

CONSERVATION LEGACY ANNUAL REPORT 2015

FOR PEOPLE AND PLACE



CONSERVATION
legacy



CULTIVATING LOCAL ACTION TO PRODUCE ENDURING WIDESPREAD IMPACT IN COMMUNITIES, ECOSYSTEMS AND PEOPLE.

2015 WAS A BIG YEAR. Our staff and Board of Directors finalized our new mission statement, 'cultivating local action to produce enduring widespread impact in communities, ecosystems and people', truly reflecting our intentions as an organization and driving us in our every day actions. Our mission connects us; it pulls together our diverse array of program models operating in communities across the country.

Programs operated by Conservation Legacy provide opportunities for job training, personal and professional development, service learning, as well as assist project partners in accomplishing critical work on public lands and in local communities. Conservation Legacy provides high-quality, locally focused conservation and community service programs that are customized to meet the unique needs of participants, partners and communities. This customized, local approach allows for uniquely tailored programmatic designs which create closer community bonds and leave deeper lasting impacts.

OUR PROGRAMS ARE RESILIENT IN THE FACE OF CHALLENGE AND CHANGE, AND REFLECT THE PEOPLE AND PLACES IN WHICH WE SERVE.

We continue to grow and adapt; in 2015 we accomplished more work and served more people than ever before. Our VISTA and AmeriCorps teams merged to create BRIDGE Network, dedicated to building capacity, restoring environments, innovating solutions, developing opportunities, growing support, and empowering leaders. Based in Beckley, West Virginia and serving communities and ecosystems nationwide, BRIDGE Network engaged over 240 AmeriCorps members in service last year. Our Ancestral Lands programming is slated to have it's biggest year yet in 2016, based on the success of this past year. We **leveraged 14,937 volunteers**. Our conservation **crews worked more than 346,000 project hours**. We've made new community connections and have partnered with new agencies and organizations to continue our work. As we celebrate the accomplishments of 2015, we also look forward to carrying this momentum into 2016.

PROGRAM PROFILES

ARIZONA CONSERVATION CORPS

Arizona Conservation Corps (AZCC) provides young adults with challenging service and educational opportunities throughout the full calendar year from the White Mountains, Flagstaff and Tucson, AZ. AZCC operates a continuum of programs from community-based initiatives for younger teens to residential camping crews for high school and college aged individuals along with leadership programs for college graduates and job training programs specifically for current era veterans. Programs are completed in partnership with public land agency managers and are AmeriCorps programs.

BRIDGE NETWORK

BRIDGE Network's Community and Environmental Stewards programs place AmeriCorps and VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) Members in communities across America for a year of volunteer service by facilitating partnerships between federal agencies and community-based nonprofit groups. Unified in mission, each BRIDGE Network Member serves on a specific team distinguished by its unique focus and relevant federal agency partner affiliation.

SOUTHEAST CONSERVATION CORPS

Southeast Conservation Corps (SECC) operates conservation service programs throughout the Southeast that focus on empowering young people to cultivate compassion, responsibility and grit through community service, hard work and environmental stewardship. SECC is focused on connecting local youth to the natural environment through service learning, personal development and recreation. SECC offers a variety of opportunities, including both a youth mountain biking program, Trips for Kids-Chattanooga, and a variety of Conservation Programs for youth and young adults.

SOUTHWEST CONSERVATION CORPS

Southwest Conservation Corps (SCC) operates conservation service programs across Southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico with offices in Durango and Salida, CO, Gallup, NM and Acoma, NM. SCC has broad program offerings including individual intern placements in natural resource positions as well as crew based conservation service programs for youth, young adults, and post 9-11 era Veterans. SCC programs are rooted in the communities where we serve, addressing local public land issues and working to meet local community needs and interests.

