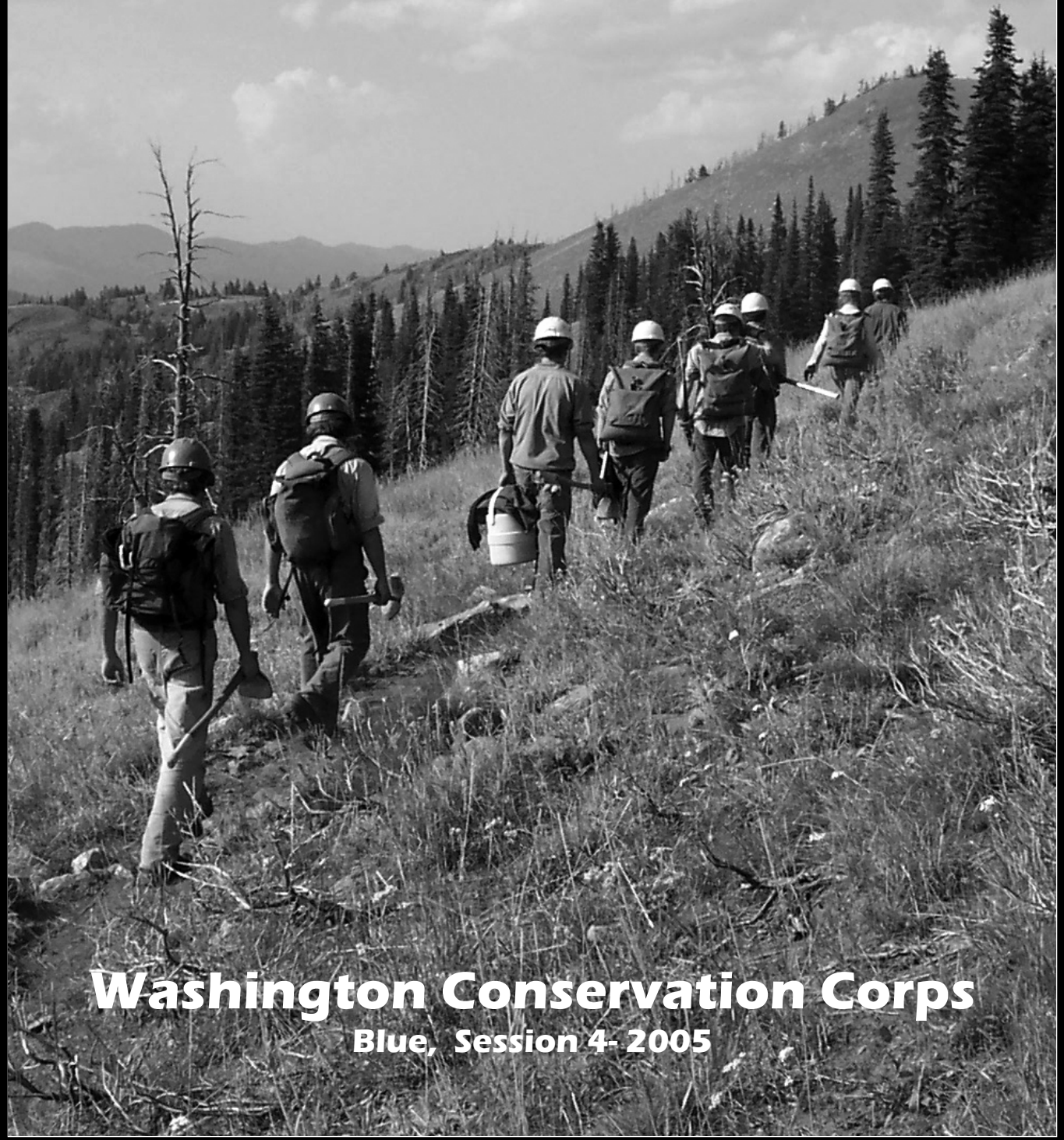




# *Crew Journal*



**Washington Conservation Corps**  
**Blue, Session 4- 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- Willamette  
Ranger District- Detroit  
Project Name- French Creek – Beachie Mt. Trail Maintenance**

**Week 1: July 31 – August 6**

Monday: This weekend with the Blue Crew, we learned how to use all the tools. We had to get up at 6:30/7:00am. On Saturday we took a two hour mini bus ride to our site. When we arrived at the site we set up the cook area and tents. Then, two people helped to start cooking dinner. We all sat down and ate together. Then we all went to bed around 8:00. –Joe B.

