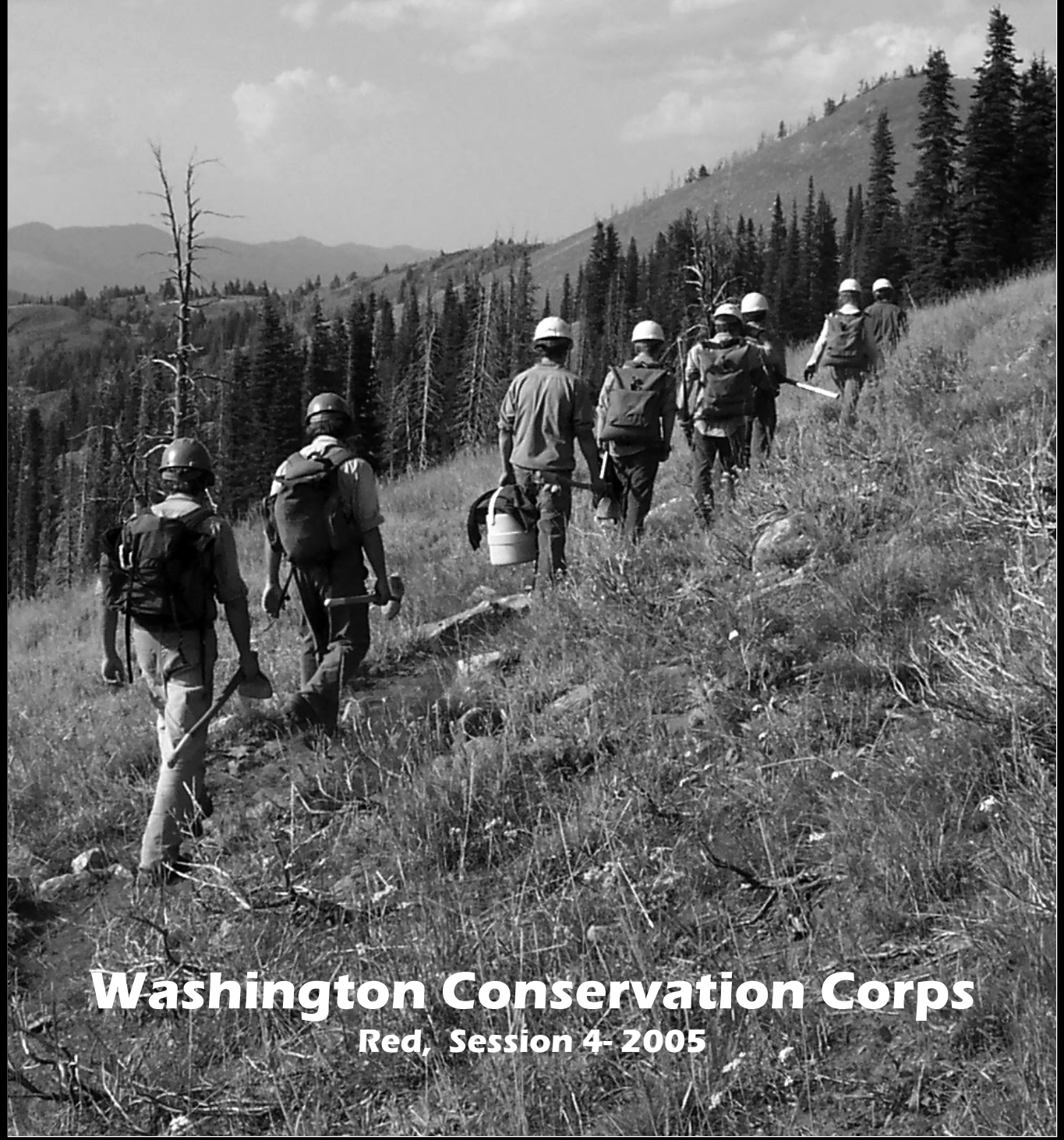




# *Crew Journal*



**Washington Conservation Corps**  
**Red, 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- Umatilla  
Ranger District- John Day  
Project Name- Olive Lake Trail**

**Week 1: July 31 – August 6**

Monday: This weekend was spent learning the basic ropes of what's expected of us and what we should expect for ourselves. Getting to know the crew leaders and the program is what will encompass the next five weeks. Another major event to the weekend was meeting the individuals that would be sharing the NYC experience. All in all it was probably one of the most important weekends we'll run into over our time spent away from home, friends, and all things familiar! –Caitlin C.

