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Hiking, Camping, and Friends; Could This Really be Work?

July 27, 2006 (Eugene, OR) – Perhaps you know them. Or maybe you've seen them out in the woods. These individuals are between 16 – 19 years old and they are spending five weeks of their summer out in the wilderness.

Each day they wake from their wilderness campsite and hike to a conservation project. Five days a week crews exercise their muscles and minds side-by-side lifting rocks, clearing paths, and tackling camp life. They work diligently before breaking for lunch and then continuing down the trail. To reward themselves for a hard day's work, the crew explores their unique surroundings via a quick hike or dip in a lake.

Once back at camp, the crew cooks dinner and dives into their meal. As the day's work settles into their muscles and bones, one by one they head to bed to prepare for another great day on the trail.

Just like other Northwest Youth Corps participants from Idaho, these youth are challenged during the five or six weeks spent performing trail construction, working with fire crews to clear hazardous forest fuels, and restoring wildlife areas.

From watersheds in Oregon or Washington to rocky trails in Idaho, project areas bring challenges and opportunities to develop wilderness skills. Though there are many personal rewards to take from their experience, all receive a monetary stipend for their participation.

Over 175 Idaho youth have experienced Northwest Youth Corps for themselves. For more information about participating in one of our programs, please call (541) 349-5058. Twenty scholarships are available on a first come, first serve basis for Idaho youth ages 16 – 19.

Scholarships are made possible by the North Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committees (RAC). Northwest Youth Corps program project sponsors include United States Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and US Fish and Wildlife Service. Program funding comes from Secure Rural Schools Act of 2000 Title II and Title III funding, Recreation Trails Program (RTP), Idaho Resource Advisory Committees (RAC), Off Road Motor Vehicle Program (ORMV), and Northwest Service Academy/Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute.

Northwest Youth Corps is a non-profit conservation organization whose mission is to create leaders through teamwork, education, and outdoor conservation work experiences. Northwest Youth Corps has served more than 10,000 youth nationwide. For additional information contact Northwest Youth Corps at 2621 Augusta Street, Eugene, OR 97403, phone (541) 349-5055, or visit www.northwestyouthcorps.org.

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