

Northwest Youth Corps
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June 15th 2009
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Follow up for Northwest Youth Corps
Motor Vehicle Accident**

On June 14th 2009 a Northwest Youth Corps (NYC) vehicle was involved in a single vehicle accident while en route to a project in central Washington. Eleven teenagers, 16 to 19 years of age, and two adult leaders were involved in the accident. Youth were from Oregon, Arizona, Illinois, Washington and Nevada. There were no significant injuries and the families of all youth involved in the accident have been notified.

The information we have available at this time is limited. We know the vehicle went over a guard rail and down an embankment. The front end of the bus was significantly damaged. It is unclear if the bus rolled over. As a matter of organization policy all participants and staff were examined at the nearest medical facility. Injuries were minor: bruises, two sprained ankles, and one student with a previous injury re-broke his thumb. All youth have been released from medical care. The crew remains in Washington and will soon be en route to their assigned conservation project. All youth are planning to continue in the program.

The vehicle involved in the accident is a 2008 mini-bus constructed to school bus safety standards. Although school buses are not typically equipped with seat belts NYC specified the addition of three point safety restraints on these vehicles. NYC has purchased 14 of these vehicles at a cost of \$48,229 each. NYC chose this bus, regardless of cost, because of its safety features; rear dual tires for additional stability and four safety exits. NYC has a fleet of 51 vehicles. Last year NYC crews traveled a total of 359,187 miles.

NYC has an extensive safety program and dedicates an entire day during field staff training to vehicle safety. Our driver training program includes hands-on instruction, a written test, and a checkout of every driver by senior staff. Driving history checks are conducted before staff receive certification to drive an NYC crew rig.

Northwest Youth Corps was created in 1984 and has served nearly 12,000 youth over the last 25 years. This summer we will have 36 ten-member teams working throughout Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. In 2009 we expect to employ over 1,000 youth during our spring, summer, and fall programs. Youth apply for a position with NYC much as they would any job and come to us from throughout the Northwest and across the United States. Last year NYC crews worked 151,818 hours on a wide variety of high priority conservation, reforestation, and recreation management projects.

Challenging youth and developing leaders through teamwork, education and outdoor experience since 1984.

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