Introduction

2018 marks the 2nd year of the county-wide Youth Conservation Corps. Program (YCC) operated through the San Juan Islands Conservation District, which includes Lopez Island YCC (11-year old program), Orcas Island YCC (7 years), and San Juan Island YCC (5 years). Previously, all three island programs have operated separately under individual non-profit statuses. With the merging of these programs, financial and material resources, staff, and organizational support has enabled the program to grow and strengthen across the county. The Youth Conservation Corps of the San Juan Islands (SJI YCC) was developed with the vision of a community and a world in which human beings co-exist peacefully with each other and responsibly with nature by encouraging community dialogue and youth leadership by engaging the next generation in place based education, conservation and public land stewardship.
Our program is built upon the strong belief in the importance of engaging youth in an impressionable outdoor educational experience, providing their first job experience and developing a work ethic, all while inspiring an avenue to employment particularly in the care and stewardship of the natural environment. Additionally, SJI YCC provides an pathway for our youth to engage with local agency natural resource managers and contribute to the community where we grow and thrive together. Learning directly from our current natural resource experts prepares our youth by providing a connected foundation of training from today’s professionals and propels them into a successful pathway into adulthood. Knowing that the youth today will be making decisions that determines what happens tomorrow, the San Juan community is committed to nurturing the development of strong, creative, and informed young adults.

For the 2018 summer season, a total of 48 youth between the ages of 12-18 participated, cumulatively contributing more than 5,300 hours of land-stewardship activities and work projects throughout public lands in San Juan County. All youth participants received CPR first aid certification from Orcas Fire Department and all staff were Wilderness First Aid Certified. Projects were coordinated with and sponsored by the following 22 federal, state, local, and tribal agencies/partners: San Juan Islands National Monument/Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Washington State Parks, Washington Trails Association, Americorps, Northwest Straits Foundation, San Juan County Parks, San Juan County Land Bank, San Juan County Public Works (Environmental Division and Solid Waste Division), Port of Friday Harbor, Port of Roche Harbor, San Juan County Noxious Weed Board, San Juan Preservation Trust, IHIYA Biological Preserve, Orcas Island School District, OPAL Community Land Trust, Orcas Island Fire Department, SJC Marine Resources Committee (MRC), Kiwanis club, Lopez Island Family Resource Center, the L.I.F.E. Trails Program (Lopez Island Fitness / Farm & Education), and the Coast Salish Youth Stewardship Corps. The work was completed on 6 islands throughout San Juan County (San Juan, Orcas, Lopez, Shaw, Patos, and Sucia).
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The Team

**YCC Program Manager (maternity leave): Erin Licata**
A Pacific Northwest native, Erin has a strong background in environmental research monitoring and restoration throughout Western Washington University where she received her Bachelor’s in Environmental Science. Prior to working for the Conservation District she worked for the US Forest Service and the Samish Indian Nation Department of Natural Resources managing a variety of projects and grants in scientific monitoring, research, restoration, GIS database management and mapping. She enjoys backpacking, culinary mushroom hunting, canoeing, carving, painting, and utilizing traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) in native resource ID and gathering. She has cultural connections with the San Juan Islands and wholly believes in the seven-generation perspective on sustainability and that the health of our people is directly dependent on the health of our environment.

**Stewardship Program Manager, Interim YCC Program Manager: Samantha Martin**
Samantha has been a resident of San Juan County for over 12 years and currently lives on Orcas Island. Her main role at the Conservation District is to coordinate the Shoreline Stewardship Program, which works with shoreline property owners to develop the best solutions for protecting important shoreline habitat. She is also involved in supporting a viable agricultural economy in the County and acts as a stormwater monitor for Orcas Island. After receiving a Master of Science degree in forest ecology and soil science (University of Washington, 2007), she co-founded Rain Shadow Consulting—a small-scale, island-based company which helps landowners sustainably manage their forestland. Samantha has over 20 years of horticultural experience and has been involved in native oak and grassland restoration, as well as the recovery of rare plant species in San Juan County. When not working, she enjoys being part of a dance group on Orcas and spending time enjoying the beauty of the San Juans with her family.

**San Juan Island YCC Coordinator / Crew Lead: Sara O’Connell**
Sara is passionate about the natural world. She has a SCUBA Divemaster certification and lead tours around dives sites. She worked as a Naturalist and Kayak Guide on San Juan Island for two seasons and has been a teacher in many different settings while maintaining her curiosity as a student of the world. A life changing trip for her was when she rode her bike for 5 months with her husband on a self-supported tour that took them from their front door in Seattle, through 9 national parks, ending at the tip of Baja, CA. She holds a BS in Environment and Occupational Health and worked with environmental testing equipment for several years. She received a 200-hour yoga teacher training certificate and was able to bring self-care and reflection to the morning circle-ups during summer program. Having a deep connection to nature is the ribbon that has tied her life together and has been her guide through it all. She loves working with youth in a natural setting where finding peace in all that surrounds them was inevitable.

**San Juan Island YCC Crew Leader: Carlton Burns**
Carlton is an East Coast native; born and raised in Maryland on the Atlantic Coast. He holds a Human Communications degree from Salisbury University in Salisbury, MD. Carlton began his relationship with environmental conservation as a YCC student in Washington DC. Since then he's been blessed with opportunities to staff many great youth conservation programs nationwide; leading projects and youth programs in Yellowstone National Park as well as right here at San Juan Island National Historical Park.
He is passionate about, and dedicated to, aiding the growth and development of all members of humanity, with a special focus on our youth.

**Lopez Island YCC Crew Coordinator / Crew Leader: Libby Valluzzi**

Libby grew up playing in the Pacific Northwest rain, making forts underneath the garden rhododendrons and exploring the forest with her four older brothers and sisters. Libby was drawn to environmental education because she realized the most long-lasting way to reconnect humans to the web of nature is by giving them memorable and grounding experiences outdoors. She considers her environmental educator work to be activist work and is deeply committed to returning humans to a harmonic relationship with nature. Before and after graduating from the University of Washington with a B.S. in Environmental Science and B.A. in Community, Environment, and Planning, Libby taught at outdoor educational programs throughout Seattle, Bainbridge Island, and La Honda, California. Since moving to Lopez Island in 2013 Libby has worked at numerous educational organizations as well as managed her own outdoor education summer program. She recently completed a 9-month course exploring Coast Salish Ethnobotany and Traditional Skills taught by Heidi Bohan. Libby is also extremely passionate about real food and no-till agriculture and spends most of her non-educator time tending gardens and livestock. She has been a violinist since age 9 as well as a self-taught singer-songwriter on the guitar and plays at weddings and events. In her free time she enjoys sewing clothes out of recycled textiles, wandering around the forest, and going for long walks. She lives in a little cabin in the woods built by her husband, Andrew, a Lopez Island-born-and-raised fisherman.