PRESERVE AMERICA YOUTH SUMMIT

The Preserve America Youth Summit (PAYS) Program began in 2007 with the goal of creating an opportunity for young people aged 13 to 18 to get out of the classroom and into the field to learn about history, archaeology, heritage tourism, and preservation. Interacting directly with community partners such as federal, state and local governments and agencies as well as non-profit historic preservation, tourism, community, and education organizations, each Youth Summit provides interactive, outcome driven learning experiences and service opportunities.

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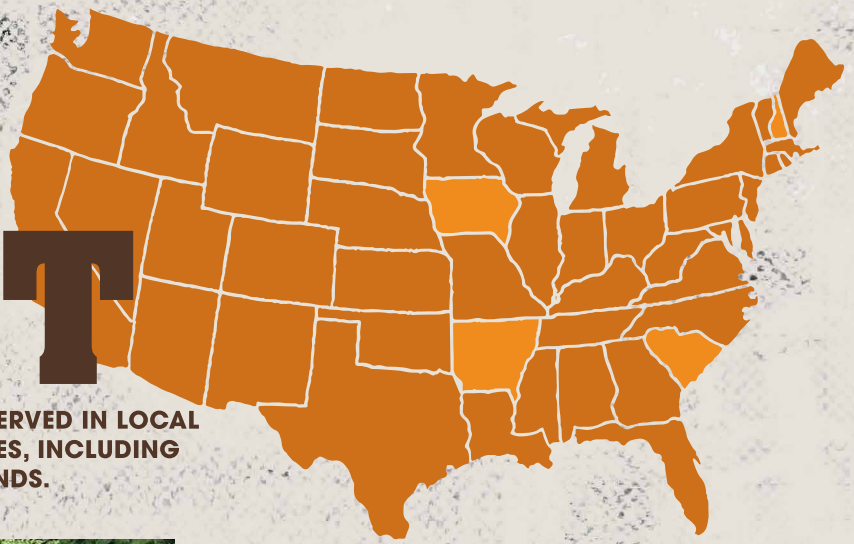
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2015 IMPACT

IN 2015, CONSERVATION LEGACY PROGRAMS SERVED IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN 48 U.S. STATES AND TERRITORIES, INCLUDING GUAM, PUERTO RICO AND THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS.



1,112

TOTAL MEMBERS



346,829

**CREW PROJECT HOURS
IN 840 HITCHES**



79,000

**VOLUNTEER HOURS BY
14,937 VOLUNTEERS LEVERAGED
ACROSS PROGRAMS**



\$2,000,000

**IN AMERICORPS
EDUCATION AWARDS**



FOUR

**PRESERVE AMERICA YOUTH
SUMMITS ENGAGING 220 STUDENTS**

FINANCIALS

DIRECT: 92.8%
INDIRECT: 7.2%



OTHER: 1.6%
GRANTS: 21.7%
PROJECTS: 76.7%



RECOGNITION

21ST CENTURY CONSERVATION SERVICE CORPS CHAMPIONS OF THE YEAR

In 2015, The Partnership for the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) recognized **Michelle Mitchell** as a 21CSC Champion of the Year for her outstanding contributions in connecting people to the land.

Mitchell, a regional program leader for volunteer and service programs in the U.S. Forest Service Southern Region, was selected for tirelessly creating and enhancing programs that engage diverse groups of young people and veterans in conservation activities on America's public lands.

Mitchell helped manage approximately 127 Youth Conservation Corps participants across 13 states and Puerto Rico. She also cultivated relationships with 21CSC program operators including **Southeast Conservation Corps**. In the past year, she has served as a personal mentor for 13 young people working in the region, helping guide them toward success and future employment possibilities in the conservation field.

Looking forward to 2016, we are proud to continue our partnership with **Zac Ribbing** of the Coronado National Forest, as one of the current year's Champions. Zac has collaborated with **Arizona Conservation Corps** to create a scalable model of a professional development program that meets key agency and community needs.

Zac is a model project partner at all levels. He takes a comprehensive, collaborative, engaging approach to solving problems that both land management agencies, communities, and corps members are confronting in an ever changing cultural, economic and natural environment.

