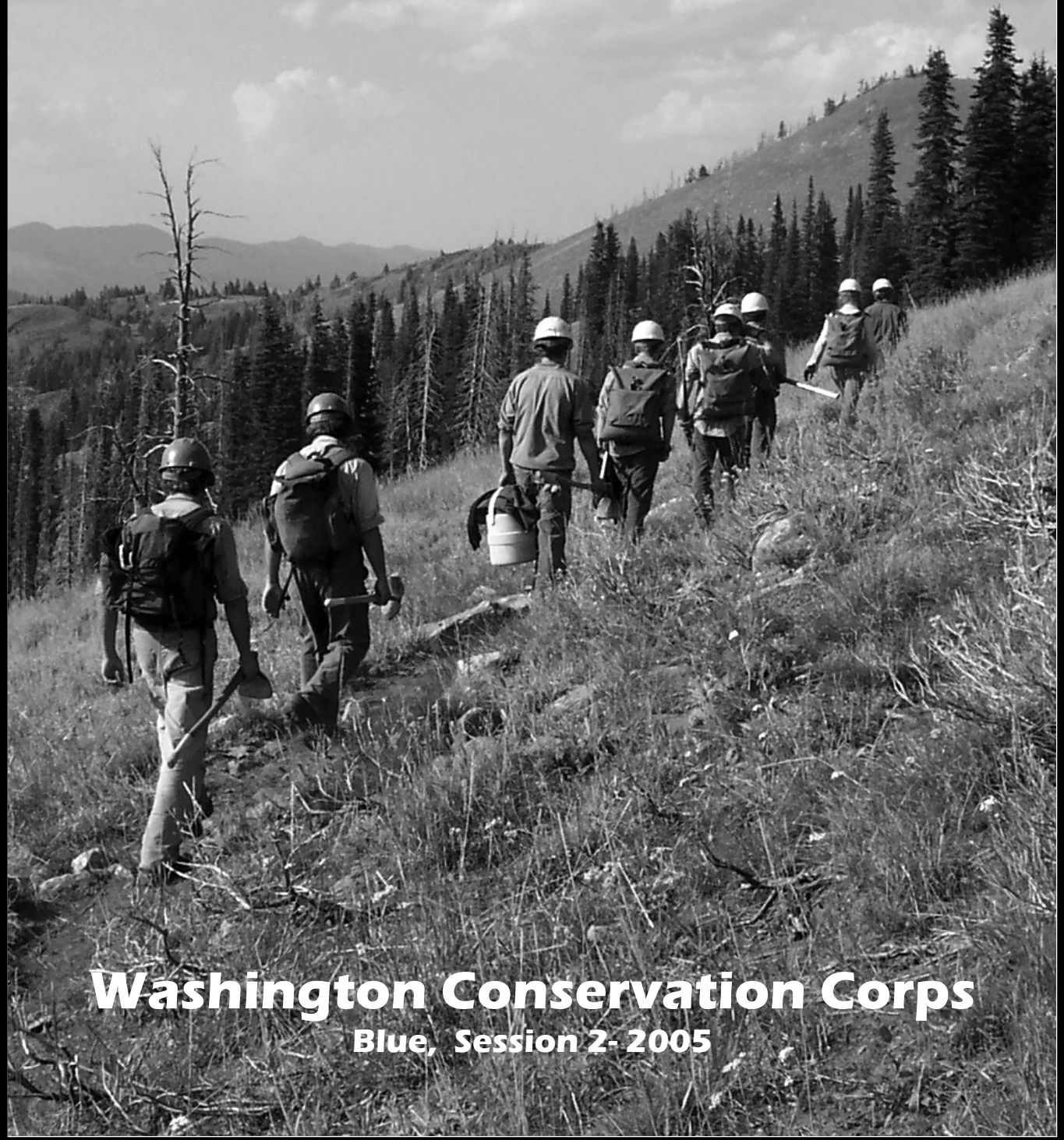




Crew Journal



Washington Conservation Corps
Blue, 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,

Billy!