**Lopez Island YCC Crew Leader: Kevin Zelenak**

Kevin has a diverse background in conservation and outdoor work, having spent several seasons immersed in the wilderness of Olympic National Park performing backcountry trail maintenance and historic structure preservation. After attending Wenatchee Valley College with an Associate Degree in Arts, he joined the Washington Conservation Corps. (WCC). In WCC, he worked with the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group and San Juan Preservation Trust to manage noxious weeds and participated in the initial replanting of Lake Mills during the removal of the dams on the Elwha river. Kevin is connected to Erin Licata and Sam Barr through participating in the 2017 Canoe Journey, 2017 and 2018 Mini-Canoe Journey, and spending time with the Stillaguamish Tribe. He comes to Lopez Island with his trusty dog Spruce from the town of Glacier, at the base of Mt Baker, where he spends his winters skiing and playing music. Kevin is a talented bassist who plays in a number of Glacier-based bands, including Fugue State, a folk-rock band featuring long-time Lopezian Patrick O’Neil on guitar. Having lived extensively in temperate rainforest climates, he’s occasionally unnerved by the lack of running freshwater on the island but takes comfort that the wells seem to be doing their job adequately.

**Orcas Island YCC Coordinator / Crew Leader: Ishta Tyler**

Ishta, a 2-year resident of Orcas Island but life-long resident in the Pacific Northwest, worked with Washington Conservation Corps. in Snohomish County from 2014-2016, after finishing college studying Early-Childhood Education. Her passion and interest in leading children outdoors led her to a recent certification as a Forest Kindergarten Teacher through Cedar Song Nature School on Vashon Island.

**Orcas Island YCC Crew Leader: Huxley Smart**

Huxley grew up on Orcas Island, and after graduating with a B.S. in microbiology and travelling to Southeast Asia, she is back on-island this summer to re-connect to her community and the place she loves.
Environmental Education

Several hours of each work day include dedicated time for YCC youth to connect with the land through experiential, hands-on, reflective, and inquisitive environmental education topics. Staff develop educational plans pre-season and aim to tailor topics and activities to the interests of the youth. Some topics covered by all three crews this summer include:

- Native plant and animal species
- Invasive and native plant identification
- Wetland science/function
- Water and soil testing
- Soil/substrate compositions
- Intertidal systems and marine ecology
- Raingarden and Stormwater facility science/functions
- Geological history of the islands
- Effects of pollution/micro-plastics on marine life
- Effects of deer on ecology and control strategies
- Weekly journaling for reflection on self, group, and nature
- Nature illustrations and poetry / writing prompts
- “Each-one-teach-one” plant hikes
- Knot-tying
- Oral histories and legends of Coast Salish peoples
- Traditional Ecological Knowledge
- Food web discussion and running games
- Leave No Trace Ethics
- Authority of the Resource Technique practicing
- Nature tracking
- Bird observation with field guides and binoculars
- Mock trial about local environmental hot topics
- Practicing First-Aid scenarios.
- Lekw’engen (Northern Straits) language, Coast Salish canoe culture, and place based cultural history within the San Juan Islands
Projects with Agency Partners

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)/San Juan Islands National Monument

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Chadwich Marsh (Lopez), Point Colville (Lopez), Iceberg Point (Lopez), Cattle Point (San Juan), Patos Island
- **791 hours** of youth stewardship on SJINM Properties (301 hours Lopez, 490 hours San Juan)
- **Projects include:** Noxious weed removal, beach trash pick-up, trail maintenance

Point Colville - Lopez YCC
June 25, June 26, July 23 (half day)

- 11 hours spent removing noxious weeds (Canada thistle and Sweetbriar rose)
- 1 large bag 2 micro and macro trash removed from beach

On the first day, the crew heavily brushed back 2 miles of trails, particularly salal sections before getting to the fork in the trail. Continued to the right fork on the trail and spent the rest of a day cutting back invasive non-native sweetbriar rose. Most roses were less than 2 feet tall and concentrated in the open area facing Castle Island, though there were a number at the southern point hidden off-trail amongst the rocky terrain. An estimated 2 acres of ground was covered for sweetbriar removal. On the second day, sweetbriar removal continued for another hour, followed by removal of Canada thistle in about a 1-acre area, and then beach cleanup on the sandy beach East of the point. This beach cleanup yielded approximately one garbage bag full of both micro and macro trash, primarily at the high end of the beach hidden among the driftwood. There was not an overwhelming amount of trash, but the beach benefited from having been cleaned by the crew. The crew returned to Point Colville again on July 23, when the thistles were in bloom. Nick Teague advised that thistles be cut during the early blooming stages, to provide maximum benefits to pollinators.

Chadwick Marsh and Hill - Lopez YCC
July 10, August 14

- Surveyed and treated 8 acres of land for noxious weeds (English holly), 4 hours
- 1 mile of trail brushed

The crew spent the first day (July 10) surveying around the marsh for English holly. The crew broke up into two groups and went off-trail in search of the holly plants. Around 20 plants were found, all about a
foot high. The crew cut at the ground then hung the plants in a bush or tree, to prevent it from re-rooting in the ground. The group tried, and failed, to locate a grove of young alder trees that Nick Teague wanted to hear about. However, on August 14 the crew returned, this time successfully finding the stand of Alders. They surveyed the alder grove and found a few bull thistles and young holly. Near the end of the grove and against the fence of the neighboring property, there was a very large holly that required sawing 4 main stems. LICC should return to this spot in the future, to continue cut-back and removal of this holly. The crew then headed up towards the top of Chadwick Hill, brushing back sections of overgrown salal along the way.

**Iceberg Point- Lopez YCC**

July 31, August 9

- 5 hours spent removing noxious weeds (Canada thistle, bull thistle)
- 1 mile of trail brushed (along Johnson’s property/easement)
- 12 large bags beach trash removed

On July 31, the crew worked primarily on thistle removal. Thistles were in the peak of bloom, which was optimal time for cutting for the benefit of pollinators. The crew grew weary of many hours of exposed sun. Another project for the day was brushing back the salmonberry “tunnel” in the forested easement of the trail. In the future, breaking up the thistle removal jobs with more education or whole-body tasks would be ideal. Also, brushing back the easement should happen earlier in Summer, perhaps June or early July. This day could be combined with beach-cleanup along the southern pocket beaches and heading into adjacent private property, with permission. On August 9, Mark Herrenkohl, from SJC Solid Waste, spearheaded a beach-cleanup project at Iceberg. He paid for the crew’s stipend this day, as well as brought 5 additional volunteers along. The crew found many bags of trash, and more could easily be removed here in months and years to come.
Cattle Point – San Juan YCC
July 17 (Crew 1) and July 19 (Crew 2)

- One large plus two smaller English Hawthorne removed
- Removed two large stands of Himalayan Black Berry plus parts of another stand
- One trash bag full of beach trash (mostly small Styrofoam and plastics)
- One bag of Tansy Ragwort flower heads collected and removed

The first part of each day was spent on the removal of English Hawthorne and Himalayan Black Berry. The removed invasive species were piled up and left to decompose. The DNR land manager also asked that some Tansy Ragwort be removed from his adjoining land, which the crew took care of as well. Crew members used loppers and hand sheers as well as hand saws for this job. After about 2.5-3hrs of work, lunch was taken by the light house, which is where Shona from Wolf Hollow met up to teach bird ID and how to make field sketches of birds (mostly shore birds that day). Crew members were taught how to use binoculars and a bigger scope was also set up. After this activity, there was about one and a half hours left in which the crew spent time down on the beach in front of the radio tower and all the way past the lighthouse doing a comprehensive beach cleanup. They combed through debris and collected even the smallest piece of plastic or Styrofoam.
San Juan County Fair “Leave No Trace” Booth– San Juan YCC
August 15 and August 16

Kelsey Kittleson, Leave No Trace Intern, and Nick Teague met up with the crew the day prior to the fair and gave about a 40 min presentation on the 7 LNT principals and what it meant to San Juan County in particular. These days working the fair acted as more of a make-up day because not everyone was able to participate. Each crew member signed up for 2 of the 2-hour time slots, meaning they could break up their time between the two days or they could work a straight 4-hour block. No more than 3 youth worked at a time. This was a bit challenging to coordinate but, in the end, worked out well. Once at the booth, they encouraged fair-goers to learn more about Leave No Trace by having them spin the wheel where a number coordinated with a question that they would ask pertaining to LNT. Upon giving the correct answer they handed out stickers or patches based on the question’s degree of difficulty. The youth explained the 7 principals to people unfamiliar with LNT, which was a good practice and helped solidify these principals for them.