Tuesday: This week we are working at Olive Lake in the Umatilla National Forest. The week has begun with the building of a bridge and the ripping down of another little bridge. We have also worked on the trail and will continue to for the rest of the week. We are doing this because the trail is washing away and needs to be cleared and reestablished to allow hikers and campers to pass without falling and breaking something. –Dani Z.

Wednesday: Our goals for this week are building two bridges, treading, brushing, one switchback, and cleaning other campsites. Our main goal is to work around all of Olive Lake and on the hiking trails. The circumference of Olive Lake is about 2 miles. We all did a crew contract so we could all get along during this session. –Austin S.

Thursday: I think we learned that this would be harder than we thought, but we can still do the work. We went farther physically than we thought we could. We've come closer as a group, and we had fun working hard as well as at free time. As well as the work we found that drinking water in a limited amount of time is hard. This first week has been a preview of the next four weeks. This is going to be an awesome experience! –Naomi G.

Friday: There were only a few challenges this week. One was brushing. The sun was beating down on our backs and we had to drink a lot of water. Another challenge was nailing the bridges. The first and second bridges were nail benders. Carrying the bridge box along with the big length of wood was a challenge. One accomplishment was building 2 bridges in one week. The last accomplishment was brushing the trail—it was so thick you could not see ahead. –Thomas C.

**National Forest- Okanogan  
Ranger District- Methow Valley  
Project Name- Methow PCT Restoration**

**Week 2: August 7 – 13**

Monday: Our weekend site was in Deetroit. Some of us went to the lake and relaxed. Some people went on a hike and swam in the river. Everyone got a chance to go to the store and make phone calls. Everyone had a great time visiting with the other crews! –Who's Yo Mama!

Tuesday: Pulsing blisters, knotted muscles, and nerves on the verge of snapping would best be able to describe today. After a rocky-switch-backish ten mile hike it's easy to say that the sight of camp was a blessing, which, amazingly, is a gift that is overshadowed by horses and the men who led them. The view from camp is stunning, and oddly enough, night here, though the skies are star splattered, never actually gets pitch black, though the sky we were working under today was a brilliant blue azure. Work was steady and redundant, as we were digging grade dips along a steadily inclining hill. The work wasn't extreme but the hikes back and forth will lengthen any work day. –Caitlin C.

Wednesday: This week we're working towards getting to work on time, hiking fast, doing grade dips and turnpikes, and bonding a lot. Being in the mountains is great... the mountains are indescribable. It's like a painted scenery and it doesn't look real. The scary thing out here is that there are rattle snakes. We haven't seen any yet, but we've heard them. We're all having fun working and sharing some life stories.

Thursday: It seems to me that this week we're learning the meaning of hard work. Not necessarily in the work itself, but in the amount of hiking. We're trying to combine our quality of work and speed, which seems to be coming slowly. Also, by now it's really sinking in that we're here for a long time and that it's hard work just living in the woods without the work. Hopefully we're learning to tough it out and accept situations that we're not used to or aren't comfortable with. –Claire F.

Friday: This week our crew has faced many challenges but accomplished much including the big challenges. The greatest challenge this week was the ten mile hike that left us panting, sweaty, tired, and above all, blistered. When we finally walked down the last trail, the beautiful little off-shoot to the left proved to be the trail to camp. Seeing that was one of the best sights of my life! And surely a huge accomplishment. But the hiking doesn't stop there! Another great accomplishment is our hike to work everyday. Now we are working on the challenge of perfecting grade dips (or nearly perfecting them)

and are looking forward to more challenges to be met with success and satisfaction of another accomplishment. –Dani Z.