Tuesday: This week the crew, or more specifically the Blue Crew, has been working on a trail near Detroit, Oregon, called the French Creek Ridge Trail No. 3349. This is our typical day on this project: We start the day early, I'm not sure how early, I'm thinking 6:30, then we eat and do all that stuff. On the trail we just do maintenance work, it keeps the hikers happy, they won't get lost or intrude too bad in the forests. And sometimes one of our crew gets stung by a bee, like Chad. –Desiree S.

Wednesday: This week, goals are to brush out, remove rocks and other hazards, and generally improve the French Creek Ridge Trail. Also, we need to get in 39 hours of work; some of which is covered by OSHA or however you spell the acronym for the safety book we got paid to hear. As always, a goal is to make sure no one gets hurt and/or dehydrated. Another couple of goals are to finish the job and have a good time doing it. –Brendan R.

Thursday: This week we brushed out, cut mini trees down, removed rocks, pulaskied big stumps, and hazel hoed the trail. We learned a lot of safety tips, like to keep your hard hat, gloves, and boots on. We have to keep hydrated and drink lots of water. We played Big Booty and the orange game. We learned to talk quietly when it's bed time. Work hard, use the tools properly, and have a fun time. –Chad B.

Friday: This week we accomplished a good deal on the French Creek Ridge Trail. We cleaned up some of the most crowded parts, and made it much nicer to walk through. A few of our challenges as a crew were the morning hikes to our work space (though that was more challenging for some of us than others), drinking all our water (though we did accomplish this with a few chug sessions) and keeping cool. But overall, we learned a lot, did a lot of work, and had a pretty good first week. –Amanda W.

**National Forest- Willamette**  
**Ranger District- Detroit**  
**Project Name- Bachelor/Coffin Mt. Trails**

**Week 2: August 7 – 13**

Monday: Our crew met up with all the other crews and set up base camp on Friday. Then we ate dinner, talked, and went to sleep. The next day we went on a rec trip. I went to the lake with Beth. A lot of our crew hiked up Coffin Mt. and met the lady that lives up there. Matt and Jessie went with Doug on a hike. Once we got back, Red Crew made dinner and we started getting ready to leave for Sunday. On Sunday we found out where we were going and we left. –Rebekah G.

Tuesday: This week we are working around the Bachelor Mountain Trail. Today we finished the “Bruno” (?) section of the trail; we put in 9 hours of work today. We also hope to get the next fork of the trail done ahead of schedule so we can work on the Coffin Mountain Trail and maybe visit the lookout on top. My personal goal is to not get stung again so my eye won't swell shut again. –Brendan R.

Wednesday: The Blue Crew this week has many different goals. One of our goals this week is to finish one of the three trails that we are working to finish. That was a horribly written sentence. The Blue Crew finished the Bruno Trail and practically finished the Bachelor Mountain Trail, except for the few drain dips that we still have to insert. After that we have to travel on over to Coffin Mountain and clean that trail up for the lady up above. Then we leave. These are all the goals for the week. –Curtis B.

Thursday: Our crew learned about clouds, reading maps, rocks and tectonic plates. We also learned it is not cool to lose our tools. The map reading was fun to learn about; I've been told how to read them but always forgot. But I don't think I'll forget so easily this time. So, all this week we learned some new things which could be very useful in the future. –Desiree S.