Billy Scrafford
Program Manager
a.k.a. "Office Geek"



National Forest or area that the work took place: Ochoco National Forest
Ranger District: Paulina
Project Name- Ochoco Weeds

Week 1: June 11-June 18th

Sunday: Things started out rough for our crew this week. We get to the camp site and find out we are missing several items, namely our tent corner/joints and our cutting boards. But we improvised and set up the tents, even if they aren't the sturdiest buildings in the world. Even with the rough start the crew is still up beat and looking forward to starting our 6 weeks....Aric B.

Monday: Today we did a lot of walking and swinging. The work is hard but it is very interesting. I also know the work will get better and will go by faster and that's my thoughts.

Tuesday: As the second day of work it was so much better. Everyone is already so close and pretty much getting along. The project we are working on isn't the best NYC has to offer but we're making due with what we have. It's pretty cool when everyone starts talking and you get to know everyone's personalities even more. I think that every time someone closes their eyes they picture the weeds in

the back of their heads. But using the tools was starting to get a lot easier, and I think everyone can use them correctly now. Drinking the water before the limit was so funny, especially when Brandon downed a yellow top for like 10 minutes straight. Today we also had our woods boss come out to help us. He was so fun and he really helped us get everything organized. At lunch it was pretty quiet but that's because everyone had worked up such an appetite, but I'm already so over PB&J!!! So today we accomplished so much and hopefully we will eliminate all of the aliens....Carmen P.

Wednesday: Our crew goals for this week are to destroy all the aliens that are taking over the forest. We are working together as one to take back our forest. We are working for a trail job and getting a good note from our sponsor. Finish our first priority better, safety issues. Make it through the week and be proud of what we have done...Stormy

Thursday: This week we learned a lot of things. We learned that working as a team gets the job done, but also not everyone is meant to get along with each other. But none the less a team that works together is more likely to get the job done regardless of the differences within the group.

Friday: Since it was the end of the week, work went by really fast. Maybe one of the hardest parts was not being able to shower. But since the work was fun and we all got to get to know each other really well it was fun. Another one of the hard parts of the week was having no joints for our tent and having to use what we had to make something safe to sleep under. Probably one of the best parts of the week was when our crew leaders surprised us with brownies in the middle of the week. All together pulling hounds-tongue and building what we could was pretty exciting for our first week. I'm sure we're all looking forward for what's yet to come...Phoebe

US Department of Fish and Wildlife Columbia National Wildlife Refuge

Week 2: June 19th-June 25th

Monday: We were first to the weekend site so we (Savage) set out the layout. Our tent corners were recaptured for Orange crew late on Friday night. It was pretty exciting. On Saturday there were recreational trips. I went with some other team's members to the John Day fossil beds and watched a movie about fossils. Sunday was pack-up day; the awards were handed out. Our team was awarded the MacGyver award for having to tie our tents up last weekend (Arit?) got the iron chef award....Kate "cat" Latina-Able

Tuesday: This week we are working on taking out Russian olive trees in eastern Washington. After one week I feel that we are coming more together as a family and everyone's true selves are coming out. The Russian olive trees are a weed and we are taking them out of the Columbian wildlife refuge....Lars

Wednesday: I think that our crew's goals for the week are to come closer together as a group, living and working together. I also think that we all want to become more on top of the daily routine. Everyone plans to "kill" as many Russian Olive as possible this week without getting hurt....G.

Thursday: This week our crew started to work as a team, it made work much easier to have everyone working together. We learned that no matter how hot and long work seems to be it's always better when everyone is actually doing their part. We've learned a lot about each other. The circle talk we had about the problems our group may have had or troubles we've had. That really helped us understand one another. I think our group is really starting to get the hang of these things; I think things will only get better...Phoebe W.

