

January 15, 2010

Hello all,

I hope that this journal reaches you all safe, happy, and full of pride. You folks spent 5 weeks of your lives living, learning, and sweating in the wilds of Eastern WA. You all completed some amazing work, met some incredible challenges and created memories that will last a lifetime. Hopefully by now the mosquito bites of twin sisters lake have ceased to itch.

As we have all re-entered the "real world" I hope that images of the mountains, desert, forest, cold nights and hot days still burn bright in your minds. You all made an incredible impact on the forests and natural places you worked. I hope that you all are as proud as I am.

So lace those boots tight, grab a PBJ, and enjoy. I wish you all the best!!

Jeff Olson

BLP 4

CREWLEADER: Lucy Cohen

CREW COLOR: BROWN

WEEK # 1

PROJECT NAME: Bumping Trail Rec Construction

NATIONAL FOREST: Wenatchee NF

RANGER DISTRICT: Naches

MONDAY: Describe what your crew did this weekend:

We met up on Saturday and played games while meeting and introducing ourselves to our crew members. On Sunday we got up and chopped/hacked a trail for turtle observers, and then we got in the rig and settled in for a long car ride.

TUESDAY: Describe your project this week; where are you, what are you doing, why?

We are in Wenatchee by Twin Sister Lake. The mosquitoes are attacking our morale like vampires, sucking away at our will to live. Fortunately it is raining now and likely that such trouble will soon abate. We are building a trail for hikers.

WEDNESDAY: How EPIC are you?

BLP suited up according to protocol. Ski masks, Pulaski's, dirt for our faces and whips to crack over our own backs when we weren't completing our objectives quickly enough. Today we trained for 27 hours today, readying ourselves for the weekend site. Fear is our greatest weapon. Battle cries shake white walls and prime chainsaw motor. We are discipline. We are wild. Savannas and icebergs creating opposing schools of thought that collide, spawning torrential downpours of US.

We are a rogue team of lone wolves fighting for honor and personal gain. You may be safe someday but the hairs on the back of your neck will stand on end while you drive into the weekend site. We will stand erect concealed prior...

THURSDAY: Who would do what in a fight with a bear?

After starring down the bear, Collin distracted him by throwing PB&Js. Gabby and myself then hacked at the legs with Pulaski's whilst the crew leaders beat at its head with SEED books full of rocks. Although Megan hurled bricks of cheese, it was to no avail. The SEED books and rocks broke on the bear's skull, as like lollipops, he ate the Pulaski's. Then as the bear lumbered forward to seal the deal, a bass peaked forth a song, which lilted upon the horizon and a great Viking stepped forth and bellowed at the bear, "input". Alicia then hurt the bear from on high and finally Tommy lit a fire underneath him that was too big and everyone complained. The bear quaked with fear. The bear rolled its eyes and stepped forth to devour afore mentioned crumpet. As he opened his great mouth to devour the poor hero, a glistening drop of jelly dripped from his jaw and as it struck the ground, all sound vanished like a lonely voice in the vacuum of space. And then, as though someone had begun brushing his teeth, a soft humming began. Slowly it escalated into a deafening roar as an uncountable number of mosquitoes drained the unfortunate beast of all his blood.

FRIDAY: What song would each person be? If anyone knows it, sing it.

Ethan would be "Enter Sandman" because he looks cool.

Emmet would be "Crunken Lullabies," obviously.

Collin would be "Wipeout" because he's gnarly.

Tommy would be...

Jordan would be "Take on Me" because he's radical boss.

Liz would be "Dancing in the Dark"

Gabby would be "Trogon" because she's a beast.

Megan would be "Hammer of the Gods" because, well, I'm not sure why but I really like that song...

I would be "What is Love". Yeahhh.

Lucy would be "Never Gonna Give You Up" because she is inescapable.

What about Alicia?! Butthead! Alicia would be "I want to Break Free" because she loves that song.

