



# *Crew Journal*



*Oregon Conservation Corps  
Orange, Session 1, 2006*



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 2006. It is testimony of your successes, challenges, experiences both good and bad as well as some 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. Make it happen!!!

A few of the amazing things accomplished during the 2006 field season at NYC; over 17 miles of new trail constructed, over 328 miles of existing trail maintained, 2,237 drainage structures installed, 3,400 ft. of retaining wall built, 1,222 ft. of turnpike constructed, 323 ft. of bridge built, 208 acres of trees pruned, 381 logs bucked out, and 1,513 acres of noxious weeds eradicated.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Waksmundski". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned over a light blue rectangular background.

Joe Waksmundski  
NYC Field Director



**National Forest or area that the work took place: Willamette NF**  
**Ranger District: Sweet Home RD**  
**Project Name- Invasive Species Removal**

Week 1: Date June 19<sup>th</sup>-June 23<sup>rd</sup>

Monday: We got stuck in the mud on Sunday but Deverton saved the day with his masterful chainsaw skills. We got camp set up really fast and we discussed camp rules. -Joe

Tuesday: This week we are eradicating invasive foreign species of plants. Specifically we're taking Pulaski's and hazel hoes to scotch broom and Himalayan blackberries in the wilds of the Sweet Home vicinity in Southwest Oregon. We're taking these alien organisms to the chopping block to clear areas and open them up for repressed native plants to thrive in the native land. -Avi

Wednesday: Today we finished off the scotch broom, we finished the last minute. It was a long hard, hot day but we somehow managed to finish the overwhelming amount of scotch broom. That was pretty much our whole day except the free time where we got back and the dinner that is coming soon. -Steven

Thursday: We learned about discrimination in seed. We learned how to play one fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish. It was a blast and big booty was too. We learned about dealing with people's problems. That was hard enough with everybody cramped. But....It was fun. –Scott M. AKA Lemmy Wink

Friday: We demolished scotch broom bushes and blackberry. We were by the water and we killed the plants with sharp tools. It was wet and we got dirty but worked our batooties off. We hiked and whooped the black berry and scotch broom population of this area around sweet home. I would have to say we did a great job. Go Orange Crew! Shout out to my mom and dad in Cali, what up Larry and Doug. –Marlo & Chelsi

**National Forest or area that the work took place: Klamath NF**  
**Ranger District: Scott River**  
**Project Name- Shakleford Creek Trail Rehabilitation**

Week 2: Date: June 26<sup>th</sup>-June 30<sup>th</sup>

Monday: Today we woke up at 6:15 and we cleaned up our 1 night camp and we set off to our backcountry camp. When we got to the location we hike in with heavy packs and tools. It was a three and a half mile hike, so we are here now and it is a really nice place to be. –Steven

Tuesday: We are doing general trail maintenance this week. We've been repairing rock bars and drainage dips and we've been clearing rocks and logs and debris from the trail. Unlike last week, we've actually been hiking so everyone's pretty tired. And!!! Today we were hiking through snow which was surprising since it was so hot. –Claire

Wednesday: Today we finished maintaining the loop trail. We used the Pulaski's a lot to chop fallen trees, which is always a satisfying project. Due to a rough trek to the latrine Chelsie couldn't work today, but she and Lindsay did the chores for us. Towards the end of the day of hiking we went to Cliff Lake which was very pretty. George and I talked to some hikers who appreciated our work. We hope to clean up a lot more trail this week towards the trail head and to enjoy this beautiful area. –Haley Harwood

Thursday: This week our crew went to Klamath National Park in Northern California. We were packed in and out by a (noise?) crew. The work mostly consisted of hiking through all the trails and removing obstacles, also we dug more than 25 drainage ditches. In the latter part of the week our crew suffered two injuries, but the crew members quickly recovered. Overall the crew hiked around 15 miles over the span of the week. Whatsup mom its Marley love you a lot. –Marley R.

Friday: This week we faced the slopes and many rapid flowing creeks of the Marble Mountains. Everyday we dealt with a large amount of hiking while maintaining intensity in dealing with the projects we came upon. We dragged heavy water jugs and awkward, unusual tools such as the rock bar and sledge hammer with us all the while. In the work itself we faced unforgiving rocky stretches of dirt and stream bed that had to be dug out, massive logs blocking trails, and rocks we needed to move that weighed as much as 350 pounds at times. In addition we had to deal with the set back and downers of our crews first injuries. Our crewmember experienced red and swollen eyes and severe light headedness and despite her persistent dismissal of her condition, she was forced to sit out a couple of hours of work. Another injured and re-injured her ankle

knocking her off her feet and causing her to miss a full day of work. Despite these challenges our crew prevailed over our mountain and finished far more trail than we or our employers expected us to. We altered streambeds, created and built up dozens of water bars and generally got the entire trail system in line. Our injured crew mates persevered working while still in pain and we all made it out intact. –Avi

