent camaraderie, on top of it all, the van's battery died. Our rovers figured it out though. Jennifer ate a strawberry sandwich, which she was allergic to. She's fine but it was quite a scare....Anthony

National Forest: Nez Perce
Ranger District: Moose Creek
Project Name: East Moose Trail Maintenance

Week 4: Date: Aug 21st-27th

Monday: My crew and I hiked 3 miles over the Montana Border to Idaho Border. There was great scenery and nice weather. We had horse packers pack are food in. We got to camp and started to work on a re-route for four hours we busted out and had fun. This next two weeks are going to be great...Brian

Tuesday: Today we worked on the re-routing we started yesterday. It was awesome, we worked crazy fast. We got to check-out an area that had been blasted. The teamwork with this crew is getting better everyday, that includes with the chores. Sure we have a few kinks to work out but even the greatest well oiled machine has a specialized mechanic...Jennifer

Wednesday: Today was awesome because of Barry's blasting. Barry is our awesome contact and three times today he asked us to go very far away while he blew up dirt and rocks. The blast echoed from the hills and we were almost crushed by an avalanche! But the great trail Gods decided not to punish us for sitting down on the job. We played ship on this massive rock in the field. I was the (bos?) don't care about what everyone else was. During lunch we discussed how much we'd like to eat bald eagles and whales. I just finished making bomber hummus and am now writing the journal. I want coffee though. Really bad! Mmm, I think I'm drooling...Jani

Thursday: This week our crew has had a great time building some re-routes. Barry our contact blew the big boulders of 1 of them so now we can finish it up. Today when we were in the rock fire line we were having a blast with our telephone game, we learned a lot of new sweet moves. I think most of the crew is stoked for after work tomorrow when we all get our 24 hour solos on ya. It gets really really cold her at night just thought I'd add that....Kayleigh

Friday: Ahhhh today was the epitome of majestic ness. We slept n until 7 and worked a satisfying 7 hour day. Bump lining occupied a vast majority of today, resulting in an only particular completed re-route. Oh well, perhaps we'll do better next time.

National Forest: Nez Perce
Ranger District: Moose Creek
Project Name: East Moose Trail Maintenance

Week 5: Date Aug 28th-Sept. 3rd

Sunday: We busted out a lot of great hard work. There's nothing like the smell of hard earned sweat. Cap'n and Gainer showed up and helped us double time our work to get the turnpike finished. We got mail today, the highlight of our weeks. I was so glad to hear from my mom and to know that she's ok, though she sent some meat that I gave away. This being out in nature working, living/breathing fresh air is truly living. "Life doesn't begin with your first breath, life begins the first time you live..."Jennifer

Monday: Today Gainer helped us start our 3rd re-route. We got a lot of clearing done. Today was also Aimee's birthday. She finally turned 21. Today we had the best shotgun so far. We still have a lot of loping to do and we have even more trail building to do. Bryan still can't find the latrine. ...James

Tuesday: We were in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness]. We did re-routes and 2 turnpikes. The 3rd re-route we finished. We finished all of them. All together in feet wise was 2,000 ft. I worked my butt off. So did the crew. That last 2 weeks kicked my butt, which I will never forget...Brian

Wednesday: We woke up at dawn, as usual. But this morning breathed a sigh of relief and sadness. It was the very last working of our NYC summer session. We packed camp then hiked off to finish our job. After work we left for the trail head leaving behind sweat, blood, and tears. Goodbye work, goodbye forest, we are now on our way back to society....Jennifer.

Thursday: We woke up to frost on our sleeping bags and I vowed not to move until it was gone. Unfortunately I had to use the restroom. Our fire was blazing though. We left the Selway Wilderness and drove through Montana. Stopped at Darby, got coffee which I drank in like 10 minutes. We then visited Salmon Idaho and spent an hour seeing the sights. After that we hike to the most bomber hot springs in the world and spent the night sleeping under the stars...Jani

Friday: Crew woke up to a beautiful sunny day alongside the Salmon River. With a quick bagel breakfast we were off off and away. With one priority in sight and that's whoop'em up campground and Big Clean. On the way we stopped in the quaint town of Salmon. We were making great time that we were allowed to wander around for an hour. Finally we stopped in Stanley had some coffee while Stoney checked in with fellow crew members. What a surprise when Stoney treated us to sundaes we love him, he's so great. He loves us too because we are so wonderful and work hard together....

My Most Challenging Day At NYC Was...