SAN JUAN NATIONAL FOREST PROGRAMS RECEIVE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL AWARDS

The San Juan National Forest and its partners received the U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Regional Forester's Honor Award in April of 2015 for launching **The Four Corners Federal Lands Internship Program**, a program that offers college students experience in resource-management careers and puts students to work alongside agency staff.

"The program is extremely beneficial to students seeking a career in land management," said Tana Verzuh, Fort Lewis College Career Services Coordinator. "They get great on-the-ground experience and exposure to the federal agencies and non-profits."

"I'm very appreciative of this recognition from the Forest Service," said Cliff Spencer, Superintendent for Mesa Verde National Park. "**The Southwest Conservation Corps** and Mountain Studies Institute also deserve a lot of the credit for bringing the program to fruition."

2015 HEROES OF THE 21ST CENTURY CONSERVATION SERVICE CORPS: ANTHONY 'CHAKO' CIOCCO

The North Face partnered with the Department of the Interior to donate \$100,000 in grants to 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) program heroes. Chako has been recognized with a \$25,000 grant from The North Face for **Southwest Conservation Corps' Ancestral Lands** program. Hear more from Chako on page 6.

CHRIS BRAIDHAIR: ONE TO ONE WITH MOTHER EARTH

Southwest Conservation Corps and **Arizona Conservation Corps** Corpsmember and Crew Leader, Chris Braidhair, was highlighted by REI through their online blog. Chris talks more about his experience with Conservation Legacy on page 6. The blog post can be found at blog.rei.com.



PEOPLE

ADVERSITY IS BEST FACED THROUGH HARD WORK AND COLLABORATION. CHALLENGE IS OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH. WE CELEBRATE THE INDIVIDUALS THAT TAKE THE PATH LESS TRAVELED.



1,112

**IN 2015, CONSERVATION LEGACY
ENGAGED A TOTAL OF 1,112 MEMBERS
ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS.**

CALEB COURTNEY

SOUTHWEST CONSERVATION CORPS VETERANS FIRE CORPS CORPSMEMBER

Caleb discovered that the Veterans Fire Corps (VFC) program was what he needed to not only be successful in the firefighting world, but to give him a transition back into civilian life. The VFC helped him retain some of the camaraderie and understanding that he had in the military by allowing him to spend time with fellow combat veterans, but also gave him the opportunity to reestablish his life through simple things like cooking outdoors and working long days in a field he enjoyed.

Prior to his service in the VFC, Caleb spent five years in the Marine Corps. When he finished with the military he struggled with the civilian side of life. Everything built up to an early mid-life crisis, when he had a breakdown that ended with a divorce and a lot of questions on his part about what was next in life.

The program gave him the hard experience and technical skills he needed to pursue a career in firefighting. Caleb left with great friendships and a more solid direction in life; he highly recommends the VFC program to any combat veteran that is interested in a similar career. He is currently looking towards the future, pursuing several hotshot crews and thinking about stepping into a VFC leadership role.





JULIANA FULTON

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS

Juliana Fulton spent 2015 as a Regional, Trail, and Community Assistance (RTCA) Fellow with the National Park Service (NPS). Juliana, based in Detroit, Michigan, worked on the Detroit Parks Strategic Master Plan under a partnership between Conservation Legacy, the City of Detroit and the National Park Service. Juliana compiled information which was used to identify which parks the city should focus reclamation and funding efforts on for a ten year plan that is currently being formulated. She has presented ideas to community partners encouraging all involved parties to work towards purposeful natural areas, and has educated the general public about the difference between a natural and vacant area.

Additionally, Juliana acted as an outreach coordinator for community groups to improve and re-envision parks that the city does not have the resources to maintain. She was the main contact person for the Detroit Land Bank, working on a plan to expand parkland in vacant and blighted neighborhoods, helping to stabilize and beautify the areas. In an effort to expand how Detroit parks are used, she also worked on Food Truck and Community Garden plans for the parks.