**National Forest- Okanogan**  
**Ranger District- Methow Valley**  
**Project Name- Methow PCT Restoration**

**Week 3: August 14 – 20**

Monday: Sleeping in was probably the best part of our weekend... it was a nice change from the six a.m. wakeup calls. Traipsing through the river was probably another fun, if cold, endeavor when coming back from an abandoned trapper's cabin. Seeing it was pretty cool because it gives insight into a bit of the forest's history. Berry-picking and star-gazing also played an important part of our singular day off.

Tuesday: Well, since we are in the backcountry, our project is the same as last week. We are still in the Okanogan Forest digging drain dips for the PCT. We are also building and fixing turnpikes and stream fords. Two more days of work! The hike back will be easy because we've had an addition to our work of a LONG hike, there and back everyday... good practice! –Gretta S.

Wednesday: We have to eat as much food as possible. But the work has been fabulous, everyone's been having a lot of fun. We've had some hilarious moments. I don't think we're going to finish the project but we're working really hard. –Stephen

Thursday: Our crew learned how to identify things with a dichotomous key. We learned how to set up backcountry tents and load backpacks. Our crew learned how to keep stuff dry the hard way. Our crew also learned how to build grade dips and stream fords. Our first stream ford took a while but our second one was fast. –Thomas

Friday: Some of the challenges we faced this week were the hike to and from work and working very long days to make up other crews' hours and a member of our own gone. We also worked hard to combine quality work with speed. I think the biggest accomplishment of this week was finishing up our backcountry and making the hike and the very long hike out, and also, working through the absence of Austin, to find out at the end of the week that he'll be returning to us this weekend. Getting through this backcountry was quite a mental challenge, but we did it. It seems like our transitions are getting smoother, like when the horse packers came early and when our tents were soaked, we were able to adapt to the situation and move on, making the best of it. –Claire

**National Forest- Wenatchee NF**  
**Ranger District- Leavenworth**  
**Project Name- Ingalls Creek Trail Maintenance**

**Week 4: August 21 – 27**

Monday: After two weeks spent in the backcountry without seeing any other crews, the sight of the van after our ten mile hike was most definitely worth its weight in gold. This was only over-shadowed by the fact that we were able to wash clothes AND shower! The weekend site was a blast (as usual), hearing what the other crews had done and just hanging out with friends. –Caitlin

Tuesday: This week we are camped on a beautiful mountainside in the Wenatchee Mts. We are brushing the trail along the Forth Creek, along with a few drain dips. The brushing is kind of fun compared to all the digging we did last week. It's too bad we are only here for less than a week because it's absolutely beautiful. –Gretta

Wednesday: Wow, NYC's already close to finished, and I feel it's barely started. It's so crazy how time flies. We've done grade dips, turnpikes, and hiked for 10 miles. We've been exhausted and frustrated, but once we've slept we're all smiles. Because when the morning glory shines, and fills our hopes up anew, we've started fresh, a brand new day, a day in the life of Red Crew. This week the Red Crew lands and hopes to finish brushing out the trail that goes from the Alpine Wilderness all the way up to where the Blue Crew finished their section, thereby making the trail more readily accessible, and self-sufficient for the next 10 years. By tomorrow, we hope to have finished most of the trail up to the creek, so that on Friday, we can do the finishing touches that are closer to home (home being our site). –Joshua

Thursday: Today we got to the end of our week's project. The first couple of days it didn't feel like we were making much progress, but we finished it today with enough time for QC and our small projects for tomorrow. From this, I think we have learned that if we push through and actually work at a fast pace we can get what we want done. I also feel that we're living in a great balance. Although people have their differences, we are living with each other peacefully and respecting each other. –Claire