Patos Island – San Juan YCC Overnight Trip
July 31, August 1, August 2, August 3

- 1 mile of trail brushed
- Big pile Canada thistle burned

On Tuesday morning the first group of campers met at the ferry terminal and headed to meet the WA State Parks where they boarded two of their boats and headed to Patos. The two crew leaders and 11 crew members arrived around 11am and listened to a brief introduction by Bethany from WA State Park. After the boats were unloaded, camp set up and lunch ate, everyone geared up and hit the loop trail which started from the camp site and headed east. Anything low to the ground 2’ wide on either side of the existing trail was cut down using hand sheers and loppers with the occasional hand saw for a tree limb. The crew stayed at this for about three hours. The second day, the crew hit the trail shortly after breakfast, and began brushing trails. After a long and hard day the crew headed to the lighthouse for a tour and to hike the loop trail. They met up with some docents who showed them around and then watched as the resident Orcas circled back towards the US from Canada with many breaches and spy hops. This crew departed after breakfast the next morning when the State Park boats switched the crews and brought back 7 more
youth around 11am. This group was able to get to work fast as the camp was already set up for them. They continued with the trail brushing for about 3.5 hours and still had time to hike to the lighthouse for sunset. The second day they started early after breakfast, so they could get two days of work in before they left the island. The boat came around 1:30pm on Friday and we were taken back to Orcas to catch the ferry home. SJICC was able to thoroughly brush 1 mile or more of the loop trail. Tools were somewhat lacking as long handled hedge shears would have been the preferable tool for the job.
National Park Service

Summary

- **Project Sites:** American Camp (San Juan), English Camp (San Juan)
- **497 hours** of youth education and stewardship with National Park Service
- **Projects Include:** noxious weed education and removal, native plant propagation, beach trash cleanup, remnant island marble butterfly fence removal, traditional ecological knowledge, Lekw’engen (Northern Straits) language, Coast Salish oral histories, Coast Salish canoe culture, cultural history and present day tribal involvement with the San Juan Islands National Park.

American Camp – San Juan Island YCC
July 16 (Crew 1) and July 18 (Crew 2)

- 16 bags of thistle heads cut and removed
- One full plastic bag of seeds for each native plant collected

SJII YCC spent most of their time around Redoubt and old road bed at American Camp. On the first day, Jenny Shrum met with the group and instructed where the critical areas for Canada thistle removal were. SJII YCC worked within these identified areas to cut the flower heads, bag and crush the remaining plant material. During lunch, Sam Martin joined the group and provided additional education about native prairie ecosystems and the importance of specific species to restoration efforts. The youth were taught how to identify common camas, death camas, chocolate lily, and blue wild rye, during their seed pod stage of life. The second half of the day was spent collecting these native seeds for use by the National Parks in future restoration efforts. SJII YCC then met Jenny and Trent for a tour at the Island Marble Butterfly (IMB) Lab, the youth learned more about Island Marble Butterfly restoration efforts, butterfly lifecycles and the essential habitat components needed for successful restoration while practicing their plant ID skills at the nursery.

English Camp/ American Camp- San Juan YCC
July 23 (Crew 1) and July 26 (Crew 2)

- One bag of trash picked up
- 8 bags Canada thistle flower heads removed
- Lekw’engen language lessons, legend of the Maiden of Deception Pass (oral history, ecological teachings), Coast Salish songs.
SJI YCC Crew 1 spent the first part of the morning helping Emilio clean up after the Canoe Journey and then he walked the site and taught them about the human history at English Camp. After the educational walk the crew spent the remaining portion of the day picking up trash around the parking lot and trails leading to the parade ground. On the second day, SJI YCC’s crew 2 met with the National Parks Invasive species removal team. They worked the morning together removing thistle and then ate lunch at the visitor center. After lunch, Emilio met up to provide another Anthropological educational walk.

At the end of both days each crew met up with the Coast Salish Youth Stewardship Corps at the NPS Group Campsite for Lekw’engen (Northern Straits Salish) language lessons/games, and learned a Samish oral history legend on ecological ethics and human’s relationship with land and sea “Maiden of Deception Pass” told by a Coast Salish Youth.

Receiving an immersive site based learning experience of the colonial history from Emilio and then the indigenous history from the Coast Salish Stewardship Corps was an invaluable lesson about in-depth comprehensive history that has played out on the landscape that these youth also call home. Furthermore, this type of education has been recognized to be deficient in contemporary educational environments.

**American Camp – San Juan Island YCC**
August 13 (Crew 1) and August 14 (Crew 2)

- Two full deer fences taken down
- Lekw’engen language, legand of Slahal (oral history, ecological teachings), songs, stick game

Combining forces with SJI YCC, Northwest Youth Corps (ASL Crew) and the Coast Salish Stewardship Corps (CSYSC) was one of the most significant collaborations of the season. SJI YCC and CSYSC met up to do a joint warm up exercise and safety circle in the morning before heading out into the prairie at American Camp. CSYSC taught SJIICC how to introduce themselves in Lekw’engen (Northern Straits) language, and during the exercise warm up session SJI YCC learned how to count their reps in Lekw’engen. Later when meeting up with the NWYC (ASL Crew) youth were taught how to introduce themselves in sign language and practiced using the alphabet in sign language.
All three youth programs met Trent in the prairie at American Camp and were instructed on the logistics for removing a large deer fence. Everyone was advised to use caution and care during removal to preserve the integrity of the fence because it was planned to go up again next season. Youth of each youth corps were mixed together and then broken up into smaller teams. Each team worked collaboratively together to cut zip ties, take out staples, dig up U-bolts, remove T-Posts and fiberglass posts. Removing the U-Bolts was challenging because there were grasses, blackberries and thistle growing all around and keeping the fence pinned to the ground. Once the plastic fence was free, it was laid out and the team worked cooperatively to roll it up tight. Transporting the rolled up fence was the most challenging part because the fence became heavy and if it became loose or if the crew members were out of sync, it became unwieldy. Sometimes the teams would have to start over two or three times before they got it right. This was where teamwork and communication came in and it was a good learning experience on crew organization as youth determined that the work was better accomplished by designating one person to take the lead and call out directions.