Friday: Our crew's challenges this week were based around the climate shift, mostly going from a temperate rainy forest to a high-altitude dry desert was a shocker for most of the native Oregonians. Staying hydrated was a problem, so to solve it, the crew really focused on drinking the water. Another challenge came from the Russian Olive Trees we're cutting because they had sharp, prodding thorns. By the end the crew had plenty of cuts, but everyone just dealt with it and kept working. Mosquitoes were also an issue where we worked. They would swarm and bite the crew, but the crew solved that problem by loading on the bug spray. The sun posed a problem as well, as many of the blue crew sported sun burns and farmers tans. By the end of the week that issue was easily solved by loading up on sunscreen on the exposed arms and necks. The blue crew had an awesome accomplishment this week of completing the section we were assigned to. Everyone was able to pull together at work and chop the trees down. We were able to devise a system of loppers, hand saws, chain saws and herbicides. Being in the desert with no trees was an issue with setting up the kitchen tarp, but luckily we had earned an extra tent that we were able to use as a frame for the kitchen trap. Basically the greatest accomplishment was pulling together and really working well as a team....Danielle

**National Forest or area that the work took place: Wenatchee
Ranger District: Leavenworth, Alpine Lakes Wilderness
Project Name- Ingalls Creek Trail Maintenance**

Week 3: June 26th-July 2nd

Monday This weekend we almost had a member of the crew quit and we almost all got a second round of shower's but it did not happen. We hiked out on Sunday and set up camp in the rain...

Tuesday: This week we are doing trail maintaining in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. The week has been going by fast and we have almost lost tools two times in one day. I think that we are making progress and I can't wait 'till it's all over...

Wednesday: My crew's goals are to make it through the two weeks of back country together as a team as one big hard working butt-kicking team and to fight through to the future teams that were ahead of us; another is to finish the rest of the six weeks and be able to go home proud of what hard work that we have done. I know we will achieve these goals...Rich

Thursday: This week our crew learned to live with each other. We learned to conserve food and fight our hunger at times. We've also learned to accept one another's differences from our abilities to hike to our abilities to make lunch. Over all we've learned how to live a simple life....Garrett M.

Friday: Our crew hiked 6 miles up a mountain with 70lb. backpacks mounted upon our tired bones. Many among us had never hiked before and the going was rough, but no one gave up. We slept one night in the rain, without tents and surrounded by less familiar faces than those of our own team, but I think the experience brought us closer together. The job of the next week as well as this one is trail

maintenance and re-routing in some areas. Personally I enjoy the work because we are far away from cars, buildings, and all of the things that remind me of the damages that humans cause the ecosystem. Others, however, don't share this view; they miss the conveniences of home, their friends and families. We have made the trail much more clear and nice. Many goopy, muddy, dangerous areas have been fixed with hard work, not to mention a few muddy ambushes. Our team, though tired and homesick, is growing together as we make miles of hard-earned accomplishments....Kate "Cat"

**National Forest or area that the work took place: Wenatchee
Ranger District: Leavenworth
Project Name- Ingalls Creek Trail Maintenance**

Week 4: July 3rd-July 9th

Monday: This weekend we took a two mile hike to the top of a mountain. When we got there, there was a huge lake which was where we were attacked by swarms of skeeters and had to run down the mountain to escape them. Then we came back to camp to feast on rice and peanut butter until our re-supply came back...Dave F.

Tuesday: This week we have been maintaining trail in Wenatchee National Forest. We cut back brush, cut limbs, hauled rocks and dug drainage ditches. The work we do will ensure that the trail is enjoyed by all who come on foot or by horse...Aric

Wednesday: Our crew's goals for the week were to get the section of trail we got finished last week touched up and looking good, and to get through the last week with good attitudes. We did lose one of our crew members Sunday but though our crew was sad we did manage to stay a close team. Though many of our crew members would rather not be in back country it has managed to make us much closer. It's been a good experience....Phoebe W.

Thursday: The crew learned this week how to better adapt ourselves to the backcountry. The first week of backcountry, last week, the group was still getting used to the new circumstances, but now people are getting into the groove. We learned to work 8 1/2 hour days, eat the food that's available, and basically how to live 6 miles from civilization. During the SEEDS, the crew learned how to write a cover letter, how to word their resumes according to the job, and how to act during an interview. The crew got hands on experience...Danielle B.