Friday:

“I may be loneliness

I may be innocent

I may know many things

I may be ignorant

Or I could ride with kings

Who conquer many lands

Or weld this world of cards

And let it slip my hands

I may be cannon food

Destroyed a thousand times  
Reborn as fortune's child  
To judge on others' crimes  
I'll wear this pilgrim's cloak  
Or be a collared thief  
I've kept this single faith  
I have before believed."           –Sting

**National Forest- Wenatchee NF**  
**Ranger District- Cle Elum**  
**Project Name- PCT-Lemah Switchbacks**

**Week 3: August 14 – 20**

Monday: We woke up on Friday, worked, drove to the weekend site, we set up camp and went to sleep. Saturday we woke up to a chainsaw, we did chores, went to Leavenworth, we had a scavenger hunt, we did laundry, we drove back to the weekend site, ate dinner, went to sleep, woke up, drove to the ranger station, unpacked the trailer, drove to the trailhead, packed the hiking packs, hiked 6 miles to the camp, set up camp, made dinner and did chores, ate dinner, went to sleep. –Matt P.

Tuesday: This week (week 3) the Blue Crew is working on the Pacific Crest Trail. Wooohoooo! On this special trail we are working on switchbacks. When working on said switchbacks, we are also building walls. Also, the Blue Crew has to widen trails for horses. That's about it. Peace out! -Curtis B.

Wednesday: Our goals, among the many, are to withstand the extremes of the backcountry, also to avoid direct contact with wasps and other annoying bugs. Today after work Curtis got a bloody nose. Another goal that is not far from reach is completing the rock retaining walls, which is proving to be quite the task. –Bill R.

Thursday: The great Blue Crew learned many things this week, due to being backcountry on the PCT (only the greatest trail in the world). We learned the hardships of sleeping in the green and white circus tents, and how to put up bear-hangs. We learned a long hike into work and back makes for an extremely tiring day. We found out it is not an easy task retrieving things (yellow tops, tools, food) that fall or are dropped over the edge. In fact, a yellow top dropped by Thomas may even be impossible to retrieve without a Jansport phantom hiker. Magically he found our yellow top and was sitting on it as Savage hiked into work. We also learned very well that big heavy rocks are a dangerous challenge to retrieve for rock walls. Curtis was almost taken out by a gigantic rock we tried to get. As the rock rolled I was sure it was going to hit him. Luckily for us all, everything turned out OK. Personally I learned that a Nalgene can save a leg. It does have some crazy dents and scrapes but I am thankful it was not my leg. Overall I would say this week was a great experience but I think I speak for us all when I say Thank God Tomorrow is Friday! –Mindy S.

Friday: The Blue Crew accomplished a big rock wall. It took us about three days to finish it. Even though it was an accomplishment it was a really big challenge. Three people—Savage, Matt, and Joe—dropped a rock on their fingers. It was a challenge to hike about 2 miles every day to work. A good accomplishment is to see the whole Blue Crew make it to week four. It was a challenge to finish the rock wall and go over the four hours we work on Fridays. –Big Joe

**National Forest- Okanogan NF**  
**Ranger District- Methow Valley**  
**Project Name- Crystal Lake Trail**

**Week 4: August 21 – 27**

Monday: This weekend Blue Crew had a blast! On Friday we did not roll into base camp 'til 1:00am, so we did not get to take showers or do laundry. But have no fear... Saturday rolled around and after chores when it was time for rec trips, Blue Crew got our beloved shower and laundry. We were also given \$25 to spend as a crew, so we went to Safeway and bought 7 containers of ice cream. We scarfed that 'til we felt like puking as we rocked out to "Lean on Me" and other wonderful songs. When we came back to base camp, some of our parents had arrived for parents' weekend. We had Saturday circle and the question was what we had learned while working so far. That night Blue Crew also found out we would be waking up at 4:00am to leave for our next project. The other crew got 'til 6:30 but it's all good because this just proves Blue Crew is the most hard core of all! Yearr! –Mindy S.

Tuesday: For these next two weeks, Blue Crew is working in the Okanogan National Forest in the Methow Valley. This is a burn area, so there are a lot of trail issues, but so far we have worked on turn-pikes and drainage dips. In the coming weeks we will also be doing some switchback work. –Amanda W.

Wednesday: Our crew's goal for the week is mostly just to make it through the week and finish the job that we set out to do. We want to finish the project all the way. We want to do all the best work the Blue Crew can do. Our goal is to keep everyone happy for the last two weeks. For our crew PMA is a big deal and a goal is to keep it straight the rest of the way through. One goal is to leave on Thursday. – Joe B.