After the fence was removed the three crews met up for a working lunch and learned about Leave No Trace (LNT) from Nick Teague at the BLM and Kelsey Kittleson (BLM LNT intern).

After the working lunch the Coast Salish Youth Stewards led activities with SJY YCC. First they led the youth through some Lekwengen language (traditional language spoken in the San Juan Islands) games/lessons, teaching the San Juan youth how to speak basic words such as “hello, goodbye, yes, and no” Youth also learned about some basic cultural customs such as Háy7sxqwe and how men and woman raise their hands to show gratitude. Sam Barr, Samish Tribal member and Coast Salish Youth Stewards Manager told a 10,000+ year old oral history lesson on human ecological ethics and dispute resolution with the “Legand of Slahal” which gave rise to the “bone game.” He then led the youth and staff through a round of “bone game” of which during the youth learned some Coast Salish songs as well. At the end of the day all the youth were instructed to break apart and find a quite sit spot in nature and journal, after which youth shared with each other some of their insights and feelings from their journal entries.
Northwest Straits Foundation

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Cayou Lagoon (Orcas Island)
- **120 hours** of youth stewardship with Northwest Straits Foundation
- **Projects Include:** land and vegetative surveying

**Cayou Lagoon – Orcas YCC**  
**July 12th & July 13th**

The first day with NSF, Jason Morgan talked about the history of Cayou Lagoon, the impacts caused by the design of the old bridge, and the purpose of taking data to document how the new design effects and restores the area. He also showed the crew how to set and use compasses so they could locate transects and survey locations, as well as two different methods for vegetation monitoring using quadrats. We broke into 3 teams and conducted 3 surveys at designated points around the lagoon. The crew was also given a lesson on plant diversity, basic plant characteristics, and how they could use this to differentiate species. They later applied this lesson to identify the various plant species during their surveys, but could give them their own names. The crew then saved and labeled specimens to give Jason, to be properly identified later for NSF’s reporting. The second day, the crew worked on the south side of the bridge collecting data on intertidal surface biota in varying substrates and learned about the differences of marine life in varying habitats. This was the 5th year OIYCC has done this monitoring and the last year NSF would be conducting these surveys around the lagoon.
Washington State Park

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Spencer Spit (Lopez), Moran State Park (Lopez crew and Orcas crew)
- **815 hours** of youth stewardship on WA State Park Properties (210 hours Lopez, 353 hours Orcas, 252 hours San Juan)
- **Projects Include:** New trail building, building and installing trail bridge, trail maintenance, noxious weed removal, beach trash pickup

**Spencer Spit State Park- Lopez YCC**
August 7, 8

- 1 large black plastic bags beach trash removed (plus creosote and pressure-treated wood)

The crew spent the first day and an hour of the second day removing old campsite posts and replacing with new ones. This required walking, searching for the campsites, and using posthole diggers and shovels to remove and bury in the new sign. The crew enjoyed this work. On the second day, the group moved onto beach cleanup after the remaining posts were replaced. Most of the debris was found among the driftwood at the high end of the beach on the south side of the spit. Some creosote and pressure-treated wood was removed, as well. This is a good spot to return to for small and large beach debris removal.

**Moran State Park- Lopez YCC on Orcas Island**
July 16-18 (overnight trip, 2 nights)

- 8 hours of trail-work (building and fixing roughed-out trails)
- 2 miles trail brushed

The crew arrived at Moran State Park noon on July 16, ate lunch, set up camp (a few crew members brought tents for all to share), and then was transported by parks staff and AmeriCorps. workers to Boundary Trail, to do some brushing. The trail was very steep and went into a valley. After an hour and a half of hiking down and brushing along the way, the crew took a break. The next morning, the crew left camp at 8 AM the next morning, to be driven 30 minutes to the site of the new trail, “Land’s End”.

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AmeriCorps. workers led the projects, which included fine-tuning the roughed-out trail and building a brand-new section of the trail. The youth loved this work and found trail-building to be fun and engaging. The Orcas YCC joined an hour later, and all worked together till about 3:00, when they were transported back to camp.

**Moran State Park- Orcas YCC**
July 16th, 17th, & 18th (overnight trip)

- 64 hours of combined trail building
- 44 hours of combined trail rehab/maintenance
- 2 miles of trail maintained- Boundary Trail
- Approx. 0.25 miles of trail established (1200² ft.) - Land’s End

The first day working in Moran with State Parks was spent maintaining and rehabilitating the Boundary Trail. Supported by Americorps. member Kali, the crew hiked and used a manual weed whacking tool provided by the park, as well as hand pruners, hand saws, and loppers to trim and control encroaching vegetation and branches. The crew learned how to identify and differentiate plants such as Oregon grape, Holly, Nootka Rose, and Oceanspray. They were also taught how to prune vegetation in a way that is less damaging to the plants (such as trimming branches cleanly, at proper angles, and flush with the trunk.) The following 2 days the crew worked on building and enhancing the Land’s End trail, accompanied by the Lopez YCC crew and Americorps. members, Kali, Milo, and Brad. The project involved primarily widening, stabilizing, and smoothing the trail. Some members teamed up in areas to replace organic matter with rocks and trail-appropriate mineral soil. They found adequate borrow-pits and established fire lines to share the work load. Working closely together on steep slopes, the crew practiced and improved their skills in communication, situational awareness, and teamwork, along with learning trail building techniques, tool handling, and safety. The trail was physically demanding at times, and the crew occasionally strayed from the task, and tired easily. They did learn, however, about the importance of proper preparation for a job on the move (wearing backpacks, bringing enough water, taking breaks as needed). Overall, the crew took a lot of pride in their work and aside from our youngest member, were easily engaged and motivated in their tasks.
Moran State Park- Orcas YCC  
August 7th, 8th, & 9th

- 136.5 hours of combined work
- 4.5 miles hiked to site
- 8 lap joints measured and cut for stringers
- 14 pier blocks dug and set
- Half of puncheon’s decking boards secured

This was the much-anticipated project of the season, as trail building with WTA had been a favorite among the alumni on our crew. For 3 days the crew worked with Americorp members Kali, Milo and Bradley, under the direction of WTA’s Kaci Darsow, Arlen Bogards (for one day), and trail-pro volunteer, Darryl, to build a puncheon (small bridge) over a seasonal wet area of Land’s End trail. The first day the group cleared the trail, sawed out roots and logs, learned how to measure and cut lap joints with hand saws and chisels, and learned how to set and place pier blocks. The second day the team continued chiseling lap joints and setting pier blocks and began the process of laying stringers and tightening lap joints together.