And Liza?! What would Liza's song be?

By duff and rocks... Clothing torn, eyes glowing, gaze upon you, the part of your soul that thought it was strong will wither and die. Your crew leader will crumble and as he falls, the doors will lick and the gleam of our razor sharp Pulaski's will be reflected in your eyes. Awestruck and expressionless, we will dig our blistered toes into our Mother Earth and begin to charge. You will know not what to do or think... Our thoughts are clear. Our thoughts are singular. Your destruction is inevitable as we gouge the busses flanks and pull it into the widening maul that was your campsite. You can only clutch the seat as you are consumed by our darkness. If you don't go crazy or perish in the nothing, you will see the ultimate truth...

...and become us.

If you can still grasp, take my calloused hand. You are now wild.

CREWLEADER: Lucy Cohen

CREW COLOR: BROWN

WEEK # 2

PROJECT NAME: Bumping Trail Reconstruction

NATIONAL FOREST: Wenatchee

RANGER DISTRICT: Naches

MONDAY: Describe what your crew did this weekend:

This weekend was pretty lame, and by lame, I mean awesome. Sunday we ventured to the other twin lake to enjoy a relaxing afternoon while Liz hiked 8 miles and Lucy distributed Ramen, peanut butter cookies into pretty blue bags. Fun. As for the rest of us getting to swim was fantastic. Alicia helped comb knots into my hair while Megan develops a nice scarlet sunburn. We later discovered Gabe's soft spot for horses, awww. Emmet drew game maps in the sand, then joined Collin and others in underwater walking escapades.

Jordan pleased us with his scruffy beard & Ethan realized he could almost eat his own. Patience, my friend... Gabby was close by to catch all the moments on camera, and I watched in horror as they all gorged on ramen.
Liza Koski

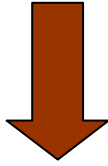
TUESDAY: Describe your project this week; where are you, what are you doing, why?

This week BLP is finishing up on our 1 mile reroute. It's mainly just QCing and digging awesome barrow pits. We are still in the Wenatchee Wilderness near the Twin Sisters Lake and we will be here until next week. I hate mosquitoes.
Collin Fox

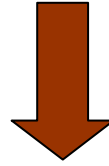
THURSDAY: Describe what your crew learned this week:

- 👉 Tortillas with peanut butter, brown sugar and cinnamon are quite delicious
- 👉 Mosquito Hell can be mosquito Heaven when the temperature drops below 60°

FRIDAY: Describe your crew's challenges and accomplishments this week



No food
No stoves



Got food!
Fixed stove!

(From the Ambassador of Mosquitoes)

God I love blood. Not my own either; other peoples'. Blood of the young, old, fat, skinny, even horse blood! God, I love horses! They are sooo incapable of swatting. Anyway, as the ambassador of our king, I would like to extend the fondest of thank you(s) to the Northwest Youth Corps. With their generous contribution of human blood sacks, we will be able to sustain families for many generations to come. This will also put us in a dominant position with the mayflies and perhaps trade will reopen and the genocide in west bank will cease. Thank you so much, NYC. This act will light the way for more prosperous transfusions in the future. Thank you, good night and God bless the Northwest Youth Corps.

CREWLEADER: Lucy Cohen

CREW COLOR: BROWN

WEEK # 3

PROJECT NAME: Bumping Trail Reconstruction

NATIONAL FOREST: Wenatchee

RANGER DISTRICT: Naches

MONDAY: Describe what your crew will do next weekend:

Since BLP has finished our project early, we will be starting our weekend tomorrow afternoon, at which time we will hike out (or more like walk, since we don't have much to carry), and then we will be driving to the weekend site with N3. After gracing N3 with our awesome piratey presence, we will drive/hike to our new worksite/camp where we will stay for another 2 weeks.
Gabrielle Jones

TUESDAY: Describe your project this week; where are you, what are you doing, why?