**National Forest or area that the work took place: Fremont NF**  
**Ranger District: Lakeview RD**  
**Project Name- Lakeview Trail Maintenance**

Week 3: Date July 3<sup>rd</sup>-July 7<sup>th</sup>

Monday: It started with a very long car trip to the weekend site from Northern California. When we arrived there, we set up camp and had dinner with three other crews. On Saturday we went on rec. trips to Crater Lake and areas along the Rogue River. When we got home parents visited. We had a great crazy dinner and a talent show. It was fun. –Scott AKA Lemywinks

Tuesday: This week we are maintaining trails in Fremont Oregon. We are cleaning, widening and building new trails. On Monday we hike about one mile in on the trails with our tools and started fixing the trail. We made the trail wider and flattened the trail out so it had more holes, big rock and uneven ground. When work was done we had a tool stash and hiked back to camp. On Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup> we hiked to the tool stash and grabbed the tools and started working backwards towards camp. We had to do major work on rocky parts of the trail by evening out the dirt and loose rocks. In the beginning of the day our goal was to finish the trail and be at the camp at the end of the day. We also had to do brushing. We made are goal for the day. For the rest of the week we are cutting down trees and creating new trail for hikers and extreme bikers. We will be in Fremont Oregon the following week after this. –Gracie R.

Wednesday: Our crew generally hopes to represent NYC out in the Fremont National Forest. We're looking to bust up some new trail, revamp old tread and deal with any other obstacles presented to us on the worksite. We also intend to milk out the vast wisdom of our crew leader in such matters. Most importantly we plan to thoroughly enjoy this middle week of the session, keeping it live with spirited song and fresh moves. –Avi

Thursday: This week we learned how to build new trail and we were also educated on forest succession and how to recognize different kinds of plants and we also learned about some of our crew members lives. –Steven

Friday: Our crew faced what was probably our biggest challenge as of yet at the beginning of the week. After the death of one of her friends, Chelsie went home after work on Monday. The nine of us were left with a sense of loss and confusion while still facing a full week of work. So with a few more hours to complete and an empty seat in the van we pulled together and found the optimism and energy that was crucial for a successful week. Many people took on extra chores, our singing on the trail was louder than ever, and we learned more about each other through personal histories.

With the addition of our new rover, Matt, our physical abilities were challenged with his morning calisthenics during safety circle and push ups at night (for some of us). This week also offered new challenges at the work site as we had our first dose of exposure to the art and

technique of trail building. By the end of the week we were digging top line, defining hinges, leveling tread, and building drainages in a much improved manner. Collectively we have a lot of confidence, a renewed sense of unity and even a little bit of fresh trail to show for the challenges that we overcame this week. –Maggie M.

**National Forest or area that the work took place: Umpqua National Forest**  
**Ranger District: Diamond Lake RD**  
**Project Name- Diamond Lake Hazardous Fuels Reduction**

Week 4: Date July 10<sup>th</sup>-July 14th

Monday: After completing our weeks work at the Fremont National Forest we embarked on our long journey to the weekend site with an ipod for our listening pleasure. We stopped in Medford for laundry and showers where Marley had an altercation with a group of Seven year olds while Matt spent an hour in the shower. The situation elevated to Mancala beads being thrown at Marley's head. He later was rewarded with the turkey award. The weekend site was in Southern Oregon by Cave Junction and we all went on rec. trips to the Oregon Caves, the Redwoods and the Illinois River. Later on Saturday Cory led the days events. On Sunday we reunited with Deverton and headed out to Diamond Lake

Tuesday: This week we are putting in work in the Umpqua National Forest by Diamond Lake. We are cutting down trees and brush and piling them into slash piles. We plan to make hundreds of these piles so that they can be burned in the fall. The goal of this operation is to prevent wild fires by elimination of there fuel source. In my case, we can at least hope to learn the intensity of any fires that do occur.

Wednesday: Orange crews goals are to get more burn piles then yellow and blue crew. We have to do a minimum of 37 burn piles a day and Monday we completed 30. All together so far we have 116 burn piles and a min of 44 more burn piles. We are also trying to make the best of burn piles of all the groups. If we stay the pace that we are going we will have 159 by the end of tomorrow. –Gracie R.