The final day was spent placing bulkheads, finishing lap joints on the final stringers, tightening the last of the lag joints, and placing and setting the decking. The crew worked well together, helping and motivating each other, double-checking their work to be sure it was precise, all in great effort to complete the project on time. The crew was also engaged with wetland plant ID, learned about the Horntail wasp, and discussed the balance of nature with recreational efforts and trail building. This is also one of those projects that the members take a lot of pride and ownership in and proves to be less difficult than others to keep them engaged and motivated.
Sucia Island - Orcas YCC
August 28th & 29th

- 91 hours combined
- 9 large (33 gal) bags of bull thistle flowers removed
- 0.5 acres of bull thistle pulled
- 0.25 acres of bindweed controlled

This was the Orcas YCC crew’s only outer-island overnight trip of the season. With WA State Parks providing the transportation, the crew was shuttled out to Sucia Island to set up camp and then boated over to Echo Bay to start the work day. Partnering with Jason Ontjes from the County Noxious Weed Board, the crew cut and bagged the delicate sow thistle heads found on the beach and then hiked back to site, controlling any weeds they found along the way. During the hike, Jason helped the crew identify native plants and invasive weeds, talked about the background of some of the geology we encountered, and the history and mythology behind the Pacific Yew tree. The next day, once camp was packed up and staged, the crew went to an exceptionally weedy beach site and controlled perennial sow thistle, bull thistle, and field bindweed.

Patos Island – San Juan YCC Overnight Trip
July 31, August 1, August 2, August 3

- 1 mile of trail brushed
- Big pile Canada thistle burned

On Tuesday morning the first group of campers met at the ferry terminal and headed to meet the WA State Parks where they boarded two of their boats and headed to Patos. The two crew leaders and 11 crew members arrived around 11am and listened to a brief introduction by Bethany from WA State Park. After the boats were unloaded, camp set up and lunch ate, everyone geared up and hit the loop trail which started from the camp site and headed east. Anything low to the ground 2’ wide on either side of the existing trail was cut down using hand sheers and loppers with the occasional hand saw for a tree limb. The crew stayed at this for about three hours. The second day, the crew hit the trail shortly
after breakfast, and began brushing trails. After a long and hard day the crew headed to the lighthouse for a tour and to hike the loop trail. They met up with some docents who showed them around and then watched as the resident Orcas circled back towards the US from Canada with many breaches and spy hops. This crew departed after breakfast the next morning when the State Park boats switched the crews and brought back 7 more youth around 11am. This group was able to get to work fast as the camp was already set up for them. They continued with the trail brushing for about 3.5 hours and still had time to hike to the lighthouse for sunset. The second day they started early after breakfast, so they could get two days of work in before they left the island. The boat came around 1:30pm on Friday and we were taken back to Orcas to catch the ferry home. SJICC was able to thoroughly brush 1 mile or more of the loop trail. Tools were somewhat lacking as long handled hedge shears would have been the preferable tool for the job.
San Juan County Land Bank

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Lopez Hill, Tombolo Preserve (Lopez), Zylstra Lake (San Juan)
- **Overnight Trip:**
- **460 hours** of youth stewardship on Land Bank Property (124 hours Lopez, 336 San Juan)
- **Projects Include:** Tree root protection on trails, noxious weed removal, trail maintenance, beach trash cleanup, fence building and installation, office work

### Lopez Hill- Lopez YCC
July 2 - July 3

- 1.5 miles of trail repaired: tree roots covered
- 1.5 miles of trail brushed
- 1 hour spent removing noxious weeds (tansy ragwort and Canada thistle)

Lopez Steward Amanda Wedow (and former LICC Director) joined the crew on July 2. The group hiked up to the Muerte Trail to repair a particularly bad section of trail with majorly exposed tree roots in the trail. The roots posed not only a hazard and challenge for trail users but created poor growing conditions for trees around the trail. There are many sections of trail on Lopez Hill that have exposed tree roots, so this project may be repeatable again in future LICC seasons. The crew broke into three small groups to tackle different parts of the trail. One group worked on building up the trail to level with a large root, using big rocks foraged from nearby treefalls. They then covered up the rocks with soil (again, retrieved from a tree fall area) and covered the repaired trail with leaves and tree needles to disguise the recently-worked area. Several other groups worked together to search for soil piles near recent tree falls, carry large rocks, rake off organic matter, and build up sections of the trail to line up and cover exposed roots. The crew was very excited about this project and enjoyed using these larger tools. On July 3, the crew headed again towards the Muerte trail, this time towards the south end of it where it ends at the unmaintained county road. Extensive brushing back of salal continued for 3 hours. The crew also worked on removing tansy ragwort and Canada thistle from the southern side of the gravel driveway towards the Lopez Hill parking area. Ragwort was present, but not in the vast numbers that Canada thistle was. It was mostly condensed into a few large sections, which LICC was able to get most of.
Tombolo Preserve- Lopez YCC
July 5 (half day)

- 4.5 large black garbage bags of fireworks debris removed

Amanda Wedow accompanied the crew for a short 1:00-4:00 work day at the Tombolo Preserve. This project was scheduled to assist with cleanup after the large annual Independence Day fireworks display over Fisherman Bay Spit. After the crew finished working, there was still quite a lot of trash still on the beach. Volunteers were requested by various organizations, but LICC could have worked longer. Perhaps next year this could be made into a full-day’s project, with a few hours’ litter pickup work broken up with some time working and learning at the Fisherman Bay Spit Preserve down the road.

Zylstra Lake – San Juan YCC
July 9, July 10 (Crew 1), July 11, July 12 (Crew 2)

- Hand dug about 5 post holes
- Set 10 juniper wood posts
- Set 22 T-Posts
- Installed 280’ of horse fence
- Installed 2 brace sections for a future 260’ fence section
- Demolished old riding fence arena and took out nails from boards

Doug McCutchen and Charlie Benthke introduced the Land Bank and the future vision of their newly purchased property, Zylstra Lake. Doug shared his knowledge about different fence types and discussed why they decided to install no-climb fencing (to work with the neighboring horse pasture on Island Haven) and why sharing resources with neighbors and working towards a shared vision was an important part of stewardship. There were many new tools introduced to the team, which included hammers, drills, post hole diggers, t-post drivers, t-post pullers, rock haulers, tampers, wrenches, plyers, clam shovels, levels, Pulaski’s, McLeods, gripples and gripple pullers, wire cutters and come-alongs to name a few. The project started out with one team taking down an old riding fence arena, extracting all nails and stacking the wood. The other teams of 3 or 4, hand dug post holes which were specified to be 3’6” deep. Juniper posts were then installed by delegating one crew member to keep it level while two or three others filled it in and tamped the dirt down as they went. Holes were drilled into the posts, and nails hammered to complete the H-bracing. Wire was arranged and gripples and gripple pullers were used to add tension across the two posts. 22 T-Posts were installed with one crew member holding the post with a level while another crew member used a t-post driver to pound it into place. All t-posts were installed at about a 4’ height and if they were too deep or turned out to be out of line, a t-post puller was used to extract and start again. The horse fencing needed to be wound together in two sections, so a few teams worked on this with plyers. Once the fence was one continuous section and all the posts were set, SJICC lifted it in place and used come-alongs to tighten. The wire fence was then secured to each t-post in four different places and heavy-duty staples were hammered in to secure it to the juniper posts. This project was great for job training and had many different tasks that changed
throughout the day to keep it interesting. On the second day for each crew, Julie lead them on a tour of the neighboring Island Haven and the animals living there.