Today we are finishing up our super QC job. Then we are hiking out and chillaxing with no mosquitoes and an awesome store stop.
Collin Fox

WEDNESDAY: Describe your crew's goals for the week:

This week our crew hopes to accomplish some heavy sleeping, massive amounts of sugar intake and intimidate the crap out of the other crews cause we're BLP and we OWN!!! YOU!!!
Collin Fox

THURSDAY: Describe what your crew learned this week:

We learned that frumpiness induces more frumpiness when you have many days off in a row.
The frumpy monster

FRIDAY: Describe your crew's challenges and accomplishments this week

Our challenge was finding something to do during the days we had off...
Our accomplishment: we counted every single pine needle on the ground.
Jordan

CREWLEADER: Lucy

CREW COLOR: BROWN

WEEK # 4

PROJECT NAME: West Cady

NATIONAL FOREST: Snoqualmie

RANGER DISTRICT: Skykomish

MONDAY: Describe what your crew did this weekend:



*Slept in and
had some
R&R*



*Stocked up
on goods*



*CLIMBED
8 miles*

TUESDAY: Describe your project this week; where are you, what are you doing, why?

TURNPIKE

WEDNESDAY: Describe your crew's goals for the week:

- ⇒ Turnpike
- ⇒ Big Tree
- ⇒ Don't die
- ⇒ Huckleberries
- ⇒ Food Food
- ⇒ No Mosquitoes
- ⇒ Please no, no please
- ⇒ Solo
- ⇒ LOD
- ⇒ 10 hour days
- ⇒ ☹

THURSDAY: Describe what your crew learned this week:

- Finished TP
- Opened a garden
- Recovered from solos

FRIDAY: Describe your crew's challenges and accomplishments this week

We learned how to work really long hours and still stagger enough energy for chores and the rest of the day. We also learned how to appreciate solitude.

CREWLEADER: Lucy

CREW COLOR: BROWN

WEEK # 5 (yippee)

PROJECT NAME: BLP West Cady Mp 8

NATIONAL FOREST: Snoqualmie

RANGER DISTRICT: Skykomish

MONDAY: Describe what your crew did this weekend:

This being the last weekend that our crew will spend in the Skykomish Ranger District, together as a crew, we decided to get far away from each other and go on our solos. We all made something, whether it be a memory, a tangible object or a future scar, yet sharing our stories over delicious food the following day was much appreciated. Speaking of food...

P. S. I'm right handed!

TUESDAY: Describe your project this week; where are you, what are you doing, why?

6:00 AM. Freezing because forces acted upon us all to bring us here... Our project, or goal, is to survive the next 3 days. Food running low... No reliable water source. Parallels to the Donner party are unmistakable... Persevere!

WEDNESDAY: Describe your crew's goals for the week:

Survive harsh Nature
Extend deforestation
Get graduated

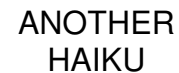


HAIKU

Ethan

THURSDAY: Describe what your crew learned this week:

Allegorical
Found spare flannel cuff buttons
Back-packing's a hoot



ANOTHER
HAIKU

Ethan

FRIDAY: Describe your crew's challenges and accomplishments this week

Early this week we finished our awesome turnpike! We also completed everyone's leader of the day and had to hunt around to find more work to fill hours. We brushed trail for the last few days with blue lips and teeth from the mass amount of blueberries we ate. The hike out of camp was obviously a breeze compared to the hike in, but working a couple hours after that was... interesting... Now we're on our way to Big Clean! YEAH!!!

Liza Koski

MY MOST CHALLENGING DAY AT NYC WAS:

My most challenging day this session would have to be our hike 8 miles up switch backs with, rumor has it, 90 pounds on our backs, but at the same time, I felt the most accomplished that same day, looking out over the Cascades from 5,000 feet up. SPECTACULAR!