Juliana's impact in Detroit will continue, as she has been offered permanent employment with the City of Detroit, where she will continue her work on park projects throughout the city.



WHY DETROIT? WHY PUBLIC GREEN SPACE?

Public green space is critical to neighborhood development. In areas of growth, parks can serve as catalysts for further development. In areas of decline, they provide an essential stabilizing effect. This is especially true for Detroit's vacant school sites. Parks promote goals as diverse as healthy lifestyles, crime reduction, community interaction, storm-water management, and economic development. Juliana's work in Detroit is critical, as the General Services and Detroit Recreation Departments are in the final stages of updating the 2006 Strategic Master Plan. Her contributions helped provide guidelines on what parks to prioritize moving forward and how to maximize the positive impacts of parkland for the quality of life for residents in every neighborhood across Detroit.



ANTHONY 'CHAKO' CIOCCO

SOUTHWEST CONSERVATION CORPS ANCESTRAL LANDS PROGRAM COORDINATOR

"My life's journey so far has brought me closer to nature and much, much closer to my traditional culture. I spent a lot of time alone in the woods, which helped guide my path. In Mvskoke culture, we believe that nature offers guidance to help you find the path to your truer self. I like to think that our Ancestral Lands program offers that same experience. It's a chance to immerse yourself in nature and feel empowered to be who you are.

Ancestral Lands has been a safe space for us to work to restore balance with one another. It's a very human, down to earth kind of experience. Even simple things like eating healthy food, exercising, waking up early, and grueling hard work, helps us to expel some of the toxic things in our lives.

We empower participants on an internal personal level and on an external path, both with professional development as well as traditional cultural development as Native people. Whether you're working towards a degree, a professional career, or becoming a medicine person, this is a space to find those callings and the support you need to become your true self.

Through Ancestral Lands programs, we accept and empower our Indigenous identities. One of my elders once told me, "For ish-dee-jah-dee (Indian People) every day we put on a costume and act in a play, we pretend we're something we're not, but we all know the truth." I think this applies to all communities. Some just realize it more than others. That elder went on to say, "If you act in a play too long, I think you get stuck that way, like the young ones today. I hope they wake up before it's too late and they can't get back to who they really are."

Acknowledging and revitalizing our Indigenous identities has a lot to offer when it comes to the natural world. Taking care of mother earth is our entire way of life. Everything we do traditionally is a part of her ecological process. Revitalizing an ecosystem and revitalizing our cultures go hand-in-hand.

I think one thing holds true for most people: if you spend enough time outdoors you will fall in love – and people take care of what they love. I felt like nature and my traditional community gave me life, and in return I've devoted my life to reciprocating that love. I hope that our efforts here in the program will be a big step in that direction."

CHRIS BRAIDHAIR

ARIZONA & SOUTHWEST CONSERVATION CORPS CORPSMEMBER AND CREW LEADER

"Growing up on the Navajo Nation, I've always been fascinated with nature. From sunrise to sunset and every changing season, every day was precious. I always had an altruistic side that I acquired from my grandmother, who was a medicine woman, so becoming a paramedic became my main goal in life. The only set back was the cost.

Once I found out about the AmeriCorps Education Award that I could obtain from seasonal work for the conservation corps, I had believed I found my calling. I could work to benefit nature and accumulate money for education. I've served four terms, lead one crew of individuals, obtained my Wilderness EMT certification from my education award and interned for the Forest Service. The conservation corps opened new doors with great experiences, awesome views and extraordinary individuals. Each work week was not only something new but somewhere new, all with the bonding relationship of the crew. We've worked, shared meals, camped and blended our lives together. Through these times, we've created friendships, though it wasn't all downhill. We've had to climb to the highest peak as a crew.