**Land Bank Office – San Juan YCC**
August 20 (Crew 1) and August 21 (Crew 2)

SJICC was scheduled to help prep the fence around the Land Bank town property for new paint and start on the painting. This project was canceled due to dangerous amounts of smoke from fires in British Columbia. August 20th, both crew leaders plus one crew member decided to help Doug and Charlie because they were already present. They helped build split rail fencing and hide social trails at Mt. Grant.
San Juan County Parks

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Shaw County Park (Lopez crew)
- **42 hours** of youth stewardship on SJINM Properties
- **Projects Include:** Noxious weed removal, beach trash cleanup, construction of drainage ditch

Shaw County Park- Lopez YCC
July 24

- 2 hours spent removing noxious weeds (English ivy, Canada thistle, bull thistle)
- 1/2 bag of beach trash removed

The crew met at the Lopez Ferry terminal at 9:45 with backpacks, loppers, hand saws, lunches, water bottles, and their bicycles. Upon arrival at Shaw Island, the crew bicycled the 2 miles to Shaw County Park. Park worker Nick Jones greeted the crew and started them off on the first project: thistle and English ivy. The English ivy had grown up a cedar tree and was old and large. The diameter of the cut ivy vine was larger than a spread hand. Thistle was removed from the perimeter of the ballfield and the entrance of the park. In the time the crew spent working, all visible thistle plants were successfully removed. After lunch, the crew moved large pieces of driftwood that had been diverting water from a seasonal stream to the boat ramp. A trench was dug, to decrease the problems that the water was creating for the boat ramp. Finally, the crew walked the stretch of the County Park’s beach searching for garbage.

![English holly, after cutting](image1)

![Digging a trench to encourage proper drainage near boat ramp](image2)
San Juan County Public Works

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Iceberg Point (Lopez Island), South Beach (San Juan), Port of Friday Harbor and Roche Harbor (San Juan), Eastsound Village (Orcas), North Beach (Orcas), Crescent Beach (Orcas)
- **376 hours** of youth stewardship with SJCPW (17 hours Lopez, 119 San Juan, 240 Orcas)
- **Projects Include:** beach trash cleanup, public awareness of plastic trash, monitoring and maintenance of stormwater solutions and raingardens, noxious weed removal, [Plastic Free Salish Sea Video](#) for the San Juan MRC

South Beach – San Juan YCC
August 9 (Crew 2)

- 80 lbs of trash picked up from the beach

Kendra and Lovell from SJCPW met the crew in the morning and talked about plastics in the ocean, the plight of the whales, and individual responsibility to opt out of using one use plastics by carrying water bottles and mugs, etc. She then handed out some canvas trash bags that were going to be washed and reused after they were done collecting trash. The crew broke up and started down a section of the beach moving slowly at first. The team worked the whole of South Beach from the big rocks on the West end to where the slope started on the East end. This work can be seen featured in the video produced by the San Juan County MRC

Click Here: “Plastic Free Salish Sea”

Port of Friday Harbor and Roche Harbor Docks – San Juan YCC
July 20 and Aug 10

This was a public outreach event on one use plastics, reusable bags and San Juan’s “Last Straw” campaign. Mark Herrenkohl introduced his efforts and taught the youth who participated in this event (8 at Friday Harbor and 5 at Roche) how to inform passers-by of the dangers of one-use plastics and encourage them to support restaurants that signed the pledge to stop using plastic straws. Crew members also encouraged the public to use reusable canvas bags. This was a great learning experience and tested the youth’s speaking ability and people skills.
Iceberg Point- Lopez YCC
August 9

• 12 large bags beach trash removed

Mark Herrenkohl, from SJC Solid Waste, spearheaded a beach-cleanup project at Iceberg. He paid for the crew’s stipend this day, as well as brought 5 additional volunteers along. The crew was very successful at finding trash, and more could easily be found here. The crew started at 8 AM instead of 9 AM, to align better with the low-tide. This work was part of a county wide effort to learn about and remove plastic debris, specifically microplastics, on county shorelines.

North Beach ‘Tree Streets’- Orcas YCC
July 24th & 25th

• 123 hours of combined work, redesign, & public outreach
• 16 Stormwater/Raingardens monitored and maintained
• 5 Stormwater/Raingardens redesigned
• 4 large (33gal) bags of weedy/invasive material removed

The crew worked with Krista Davis, a Stormwater Engineering Technician with Public Works, to monitor raingardens installed along Alder, Spruce, and Hemlock streets near North Beach- otherwise known as the “Tree Streets”. On the first day, she taught the crew about the function and goal of the stormwater raingardens and some of the reasons they may not have established well, such as soil composition, different plant functions, and the effects of drought. The crew monitored general conditions of each raingarden, took logs of how quickly water drained in various plots, and identified and recorded surviving plants. Some members of the crew also began public outreach, asking neighbors for the preferences and recommendations to redesign more effective raingardens. The second day the crew completed their neighborhood surveys and began managing the weeds in each site. The last portion of the day was spent working in pairs to redesign the stormwater facilities. They were encouraged to take into consideration their site’s ecology (soil, sun/shade, surviving plants), neighbors’ preferences, and to utilize a new species list that offered more prairie/Oak savannah plants (sun-loving, drought-tolerant).

Krista put together great activity packets that made it easier to keep the crew engaged with a variety of tasks. They also had a lot of fun with their redesigns and took time to come up with creative and thoughtful drafts. One of the challenges we experienced was locating the raingardens. Due to a high mortality rate they were difficult, if not sometimes impossible, to find. The project was also spread across 3 neighborhood blocks, so there was quite a bit of walking from site to site which grew tiring and
tedious, particularly in the heat. Also, during their public outreach, a few of the members received some negatively charged feedback about the failure of the stormwater facilities. As the crew members were always supervised when visiting neighbors, the crew lead was present to mitigate and help de-escalate the situations. The team spoke as a group about some of the community’s frustrations and how they could turn this survey into an opportunity to create positive changes, help the neighbors feel heard, and possibly use their feedback to design more successful raingardens for the future. Even through their initial frustrations, the neighbors were respectful and appreciative of the crew’s efforts and, overall, it was a positive lesson for the crew in handling emotional public interactions.

**Eastsound Village Green Wetland – Orcas YCC**

*July 30th*

- 71 hours of combined work
- 4 large (33 gal) bags of invasive plants removed
- 10³ feet of Himalayan blackberry removed
- 5 drainage overflow redesigns

Krista Davis spoke with the group about the history of the constructed wetland, the habitat it provides, and its importance and function as a water filtration system. The crew inspected and recorded the characteristics of the mucky soil at various locations in the wetland, including depth, thickness, presence of vegetation, and scent. They also worked together to come up with creative ideas for redesigning the overflow drainage system— one that won’t swallow up ducklings and other small animals, but won’t become clogged by debris, and allows for adequate water flow. They learned to identify native plants such as Highbush Cranberry, Mock Orange, and Spirea and split up into ‘species teams’ to take a planting inventory of the wetland. The crew wrapped up the day with invasive weed management (Himalayan blackberry and thistles) and a journal reflection about constructed wetlands (Village Green) compared to natural/restored wetlands (Terrill Beach Preserve).
Crescent Beach, Eastsound Beach – Orcas YCC
August 13th

- 45.5 hours of combined work
- 2 beaches cleaned (Crescent, Eastsound/Indian Island beach)
- 4 large (33 gal) bags of micro-plastic and trash removed
- 2 tires hauled and removed