Friday: Our challenges included gale force winds and the scarcity of water. Also, our "bear-hang" ended up being referred to as Danny DeVito—quite short and easily frustrated (Matthew Evinger). The missing handsaw almost made momma get her gun. So the Red Crew is on the run, but everyone's having fun and laughing through epic hikes while carrying the food they probably won't eat because they are staring at the majestic beauty that abounds. Only in the backcountry, folks... I guarantee it! –FMP

**National Forest- Gifford Pinchot NF**  
**Ranger District- St. Helens National Volcanic Monument**  
**Project Name- Loowit Trail**

**Week 5: August 28 – September 3**

Monday: The weekend was spent driving in every which way save for the one we needed to be going in, but it was an absolute blast! We spent the night at the great "camp" site and enjoyed the stars, and even though there were a lot of people around us in RVs, the scenery was great! After we found out where we were camping, we spent a day exploring the dank darkness of Mt. St. Helens' Ape Caves. The next day was a repeat of the caves, but fun! –Caitlin

Tuesday: This week we have the pleasure of working on Mt. St. Helens. We are hiking 7 miles to work to make trail on steep ledges. We are doing this project to rebuild the trail being lost to erosion in a mudslide area. –Dani

Wednesday: Our goals for this week are prying rocks and fixing a really long trail. This is all done on the famous volcano of North America, Mt. St. Helens. –Austin

Thursday: This being our last week, the finality of our NYC journey, we've taken from this experience a good work ethic. All of us have learned to tolerate and enjoy each other's company. Teamwork has been a very important part in our development, also. We have all become better people due to this experience. –Naomi

Friday: This week has been really fun, but it's also been really off because of the fact that it's the last week. We had to hike about 7 miles to work each day (there and back), and sometimes we got dehydrated and irritable. We worked trails that had had high drops on them, and it was kind of scary, but we finished our project, and finished our hours, so it was all right. –Veggie

For our final week the hike and trail building seemed to be the most challenging. Hiking 7 miles, on average, every day to and from work took a toll on our bodies and minds, but we pushed ourselves and made it every day. The work itself was rather simple, but the area we were in proved to make it somewhat difficult. The area in Mt. St. Helens where we worked was rather steep, and sometimes very awkward for your feet. The 2<sup>nd</sup> to last day of work we had to basically make a new trail out of this steep culvert. The last two days proved to be our most challenging, but we pulled through and got the project done.

We have endured and accomplished more than I thought I could do, personally, for myself. We are the Mega Hikers, Buyah! –Naomi

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

My biggest challenge was when we climbed Wenatchee Mountains. Stephen J.

My biggest challenge was the five-mile hike uphill with a very heavy pack and I thought I was going to die. Claire F.

The most challenging part of NYC for me would have to have been the 5-mile hike uphill, but in particular the last steep hill of it. Danielle Z.

...the hike from “not-heaven” up that steep “butt” hill in Wenatchee. Gretta S.

My most challenging day at NYC was the 10-mile backpack trip. Thomas C.

My most challenging day was hiking out when I had to leave the crew for a week. Austin S.

My most challenging day would have to have been the 5-mile hike we did on the 2<sup>nd</sup> to last Sunday, but especially the last mile.

My most challenging day would have had to be the last work day of our session of NYC at Mt. St. Helens, when I got really aggravated with myself, and everything was really slow. Joshua Harman-Veggie.

I'd have to say my most challenging day at NYC was the third “gully” trail at Mt. St. Helens because just as I was about to reach the top I was told I had to go back because I'd forgotten to switch shotgun duties; it was my final breaking point and I just broke down on a rock... grrr. Caitlin C.

My most challenging moment was the 10 mile hike into Okanogan; I wanted to quit so badly, but the hike was rewarding. Jordan M.

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

...when I met everyone, and when this guy said he loved me because I was gay and used to be prejudiced. Stephen J.

...challenging myself, seeing beautiful outdoors and wilderness, and meeting amazing people. Claire F.

...Just three? Well I really enjoyed the sights, meeting the people, and discovering that I could do things that I never thought I was capable of doing. Danielle Z.