Thursday: Well, we certainly learned how to make slash piles... really amazing ones. Several of us learned a lot about leadership after being leaders of the day. In SEED we learned about the fabulous three C's for decision making (clarify, consider, and choose). We also learned that singing songs boosts your PMA very much and that Mike FM is an exceedingly good radio station. During personal histories we learned intriguing details and several people's lives. Lastly we learned that Orange crew is well, FABULOUS. Haley H.

Friday: On Sunday morning we discovered that we would be heading out to Diamond Lake for a week of building slash piles to reduce hazardous fuels in the Umpqua National Forest. Two of the other crews had already worked on this particular project earlier in the session and they warned us of the tedious nature of the work we would be doing. Thus, as a crew our first challenge was to overcome this negativity and to begin our week

with a fresh perspective. Our next obstacle to overcome was to win bragging rights by completing more piles than the other crews. The number to beat was 153. After building 30 piles on Monday as we familiarized ourselves with PPT (proper piling technique), we knew we would have to step it up and take pride in our work if we were going to accomplish the goals we set. Eventually, we set the bar higher and decided to aim for 200 piles. Setting this ambitious goal turned out to be the great motivational factor for our crew. We worked steadily and with a sense of determination. To our own surprise, we surpassed our goal and made a grand total of 205 slash piles. What could have been a boring project ended up being a rewarding experience. This week also brought the addition of leader of the day, which tested our ability to take on new leadership roles and to respect our fellow crew members. It was definitely a challenge that took a little extra effort on everyone's part, but with our leaders of the day our pile production was more efficient than ever. Overall in spite of the mosquitoes and some initial pessimism, Orange crew had a successful and more importantly enjoyable week.

**National Forest or area that the work took place: Rogue River NF**  
**Ranger District: Ashland RD**  
**Project Name- Klamath Co. PCT**

Week 5: Date July 17<sup>th</sup>-July 21<sup>st</sup>

Monday: Well...we won the crew Olympics! We failed in the first event of ten takedown and setup but then made a strong comeback in the p.p.g. relay and the yellow top chug. On Saturday we went on rec. trips and got a little break from each other. We also talked with each other about what we want to get out of the final week. What we want to accomplish, what we expect from each other. -Claire MF

Tuesday: We are working on the Pacific Crest Trail, we are doing brushing to widen the trail. This is our last week and we are having a good time. -Steven G.

Wednesday: Our crews goals were to get along better with each other and be more patient and understanding. Our other goal of the week was to finish the week out knowing we pushed ourselves both mentally and physically and feeling like we tried our hardest. -Marley R.

Thursday: The crew learned this week about fire legends, wilderness philosophy and general acceptance of others. I believe that we learned each of these well.

Friday: This week's challenge was dealing with the PCT. We had a ton of brushing to do in a short amount of time. We had to deal with the boring of brush and doing the same thing over and over every day. By Thursday we had finished the dense brush and were starting to look for more work to do. So we drove to a different location on the PCT and hiked in to finish brushing and drains. On Friday we had limited time to finish up the drains and brushing on the trail. We needed to push are limits to finish in time. We had the songs on the trail to boost are PMA. By the end of the week we finished the drains and brushing that we had set out to finish with the time just flying by everyday. Every hiker that had passed us was thankful of all the hard work that we have done. We finished what we had set out to do and more. -Gracie R

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

My most challenging day at NYC was the very first one. Orientation day at Elijah Bristow state park. I came into the program not knowing any of the other participants and with little idea of what I was going to be doing for the next five weeks. To make matters worse my allergies were acting up severely. I was blowing my nose at extremely short intervals and was constantly rubbing my eyes in a vain attempt to cure the itching sensation. Even under normal circumstances I am a rather shy person around people I don't know. The allergies and complete foreignness of NYC only exaggerated this condition. I stumbles around in a semi-stupor trying to understand the fact that I was no longer in the city and to group all the information that some outrageously enthusiastic NYC staff members were throwing at me from all directions. My only comfort was my slick pair of stylin shades which prevented me from rubbing too much and hid my tearing eyes from public view, allowing me to maintain at least a shred of dignity. Even so I'm sure some noticed my condition and pitied the lowly kid who not only was crying on the first day of the program, but thought wearing some cheap excuses for sunglasses would make him cool. Eventually I got through the rotations and icebreaking shenanigans of that first day and the next day I got assigned to a crew that I quickly grew close to. Over the course of the next week my allergies improved significantly. While I've faced various challenges out in the field with NYC since then, none have compared to that first day for me.

The first week walkng with blisters - Gracie R.

I felt that most Tuesdays were the most challenging days for me because Monday was getting to know the project and Wednesday was hump day. - Marley R.

My most challenging day at NYC was the Monday of the fifth week because I was sick and the time seemed not to pass. -Joe M.