The crew met with Elizabeth Halsey, a Probations Counselor from SJC Juvenile Court Services, and 3 of her volunteers at Crescent Beach where she talked to us about what she had learned from the Marine Resource Committee about the effects of micro-plastic pollution on wildlife. The crew then engaged in discussion about other forms of pollution, trash or toxic waste, and its effects on certain species. Most of the day was spent the day scouring both Crescent Beach and the beach facing Indian Island, and among the more interesting trash recovered 2 tires (one weighted with concrete as an old boat tie-off which required great teamwork and tenacity), a batman visor, 2 credit cards, and one tiny army figurine.
San Juan County Noxious Weed Program

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Frasier Homestead Preserve (San Juan), Eagle Cove (San Juan), Stonebridge-Terrill Beach Preserve (Orcas), Sucia Island (Orcas YCC Crew)
- **342 hours** of youth stewardship with SJC Noxious Weeds Program (161 hours Orcas, 182 San Juan)
- **Projects Include:** noxious weed removal

Frasier Homestead Preserve and Eagle Cove – San Juan YCC
July 2 (Crew 1), July 6 (Crew 2)

- 1 acre treated of Scotch Broom
- 4 bags of arch angel removed

These two days began differently as Jason was able to be present for most of the first day but only half of the second, but the flow was about the same. The only difference was that Zoey was able to meet with Crew 2 in the morning and give a presentation about Turkey Vultures. On the first day, Jason introduced the site and the goals of the day. He discussed why Scotch broom is a problem and how to remove it, making certain the plant would not grow back at the site removed. This was accomplished by either taking it down to the root or peeling the bark off the remaining stump. Tool training consisted of weed wrenches, hori hori’s and hand saws. Both crews spent about three hours tackling Scotch Broom and by the end had two large piles to show for it. These piles were either going to be left to decompose or burned later, as instructed by Jason. He also taught the crew another invasive weed, Archangel, and some other plants to be aware of. The team worked another 1.5 hours or so removing Archangel by the trail and across the stream.

Stonebridge-Terrill Beach Preserve- Orcas YCC
July 23rd

- 3 large (33gal) bags of Canada/Bull thistle and Tansy Ragwort removed
- Covered 0.2 acres of English Hawthorne removal
- Covered 6.5 acres Canada/Bull thistle and Tansy Ragwort control

The crew spent the day working with Jason Ontjes on Stonebridge-Terrill Beach Preserve, a 6-year wetland restoration effort, and a returning project site for many of Orcas YCC members. Part of the preserve is still used to harvest hay for livestock, so the crew split into two groups: one made their way across the meadow to pull Tansy Ragwort, Canada Thistle and Bull Thistle, the other pulled hundreds of English Hawthorn trees in the protected wetland and wildlife preserve. At the end of the day, Jason worked with the crew on a plant identification activity using reference books where each member learned 3 new common/native plants, as well as how to utilize literature resources to identify unknown species.
Sucia Island- Orcas YCC Overnight Trip
August 28th & 29th

- 9 large (33 gal) bags of sow/bull thistle flowers removed
- 0.5 acres of bull thistle pulled
- 0.25 acres of bindweed controlled

With WA State Parks providing the transportation, the crew was shuttled out to Sucia to set up camp and then boated over to Echo Bay to start the work day. Partnering with Jason Ontjes, the crew cut and bagged the delicate sow thistle heads found on the beach and then hiked back to site, controlling any weeds they found along the way. During the hike, Jason helped the crew identify native plants and invasive weeds, talked about the background of some of the local geology, and the history and mythology behind the Pacific Yew tree. The next day, once camp was packed up and staged, the crew went to an exceptionally weedy beach site and controlled perennial sow thistle, bull thistle, and field bindweed.
San Juan Islands Preservation Trust

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Red Mill Farms and other properties around San Juan Island
- **247 hours** of youth stewardship with San Juan Islands Preservation Trust
- **Projects Include:** noxious weed removal, western bluebird nesting houses maintained

**Red Mill Farms – San Juan YCC**

June 25 (Crew 1), June 26 (Crew 2)

- 200 sqft English Hawthorne removed
- 4 bags of Canada thistle removed
- 2 garden plots weeded amongst mustard rows

Both days began with environmental education on Island Marble Butterflies presented by Kathleen Foley. After about an hour of this the crew moved locations to the mustard plots which are maintained as habitat and a food source for the IMB. The crew broke into teams of 2-3 and each worked a row of exclusively field mustard or “fall plots” which were rows that included native chickweed, tall peppergrass and vetch, etc. as nectar plants. Extra caution was used when weeding as to avoid damaging the desirable growth. The soil was disturbed after weeds had been removed to aid in the mustard seeds taking root. During the lunch break, Leave No Trace ethics was discussed, to set an example right away of how to deal with trash/compost, moving around projects sites and interacting with wildlife. After lunch break, the crew spent another few hours finishing up weeding and removing Canada thistle or English Hawthorne from the area. The plots were completed to Kathleen’s satisfaction with time remaining each day. Kathleen was impressed with the work ethic and amount of work completed.

**Red Mill Farms- San Juan YCC**

August 6 (Crew 1) and August 8 (Crew 2)

- 23 bird houses predator proofed
- 31 bird houses or feeders cleaned

Kathleen was a great partner who took the education portion on her shoulders as well as involved SJICC in some interesting projects. She was able to let SJICC help predator-proof the western bluebird houses around the Preservation Trust’s various properties. She began the day with an hour of education about the life cycle, the history of the bird’s extirpation from the island, and the preservation techniques their land agency was using currently as well as in the past. She also discussed what other bird
species (house wren and house sparrow) might be using these houses and what to look for when cleaning them out. The houses that had been deployed were at risk of raccoons climbing up and raiding them. The solution was to take these boxes down, clean them from the past season (as the western bluebirds were no longer nesting) and arm them with PVC pipe so that they stood about 3-4’ above where any animal could climb. On site, the houses were first investigated to make sure there was no one currently nesting. They were then unscrewed and taken down to scrape clean. Once clean, crew members secured the house to a post that could fit inside of a PVC pipe and then cut the pipe to the correct height and fit it together before screwing the bottom portion of the post back in place. This took some teamwork and communication when fitting and replacing these houses. By the end of the second day, there were some houses that needed to come down and get a thorough clean which they did with some soap, scrubbers and the hose.