Thursday: This week the Blue Crew learned several things. For starters, we learned how to use some new tools. We learned how to use "Swede hooks," "draw knives," and how to chop a tree in half with a Pulaski. Another thing we learned was how to make a grey dip. We also furthered our knowledge of how to pack and tie down a backcountry pack. That's it. –Curtis B.

Friday: This week Blue Crew completed five turnpikes, crosscut over 20 logs, and built a beautiful rock zen thing which allowed water to flow under it. A challenge was working extra hours and really pushing ourselves to do it. The week is now over and we only have one final week to go, hurray!

**National Forest- Okanogan**  
**Ranger District- Methow Valley**  
**Project Name- Crystal Lake Trail**

**Week 5: August 28 – September 3**

Monday: This weekend we got to sleep in and enjoy waking up to Aurora's rice breakfast. Then we did dishes, relaxed, and played games all day. We also washed up in the stream and cleaned up our tents. Aurora, being the sweetheart that she is, made us three square meals and cut a few of the guys' hair. – Rebekah G.

Tuesday: We started a turnpike after hiking 2 miles to work. We had to start a new turnpike because the trail was so messy. Then after a hard day of the work we went back to camp. –Chad B.

Wednesday: Today is Wednesday and tomorrow is our last day of work for the whole session. These past two weeks backcountry have been intense. Cold cold cold nights! Fun hikes up hill! We have now gone 11 days with no shower! I have to say we smell raunchy. Tomorrow we will pack out all our equipment and work five hours. Five hours of hard core! Then we will be outtie. It's been fun but I think we are all ready for a shower and never ever eating gravy again! Yeayer! –Mindy S.

Thursday: Here I am sittin' here after four weeks of hard work, and thinking a nice long shower would definitely be awesome. Although eleven days without a shower was a breeze, I actually think my socks smell quite nice and would be a great deodorizer in the family van. It's dinner time and I want to eat! – Desiree S.

Friday: A crew accomplishment was to finish through week five without losing a crew member. Our challenges were building turnpikes and grade dips. That would have to be an accomplishment to finish all the turnpikes. An accomplishment was finishing our zen rock wall. It was a trail that had a stream running through it.

### ***My Most Challenging Day At NYC Was...***

My most challenging day at NYC was on week three when we had to make a rock wall. It was so challenging that it took about half of the week. The Blue Crew had to search for big rocks. "Big Joseph Bryant."

My most challenging day at NYC was when we had to hike 6 miles back to the van after a week of backcountry. Chad B.

I don't know that I really had one most challenging day at NYC. This session was pretty hard the whole way through since I came in with a cold and pretty much could not kick it out in the woods. But I am very glad I stuck it out and I really had a blast. Mindy S, aka Happy.

Many days were challenging, but I guess the most challenging would have been being away from home for five weeks. After all the longest I have ever been away from home was a week. But I finished and it has prepared me for future absences. Desiree S.

My most challenging day here was definitely the 6 mile hike we did to get out of our 3<sup>rd</sup> week backcountry. It was both physically and mentally exhausting, something I will never forget. Amanda W.

My most challenging day was when we prepared two gallons' worth of gravy in a 24 oz pot of noodles; it was impossible to digest. Bill R.

My most challenging day was Friday on the third week. We worked for four hours and hiked out of the backcountry with all our camping equipment on our backs. It was a long hike and we didn't make it back to the van before dark. Rebekah G.

I don't believe I had a single most challenging day. Whether it was physical, mental, or a mix of both, each day had its own set of trials, each about as difficult as the last. This entire session was, for the most part, very challenging. Matt P.

My hardest day at NYC would have to be the hike out from our first backcountry. I had a heavy pack and I thought the hike would never end. Curtis B.

***My Three Favorite NYC Experiences Were...***

My three favorite NYC experiences were meeting new friends, working together and not just on your own, and a cool experience was learning how to use new tools. Big Joseph B.

My three favorite NYC experiences were having a great crew, working as a team, and having a backcountry haircut. Chad B.

One of my favorite NYC experiences was Chad, Curtis, and Joe getting backcountry Mohawks done by Aurora with dull scissors. I also totally enjoyed all of our awesome views. It's also been great getting to know everyone on my crew! Mindy S.