Jordan Hankison

The toughest day at NYC this session was easily the 8 mile hike uphill. My hips were bruised for days. It was a great physical/mental challenge that I

will not soon forget. Looking downward on top of a mountain after feeling like I was about to die was the best feeling ever!

Liza Koski

I never wanted to come out here in the first place. Engaging myself everyday was difficult; the process of the thing.

The eight mile hike up in Skykomish with more than I should every carry again. 😊 ← Smiley

The 8 mile hike in was really hard, but it was awesome when I made it.
Collin Fox

My most challenging day was the 3rd to last. There was little work to do and boredom was difficult to drive off.

Gabriel Armanacas

The most challenging day was when we were denied the privilege to go swimming! Mean.

♡ Megan Groves

My most challenging day of this session was the day we hiked 8 miles, staying on task at work was difficult what I was either bored or tired.

Alicia

MY THREE FAVORITE NYC EXPERIENCES WERE:

My favorite NYC experiences were: First, our solos. I enjoyed 24 hours of complete solitude, relaxation and got a chance to do some writing. Secondly would be the end of our 8 mile death hike. It was a great accomplishment and a huge challenge. Thirdly was our chances to be leaders for the day. I had a lot of fun and learned what a big job leading a project can be.

Liza Koski

Swimmer Steve, and discussing him and his perilous way, burnouts, stars at night.

Gabe

I love hugs! In the morning especially... But I'm not too picky; I'll take one at night as well. Second: The morning sky is phenomenal! I might wake up to see a few when I go home, maybe. And finally I love how musical this crew is. ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡

Megan Groves

The campsite in Skykomish was the best campsite I've ever been to. Best crew, as well...

Leaving the wood for the last time...

SOLOS SWIMMING THE BORROW PIT!!!!

Collin Fox

Solos
The borrow pit
Climbing our mountain.

Jordan

- ☆ Solos
- ☆ Misty mornings in Wenatchee
- ☆ Free time to explore the areas around our campsites
- ☆ The amazing scenery

Alicia Armstrong

AT NYC I LEARNED:

I learned that I want a dog.

1. I love physical challenges and conservation work
2. I love living in the woods with the bare minimum essentials
3. I learned to have pride in the work I do.

I can lead people
I hate Kanye West
Thought about the things I have to look forward to.

- * Cities and people disgust me more than they ever have
- * Plant and tree ID
- * What constitutes a sexy trail
- * I LOVE the woods
- * How little I have to worry about right now.

How much I really miss hugs and how much I take things for granted, like readily available.

To eat slowly...

That stacking hours rules...
Jordan

ONE THING I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER:


The conclusion of our five weeks being augmented by vagabonds on either.

I will always remember my relaxing solo experience at the top of the Cady Ridge. It was AMAZING, as was our campsite with beautiful sunrises and warm morning breezes.

...Same as the first one, my solo.

When we had our last crew circle and awesome Alaska people came and jammed with us...
Collin Fox

- ☺ The morning experience
- ☺ Solo time
- ☺ Hiking 8 miles
- ☺ Scenery
- ☺ Coming back to civilization

The silliness that occurs when you've lived with friends for more than a few weeks. 

...My interest in strategy.

- * My solo
- * The conclusive circle interruption
- * Wenatchee's mosquitoes
- * Tomorrow's graduation

...My solo experience.
Jordan

FROM NOW ON I WILL ALWAYS:


...Not be in the woods for an extended period of time...

I will focus on my impact on the environment by evaluating consumerism more carefully and not being an apathetic fool.

Rely on myself...

Be cool.

I will try to... not take things too seriously, stay outdoors as much as possible, do as much for the environment as possible, work hard at all things I put my mind to and judge people less...

↪ Not be short with anyone, no matter how aggravating/annoying the situation is. Also I will work on putting to action a mantra someone important taught me, "I let others be themselves and I am free." 

Discontinue the use of ridiculous absolutes in my pretentious prompts.

Appreciate my home later...

Wear Danners.

Jordan