OPAL Community Land Trust

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Bonnie Brae (Orcas Island)
- **130 hours** of youth stewardship with OPAL Community Land Trust
- **Projects Include:** noxious weed removal, removing remnant deer fencing

**Bonnie Brae- Orcas YCC**
July 31st & August 1st

- 130 hours of combined work
- 750²ft of wire deer-fencing removed/salvaged
- 1 large (33 gal) bag of trash and plastic fencing removed
- 50 T-posts pulled/salvaged
- Approx. 4³ yards of Himalayan blackberry removed
- Approx. 6.5³ yards of woody debris/logs relocated for community

Under the direction of Rusty Diggs, the crew primarily worked to enhance and manage the native growth/protected raingarden areas in OPAL’s Bonnie Brae neighborhood. This included removing the deer fencing and t-posts, salvaging the fencing pieces into manageable rolls, and removing trash and invasive blackberry. During the difficult moments of climbing through wonderfully overgrown natives to access and remove the fencing, the team discussed the impacts of a large deer population on the environment, various control methods, and comparing materials and
practices. They noted that while plastic fencing was light weight and less expensive, it seemed less effective and harder to remove because it would get tangled, break, and damage plants. They also questioned using plastic materials in restorative efforts, being harmful to the environment if not properly removed, and less likely to be reusable. Comparing this to metal fencing which was heavier and more cumbersome, but durable, easier to remove, and salvageable. We also talked about some of the differences between this site as an example of a healthy and established raingarden versus the failed sites found during the ‘Tree Streets’ projects. While some of the members got started on fencing the first day, the other half helped relocate some woody debris from trees that had fallen around the neighborhood during the spring storms. Using wheelbarrows and a relay method, the crew relocated a mountain of logs to a communal area in the neighborhood where Bonnie Brae residents could share the blessing of firewood during the upcoming winter. Once all the fencing was properly removed and stored, the crews worked together on 3 native growth/raingarden areas to remove invasive plant species (largely Himalayan blackberry).

IHIYA Biological Preserve

Summary

- **Project Sites**: New trail at 474 Prohaska Rd.
- **252 hours** of youth stewardship
- **Projects include**: construction of new trail, medicinal plant study

474 Prohaska Rd.- San Juan YCC
July 24 (Crew 1), July 25 (Crew 2), August 7 (Crew 1)
Originally, SJICC had set up two days to work at IHIYA but decided to add a third because this was a project with the most meaning to the crew members and leaders. There was no hint of a trail when they first arrived on site, but it had been walked and flagged with a general idea of where to build out. The youth started the process by limbing branches and brushing to open access. After the path could be walked clearly, the soil was scraped and removed with McLeods and hoes. Some rocks would have to be moved, other rocks added, holes filled in, run-off shoots created, and trail leveled out to add safety for walkers. After just a short while, the crew could already see their progress, which was exciting and motivating for them. From the beginning of the program, learning about plants was a goal of an overwhelming majority of crew members and receiving expert knowledge from Rosa and Nunutsi was a special privilege. Half way through the first day, two IHIYA preserve stewards led the crew on a plant walk where they talked about medicinal trees, flowers, berries and wild herbs that the crew had been working along-side that morning. This was an eye-opening experience and introduced them to a new way of thinking about their surroundings. At the end of the work day the crew members took out their journals and collectively tried to recall all the new plants they had learned and spent time making sketches of some of them. These herbs stayed in their minds and they were able to find them again to make tea during their camping trip later that season. The last day on the land (crew 2) was spent working the trail farther into the meadow after which they did a silent hike activity with notecard prompts. The hike was done individually and ended with quiet time at the “lookout”. After this time of contemplation and observation, they journaled about what working on public lands and IHIYA specifically meant to them. Each crew member left IHIYA having built their knowledge base as well as having formed a deep connection to the land. The crew members all took great pride in seeing their progress and asked if they be given credit with a sign at the beginning of the trail, which Rosa was willing to oblige. Now when they take their friends and family to this land, they will have proof of the hard work they accomplished.
Orcas Island School District

August 20th & 21st

• **56 hours** youth stewardship

This week had originally been scheduled for work with the Preservation Trust and our outer-island camping trip, but the dangerous air quality from extensive fires in BC cancelled all outdoor work. As fortune would have it, Lorena Stankevich, the elementary school principal, had just reached out requesting help for an ‘urgent classroom move’. With the quick coordination of YCC staff we were able to bring 6 members the first day, and 8 members the second day to help with various tasks around the school. The teachers needed to rearrange rooms to accommodate for a larger kindergarten class. In total, the crew rearranged and setup 3 new classrooms which required an array of tasks including moving furniture, boxes, supplies, and classroom pet tanks; pinning paper and posters on walls; making photo copies; cleaning windows; and sanding the grime off old desks. To show their appreciation, the teachers rewarded the crew with a pizza lunch. This project turned out to be a significantly valuable experience which provided the youth an opportunity to help steward their own school and give back to the teachers that otherwise dedicate so much to them.

San Juan Island Kiwanis Club

Friday Harbor Historical Museum –San Juan YCC

July 3, July 5 (7 crew members from both crews – make up day)

• **28 hours** youth stewardship

This project was added only a week or so before the event took place because Kiwanis put out a last minute call for help. The crews helped for about 2 hours each day (4 hours total) to receive one day stipend. They helped set up and break down the 4th of July “Pig War Picnic”.

L.I.F.E. Trail

LIFE Trail – Lopez YCC

July 11, 12, August 15
• **105 hours** youth stewardship
• 1 mile trail brushed
• 2 hours spent removing noxious weeds (Himalayan Blackberry, Canada thistle)

On July 11, Nathan Donnelly joined the crew today to give directions on work projects. The LIFE trail was brushed back entirely, including alongside the walking paths and around the fitness stations. Two groups brushed back the trails and stations, while a third worked with Nathan on removing blackberry and thistle. All groups rotated throughout the day. The crew returned the next day to finish brushing trails, as well as fill rabbit holes in the gravel and clean off signs using a brush and water.
Other Activities

First-Aid / CPR Certification with Orcas Island Fire & EMS

Before the season began, crews from all three islands traveled to Orcas Island to attend a CPR/First Aid Training at the Fire Station. Alan Stamiesen taught the class in about 7 hours. This was his second year teaching YCC youth, and his expertise and engagement with the subject made for a rich learning experience for all. After demonstrating proficiency in skills and knowledge, each youth received a 2-year certification for First-Aid and CPR.

Tribal Canoe Journey through the San Juan Islands

The 2nd annual mini canoe journey took place on our first week of program. This event was coordinated by the Coast Salish Youth Corps, involved two tribal ocean traveling canoes, and was attended by members of 11 different tribes (Samish, Lummi, Saanich, Swinomish, Stillaguamish, Port Gamble/S‘klallum, Nooksack, Upper Skagit, Sun’Aq, Cherokee and Yakima Nation). 10 senior youth crew members and 7 staff from all three of the San Juan islands YCC programs traveled on the canoe and took part in important cultural and place-based activities. The canoe journey traveled from Anacortes to Shaw Island, then to Camp Orkila on Orcas Island, with a final landing celebration at Odlin county park on Lopez Island. A camp-out and community event occurred at each landing site including canoe rides, cultural sharing, songs, stories and celebrations that the YCC youth and staff each took part in. While landing at Camp Orkila the staff and youth all participated and witnessed a cabin blessing/naming ceremony and “traditional protocol” for Camp Orkila’s newest two cabins, the Salish and the Samish, ground breaking and naming ceremony in honor of the relationship built over the last two years with the Coast Salish Youth Stewardship Corps, YCC and the local tribes. At the final landing youth from each of the San Juan Youth Corps occupied the canoes and a youth representative of the YCC and a YCC staff member each took part in the traditional landing protocol by asking for permission to come ashore from the Lopez Island welcoming committee. The canoe journey experience was extremely meaningful for all involved.
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San Juan County Public Works (Environmental and Solid Waste Divisions)
OPAL Land Trust (Bonnie Brae)
San Juan Islands Preservation Trust
Northwest Straits Foundation
Orcas Island Community Foundation
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