My most challenging day was Tuesday of the second week, not necessarily because of the pain and dizziness I experienced on account of my peculiar eye situation but rather because of the guilt and uselessness I felt after sleeping through work/chore time. -Maggie M.

My most challenging day was actually probably the last full day of work. When I knew we were so close, but still had to work hard through the day and we were mostly just brushing the entire day. -Claire F.

My most challenging moment was our hike in, on a backcountry experience in California. -Steven G.

My most challenging day was the first day in Fremont because it was our first time doing real trail work and I thought my back would break before the week was through. -Hayley H.

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

1) My first favorite NYC experience was seeing the deer. I thought it would be no biggie to see one, but it was one of my favorite NYC experiences.

It's the food

3) Some of the kids are really cool. -Scott M.

1) The bonding time in the first week of the session was a great experience.

2) The experience moving boulders and sawing up logs in California was my favorite at a worksite.

3) Winning the NYC Olympics -Avi A.

1) Duct Tape

2) Deverton and the flowers

3) Jessica and George -Gracie R.

1) Getting to know my crew members well

2) Knowing that I completed 205 slash piles with my crew

3) Completing a second session with NYC. -Marley R.

1) Chillin with George from Cali

2) Seeing Joe's Zebra print G-string while slash piling

3) Winning the NYC Olympics -Joe M

1) Bursting out into song while working on the trail, mixing scrambled brownies with Haley or riding in the van.

2) Overcoming our first big obstacle-getting the van unstuck on the first Sunday and realizing how special and unpredictable it is to be a part of an NYC crew.

3) Our polite british accent dinner and the carrying capacity SEED that followed (which involved an Italian/Polish accent).

1) Our week in the backcountry in California

2) The rearranging log game Matt had us do

3) Massages in the dish line -Claire F.

1) Going on Matt's rec. trip

2) Weekends

3) Store Stops -Steven G.

1) Singing...anything...anywhere...anytime.

2) Having a good solid laugh, especially when it's a whole crew laugh.

3) I loved the moment when I finally felt comfortable being myself. The time when I could name the packages of tofu and I wouldn't get weird looks because people know and accept who I was. -Hayley H.

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

I will always remember that I got \$1,000; seeing deer and snakes and scorpions, and I woke up with a scorpion in our tent. -Scoot M.

I will always remember the feeling of complete familiarity and unity with 9 other people of completely different backgrounds that comes only with living together in close quarters for five weeks. -Avi

The fact that I lived with 10 other teenagers and 2 crew leaders and working with them side by side for 5 weeks. -Gracie R.

Our program manager Joe bending over while working with us and seeing his zebra stripe underpants. -Anonymous

I will always remember George Bunyon Jesus Jedi and his mysterious ways of the forest. -Joe M.

I will always remember the different personalities and styles that everyone brought to the crew and that through our struggles and successes we found time to laugh at the little stuff. -Maggie M.

Being delightfully dirty and having a dirt mustache. -Claire F.

Crew leaders, rovers and crew members. -Steven

I will always remember meeting people that were so different from anyone I'd met before and learning to appreciate differences. -Haley H.

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

I will always know that I'm funny in a lot of ways. -Scott M.

I will always treasure everything that I have going for me, particularly the great childhood I have been given hearing the experiences of other has made me better appreciate my own. -Avi

Never take material items for granted and appreciate trail workers and life more. -Gracie R.

I will have a great respect for the trails and I work on and people with empathy. -Marley R.

I will respect people for their differences and have understanding for them. -Joe M.

From now on I will always play the "I like" game when I start to get caught up in feelings of stress, helplessness or loneliness. -Maggie M.

From now on I will always try to do things that matter rather than waiting for exciting things to come my way. Try to be more patient. -Steven G.

I will always do the neck roll at least 4 times a week and sing when I'm feeling down. -Haley H.

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

Making knots; learning to live life with guys in the tents; learning to accept that it is not always about me. -Scott M.

At NYC I learned what woods work is really about, what forms of communication are most conducive of cooperation and how to cook a filthy meal. -Avi

Living with 12/11 other people; knots; forest work. -Gracie R.

I learned to have a greater respect for team work. -Marley R.

I learned how to coexist with others. -Joe M.

I've learned that even if you think you've sang every 90's hit ever recorded there are always some buried in your memory just waiting to be re-discovered; I've learned that the way you choose to approach a challenging situation at work or at camp can change the outcome in a positive or negative way depending on your attitude; I've learned that being honest with yourself and with others and feeling comfortable with that openness may be difficult but in the end it's always worth it. -Maggie M.

How to do slash piles; cut scotch broom; use tools properly. -Steven G.