Friday: Last week was probably the first week that we, our crew, did not get close to getting fired because we were all begging to understand our boundaries with each other. Beside that the hikes were hard but rewarding and for the accomplishment of making it through six weeks without losing any crew members.

National Forest or area that the work took place: Wenatchee
Ranger District: Leavenworth
Project Name- Indian Creek Trail

Week 5: July 10th-July 16th

Monday: This weekend the crew came out of the back country, took much needed showers and then washed laundry. The rec. trip was a scavenger hunt in the wonderfully Bavarian town of Leavenworth WA. It was also parent weekend, so parents were able to visit, and eat the yummy food that we prepared. Sunday morning the group had circle time and then the crews headed out to the back country again...Danielle

Tuesday: Our project is brushing, weeding and trail work. We're in the forest far from civilization and in the heart of the forest where the wild animals are...Kris C

Wednesday: This week we are doing more trail work in the Wenatchee wilderness. We are trying to get 6 ½ miles to a pass but I don't think we'll get there. WE have gotten about 2 and a half miles so I don't know if we will get there by the end of next week...Lars

Thursday: My crew learned about the ring of fire in the Pacific and how volcanoes erupt and different ways they erupt. We also learned a lot of things about swimming in the wilderness and how to prevent bear encounters and what to do if one occurs. We learned the purpose of a bear hang and how far away from camp it should be so bear's won't come in and bother you when you are sleeping....

Friday: Today was the big last hike home, heavily laden at break neck pace, we rushed the six miles through switch backs, alpine meadows and rocky stream beds. Our morale was high, despite the many challenges of the week. On the first day we hiked nearly 4 ½ miles, just to get to our work site and continued to hike those miles to and from work every day until Wednesday. Focusing was an issue with us because we were so close to home stretch. We kept plugging away even when "loppingitis" threatened to control our morale. We made good progress and then, on Thursday, our last day of work, we got to use the crosscut saw for the first time. It was hard at first, but as you got used to the flow and rhythm of the saw, it was fun. The more we communicate and relaxed, the easier it was to work the giant saw. After our crosscutting experience, we built trail for the second time. It was hot and the flies were eating us alive, but we kept focus for our last hour of work. Building trail was awesome, because we could see how the trail took shape from the beginning to the end, and the tools were a fun skill to develop. "We done Good"...Kate

National Forest: Wenatchee
Ranger District: Leavenworth
Project Name- Indian Creek Trail

Week 6: July 17th-July24th

Monday: This weekend we arrived around in the back country. David made apple pie sandwiches and we ate them with cream cheese topping. Then phoebe busted out the pssst instant shampoo and we all "washed" our hair...Grace V.

Tuesday: We are hiking back and forth on Indian Creek Trail looking for brush

to cut. Our contact is cool. He tells loads of stories from back in the day. We'll be here for two whole weeks so I better get used to all the walking...Rach

Wednesday: As we are all savages in training our ultimate goal is to become an army of savages. However, our goal for this week is to brush the Indian Creek trail to oblivion. Our contact has Hatori Hango and works as fast as three of us with it. One of my personal goals for the week is to match Rich (the contact) in sawing speed. We also hope to keep all our tools, hang a bear hang that no man can reach without an oxygen tank, and pass savages tests of wit, he is a sly one, that savage but together we may yet outsmart him. I curse him and his east coast upbringing! Not really; he's actually my hero and role model...Garrett M.

Thursday: We have already learned about cutting trees and shrubs, so this week wasn't very different. We found out that working in the rain sucks but having a stash of dry wood really was worth it. I guess we know how to make dinner better and that savage really is the best leader. We have learned all about living in the woods like hanging a bear hang and hiking with rain gear...Lars

Friday: This week it was tough to stay on track since we were so close to the end. I am also sure this crew will really miss each other. We are all starting to get used to the back country; hot showers are over-rated; (Crew?) visits are much more invigorating.. Cous-cous is a rare treat I did not even know of before NYC, but I'm sure I will bring it on future camp trips (with mueslix too). Anyways our biggest accomplishments have been the little things. Camp is always clean, chores are done on time and well, and everything is so different and easier than when we started. (we even openly admit loving all the hiking). Last but not least, we all made it and we are better for it. Thanks NYC!...Carmen P.