I have to say I really liked the views and the crew. Actually everything was a good experience, even the challenging work and not-so-pleasant smells. It all just makes you appreciate things just a little more. Desiree S.

My three favorite experiences here at NYC were, first, watching three members of our crew get wicked Mohawks, then there was the first weekend site where I and a group of other crewmembers had an awesome afternoon at a crowded lake with murky brown water, and my third fave would be sitting down to dinner every night with the rest of the crew. Amanda W.

My favorite NYC experience was all the SEED classes; my crewleader SAVAGE taught me so much. Bill R.

My favorite NYC experiences were washing up in the stream, hanging out at the weekend sites, and just working hard, knowing it will be worth seeing the beautiful trail you built. Rebekah G.

My three favorite NYC experiences were going to sleep every night, when Savage yelled "tool count!", and when I got to walk over the trail that we made. Curtis B.

I don't really favor any moment over another. It was all fairly fun. Matt P.

### ***One Thing I Will Always Remember...***

One thing Joe will always remember is the cool people and crew leaders. I will remember that I didn't give up because it was too hard. Big Joseph B.

One thing I'll remember will be my crew and crew leader, the good work experience, and the hikes. Chad B.

What I will always remember is my crew and awesome crew leader Savage. We did some hardcore work that I will always remember as well. Mindy S, aka Happy.

I will always remember the Blue Crew and all the work we accomplished as a team. But most importantly I will remember that I finished and that is something to be proud of. Desiree S.

I will always remember that last tool count, the one that meant I had survived, through all the days I didn't think I could climb all the way up the path, carry the yellow top, or get out of my sleeping bag. We all could, and we all did. I won't forget that. Amanda W.

I will always remember the day when Joe, Chad, and I all got backcountry haircuts. Curtis B.

One thing I will always remember is riding in the smelly van listening to Bill Withers. Rebekah G.

I probably won't remember much that happened. I'll forget this all sooner or later. Matt P.

One thing I learned is that you can never over-appreciate a good tape collection. Bill R.

### ***From Now On I Will Always...***

From now on I will always get along with people better. I will always remember that work is never too hard. Big Joseph Bryant.

From now on I will always be a team player and be a hard worker. Chad B.

From now on I will always enjoy every trail I hike on and think about all the hard work that goes into every trail. I will also know I can do anything I set my mind to! Mindy S, aka Happy.

From now on I will always appreciate and enjoy all the little things in life, such as toilet paper and a comfortable bed. And when I think of this, I will remember those many people who don't have these and try to do something about it. Desiree S.

When I'm faced with another challenge, I will remember that 6 mile hike in the third week. If I could get through that, I can get through everything else. Amanda W.

From now on I will always reduce my impact on Mother Earth. Bill R.

I will always work hard. Curtis B.

From now on I will always watch my impact on the environment and work hard! Rebekah G.

From now on I will always live as I always have. I've no reason to change that, do I? Matt P.

***At NYC I Learned...***

At NYC I learned how to use new tools. I learned how to work as a team and how to put up with things which I (most of the time) couldn't. Big Joseph B.

At NYC I learned to do trail work, to work as a team, and to be a good worker. Chad B.

NYC has taught me a lot of things. Number one is how to push myself. It has also taught me how to work as a team even when everyone does not get along. It also taught me not to take things for granted, like a toilet and junk food and the comforts of home. Mindy S.

Like everyone, I learned trail work, something I always wanted to try as a job. I've done things as a team and NYC that I have never really done outside NYC. I also learned to push myself and have a positive approach to things that seem impossible. Desiree S.

I learned that hard work pays off, how to use some new tools, and how to push myself through pain. Curtis B.

At NYC, I learned to climb up great big hills, that cans and can'ts are not a measure of ability but determination, and that one duffel bag is enough to hold anything I truly need. Thanks, NYC! Amanda W.

At NYC I learned that you don't appreciate what you've got until it's gone. Bill R.

At NYC I learned about knots and what they're used for. Rebekah G.

At NYC I learned how to tie new knots. Matt P.