The last day slash pilling, we had been doing it for 2 weeks, it was very tedious and monotonous, I didn't think I could mentally handle those last few hours, but I did it...Kayleigh

Ahhhhh...working that 11 hour day in the Nez Pierce National Forest and hacking out water bars the whole day. Got "the claw" that night yippee...Elaine

At Nez Perce national Forest I woke up with the worst lower back pain I could barely breath. But I got up and hiked a mile and a half up hill to the work site....Thomas

The last workday in the Nez perce National Forest, digging cut back and drainage for 11 hours with brutally bruised feet. I was dog tired, hot and constantly hungry. It was a mental challenge...Isacc

When Lucas and MAD (our rovers) were stripped from us in the second week...Anthony

I would have to say it was the 11 hour day in the Nez Perce Nat. Forest we did about a mile and a half of cut bank and water bars...James

I'd have to say when we started hiking up our trail to work at the Nez Perce forest. It was pretty steep and difficult but I made it...Jennifer

When we were slash pilling day after day...Jani

The 11 hour day in Nez Perce forest. We did cut bank and hinge and water bars...Brian

My Three Favorite NYC Experiences Were...

My favorite experiences are first our back country trips. Second all of our girl chats we would have in our tent, then the next morning find out almost the whole crew could here what we were talking about. Also the trip to the hot springs was awesome, one more thing I can't forget is the whole crew getting Mohawks in the 1st week. That was awesome...Kayleigh

Oh God, we've had many a humorous moment here at good'ol NYC. Nasty, nasty dinner moments currently top the list, followed by dear Mullets monotone description of rock formations (we laughed for multiple minutes on that one..) good times....Elaine

The feeling of never having to slash pile again, the whole crew getting Mohawks...James

When I showed up in Colville and everybody greeted me, I got a Mohawk, giving each other animals (animals that described us, nicknames) The many hours spent in the van, trapped like sardines, but still in great spirits...Jennifer

The hikes, the late night talks, finding out that tents aren't sound proof and the dance move telephone in the bucket line...Jani

The solo, late nite tent talks of philosophy and insanity and all the moments when I felt beyond normal...Isaac

Meeting everyone for the first time, the hugs, and the hot springs...Anthony

The hikes, Van rides, talking, days off, the big dinners at the weekend site...Brian

My favorite experiences were: my solo, the van rides and the hot springs...

One Thing I Will Always Remember...

One thing I will always remember is the joke flirting between me and Elaine we had so much fun doing it and it amused us and the crew...Kayleigh

That a quick trip to the creek after work for serious scrubbing makes all the difference...Elaine

Brian dumping about half a gallon of salt on the chicken...James

Mullet's safety circle stretches. We looked like fools but it was great...Jennifer

Hot springs with my crew...Jani

My vision quest in the mountains, the hot springs and the hard work...Isaac

The songs, the many many songs and the power they hold...Anthony

I will never forget me tripping and ripped the other guys tent...Brian

I will never forget how close I got to strangers in five weeks...Tom

From Now On I Will Always...

Eat out of a bowl with all my food mixed together. Sleep in the dirty clothes I wore (during the day) go two weeks without showering...Kayleigh

Have faith in people...Elaine

Shower as often as possible...James

Not be such a "neat freak" with my clothes and shoes, sleep on the ground, no more beds...Jennifer

Take time to talk to trees, backpacks, shoes, food, nalgene's, people etc.

Try and see from another's eyes, smile and be happy, powerful man...Isaac

At NYC I Learned...

How to have fun in any environment, to be tolerant of people you don't see eye to eye with and to be a generally happy and healthy person.

To eat my own food before certain people cooked dinner, how to fluff my hair properly, what it means to have memorable back pain, and uhhh...why van rides are well loved by all NYC slave laborers....Elaine

That Nalgene's also make great sleeping bag warmers on those -30 degree nights

That you don't need the comforts of society to live comfortably. We are all easily entertained. There is no way you can mask the taste of burnt noodles...Jennifer

That vegetarians can cook bomber meat too, the chili powder goes on everything and Tom Petty is the best singer ever!...Jani

More about the directions I want to go for now, the power of silence, of the search for the self and the childishness in all human beings...Isaac

I found a reason for living. I learned of the world as it was meant to be....Anthony

At NYC I learned on how to be patient, control my anger, work experience I can have fun with out getting high...Brian B

I learned how to live in a community, sharpen Pulaski's and have good work ethic...