My Most Challenging Day At NYC Was...

Many days are challenging at NYC. But if I had to choose one day in particular it would probably have been the hike in to Ingalls creek. It was only a 6 mile hike, but going up so steep with such a load on your back doesn't just do something to you physically. I'm so glad that our crew leader and Red's crew leaders were there to push us and encourage us up that mountain. I don't think under any circumstance I would have done that on my own. Another hard part about that hike was the beginning when you had two outfits you had to choose for Two whole weeks! One outfit was for work and the other was for relaxing in. I'm definitely glad I went through and made it that long way or I would have missed out on all the beautiful view and cool experiences in the back country....Carmen P.

My Three Favorite NYC Experiences Were...

Here is the first of my three favorite experiences at NYC (in no particular order). OK, so it's the first hump day of the session and we have been pulling Hounds Tongue for three days straight and at lunch, bam! Brandon pulls out some brownies. Dutch oven brownies. They were slightly burnt on the edges and still running in the middle. They were

perfect.

My next favorite experience at NYC was the feel of accomplishment when we finished the 4th creek trail re-supply for our crew. We had walked up and down the mountain to get out and up and down (with 80lb/100lb. back packs) to get back in. 13 miles total plus an evac and a trip into town, along with 6,000 total feet in elevation change, took from 6 AM to 8:30 AM.

My last favorite experience at NYC was when my parents came to visitation. My friend had just quit and I was considering quitting but my parents showed up and I lost some of my home sickness. Well, there you have it, my three favorite experiences at NYC...Aric B.

One Thing I Will Always Remember...

One thing I will always remember is the interesting people I've met and the MUD fights! The mud fights were the best even on the cold hard work days they made things fun. The people here are another thing I won't ever forget. These people aren't quite the kind of people I normally hang around, which is what made things so fun! It was so cool to get a chance to know people from all life styles and people with such different beliefs. I've learned a ton from every person on my crew and this experience has for sure made me a better person. O...O...yeah another thing I won't ever forget is the fun tent games the girls have had, followed by the explosive laughter...Phoebe W.

From Now On I Will Always...

This NYC session has been such a huge learning experience for me, and I'll always try to use what I've learned in everyday life. I totally plan on looking at the clouds whenever I get the chance to see if I can figure out what type of cloud it is. I learned how to identify the differences between the cirrus, stratus, and cumulus clouds. From now on I'll always appreciate everything I have at home that I used to take for granted. For example, showers. At home they were never a huge deal, I'd just take one without thinking about it. But out here it's become a treat to be able to wash the stink off me. Same with washing machines-I'll always love how easily it is for me to have clean clothes at home. Oh and ice cream and barbeque and fresh vegetables all have increased their importance in my eating habits. I'll always look at the environment with a greater respect. I now know the great diversity that exists in the world, and how important each element is. Through the SEEDS, I learned more about the global climate change, fish habits, and how to figure out the types of trees that are around. From now on I'll really try to conserve. I learned so much about how most of the stuff I have I don't need, or really want anymore. Basically I'll always remember this experience from now on...Danielle

At NYC I Learned...

One thing I learned at NYC is that you can go from a lifestyle of living in the city with your family and people you know, to "living" or camping in the middle of nowhere with eleven people you've never seen before and still have a pretty good time and learn a lot about many different kinds of people. Another thing I learned was that having a positive attitude makes life a

whole lot easier, thought it took me till about the fifth week to use the thought of a “positive mental attitude” It works and makes time go a lot faster. Also a positive attitude gives you time to think and realize your surroundings and the importance of it. The last of the three things I learned was that if you really push yourself hard you can get farther than you could have imagined. For example: I was hiking in to the back country area and this was a real intense, 6 mile, mastery climbing hike and I was doing it off of about 2 hours of sleep. I thought the hike would never end. I seriously didn’t think I would make it when at the break I heard we were about half way but with the motivation of others and telling myself “you can do it, just a little more.”...I made it sure enough and I’m now proud of myself....G.