The hike up Mt. St. Helens is absolutely beautiful. It was probably my favorite part of the entire experience... well, the first time we did it at least. Two other things I enjoyed very much were the blue flowers on the top of the Wenatchee Mt. and meeting all sorts of people from the West Coast. Gretta S.

My three favorite NYC experiences were building a bridge at Olive Lake, building a turnpike in the Okanogan Forest, and busting out rock on Mt. St. Helens. Thomas C.

My three favorite experiences are getting to know the other crew members, the beautiful scenery at St. Helens, and sleeping in a sleeping bag for five weeks straight. Austin S.

... (1) definitely my crew, (2) the fact of how much I can hike, (3) the places we went. Naomi G.

I would definitely have to say that my three favorite experiences at NYC were (1) friends, (2) nature in all its splendor, and (3) learning. Veggie (Josh H.)

...(1) wading back and forth through the river at Olive Lake, (2) switching shirts at Okanogan, (3) the weekend sites in general. Caitlin C.

...(1) HIKING, yeah it rocks!, (2) friends, (3) learning about people from totally different walks of life. J. Mullan.

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

I will always remember the names of the frogs that I found. Stephen J.

I will always remember how dirty I was and how much I didn't care. Claire F.

The main thing that I will always remember is all the people that I've gotten to know and learn from. When I look back on this experience it's not honestly going to be the trails that I'll see but the great times I shared with those who worked that trail. Danielle Z.

I will forever remember the view from the hillsides of Mt. St. Helens. Gretta S.

I will always remember the view of Mount St. Helens. Thomas C.

... is the crew. The reason why is that they are always supportive, comical, and very open-minded. Austin S.

... are all the places I've been and the people I've met. Naomi G.

I will never forget Gretta's wisdom and her smile, Claire's determination and her jokes, Danni's perseverance and her maturity, Stephen's laugh and his personality, Caitlin's spirit and sense of responsibility, Jordan's comicality and fun nature, Thomas' politeness and his short temper, Jacob's singing and optimism, Rachel's strong and happy-go-lucky personality, Matt (Mumbles)'s joking but accepting personality and Beth (Mom)'s caring and nurturing correction. Joshua H. (Veggie)

I will forever remember the people I've met. Caitlin C.

I will always remember that you can't always judge someone based on how they act or what they wear because you will miss some great people. J. Mullan

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

I will always look at someone and think I love people. Stephen J.

...try things before I decide I can't do something. Claire F.

There's a lot that will be different now but mostly I won't see a "situation" or something like that and say or think I can't do it before I try. Dani Z.

From now on I will always know I can walk 7 miles uphill even when I'm tired and blistered and starving... so I don't always have to drive. Gretta S.

From now on I will always appreciate the people who build trail. Thomas C.

I will always be more social and more open-minded. Austin S.

I will always appreciate the thing at home I used to take for granted, like my family. Naomi G.

I will always be more willing to have solo time. Josh H/Veggie

I'll always remember not to take what I have for granted. Caitlin C.

I will always know that if I put my mind to it I can do anything. J. Mullan.

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

I learned to work hard, be smelly, and accomplish everything. Stephen J.

...I can do more than I thought I could, nature isn't that scary, and hard work pays off. Claire F.

At NYC I learned that I was capable of meeting goals I never knew would be possible for me, the meaning of hard work, and a new respect for hikers. Danielle Z.

At NYC I learned about building trail, using tools, and that time passes faster if you play ridiculous games. Gretta S.

At NYC I learned to be more accepting of people with different backgrounds and ways. Thomas C.

I learned better social skills and great determination. Austin S.

...the meaning of hardcore work, definitely respect for park staff, and about myself. Naomi G.

At NYC I learned to be more responsible, more respectful of other people's and my time, and more laid-back. Veggie (Josh H).

At NYC I learned that there is so much I don't understand. Caitlin C.

I learned a good work ethic, better determination, and how to sing and hike at the same time. J. Mullan.