The most challenging part for me was opening up and sharing, but with each passing term it became easier. Easy enough for me that I became a crew leader for a term and leading proved more challenging than any personal vendetta I had. It's nice to pass on the knowledge learned to the next generation of corps members. I am grateful for what the conservation corps did for me and am continuing on to pursue a career as a paramedic. I cannot thank the conservation corps enough for getting me there.

With this experience behind me and my life goal nearly in reach, I am going to go back to my Navajo nation as an EMT to help my people and along the way tell the youth about an awesome experience that they'll enjoy with Conservation Legacy."

PROJECTS

THROUGH HARD WORK, WE FOSTER RESPONSIBILITY AND LEADERSHIP
FOR ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY.



346,829

IN 2015, CONSERVATION LEGACY CREWS WORKED A
GRAND TOTAL OF 346,829 PROJECT HOURS OVER THE
COURSE OF 840 HITCHES.



URBAN ARCHEOLOGY

SOUTHEAST CONSERVATION CORPS

This summer, the Southeast Conservation Corps (SECC) partnered with the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park (CHCH), and the Urban Archeology Corps program of the National Park Service to engage seven teens from the greater Chattanooga area in conservation service projects and hands on education. During the six week program the youth learned, worked, and played in their local national park this summer.

For five weeks the seven corpsmembers and two leaders worked along the Blue Blazes trail to reestablish tread, clear trail corridor, construct a bridge and build a boardwalk. The Blue Blazes trail lies within Moccasin Bend, a historical area within Chattanooga. In addition to the service work completed along the trail, the crew also participated in an archeology class with NPS employees, met with the class and professor of the University of Chattanooga for a field visit, attended an NPS staff meeting and learned about the US Jobs online system from park staff.

For their final week, the crew worked closely with the CHCH maintenance staff to complete tread maintenance within Sherman's Reservation. Sherman's Reservation is located deep within the City of Chattanooga and is the site of a famous Civil War battle.

This SECC crew exemplified to the park what a corps crew is capable of and what corps programs offer beyond the project work. The crew reflected the diversity of citizens that live within the Greater Chattanooga area, hailing from different schools, neighborhoods, socioeconomic backgrounds, and races.

A FOREST REPLANTED

SOUTHWEST CONSERVATION CORPS MISSIONARY RIDGE REFORESTATION SAN JUAN NATIONAL FOREST

Southwest Conservation Corps crews are well-versed in restoration and conservation projects. But the 2015 field season also brought a new type of challenging project: planting nearly 16,000 Engelmann Spruce trees over an area of 31 acres within a three week timespan, putting in over 1800 project work hours. This sort of work is typically handled by professional tree planters, so we had to gear up and train our crews relatively quickly in order to meet the demands of the project. Fortunately, we had an excellent partner in the San Juan National Forest to assist and provide field support to our crews in this endeavor.

The Missionary Ridge Fire Complex of 2002 was located just outside of Durango, Colorado and scorched nearly 72,000 acres. The USFS has been leading reforestation efforts throughout the burn area for several years now. In 2015, the SCC teamed up with the San Juan National Forest (Columbine District) to assist in their efforts to replant forest areas devastated by the fire. Two SCC crews were assigned to the project at the same time so that the seedlings could be planted quickly and improve the survival rates.

SCC involvement in the Missionary Ridge Reforestation project this past year was made possible by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and a match from the USFS. In 2016, the SCC will again head back to Missionary Ridge to continue in reforestation efforts.



“YES, THEY LEARNED ABOUT AMERICAN INDIAN ARCHEOLOGY, CIVIL WAR HISTORY, AND OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES. YES, THEY GAINED IMPORTANT WORK SKILLS, EARNED MONEY, AND BECAME AWARE OF POTENTIAL CAREER PATHWAYS. THEY ALSO BONDED WITH OTHER STUDENTS FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS, MADE A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO SPECIAL PLACES NEAR THEIR HOMES, AND MADE TANGIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEIR COMMUNITY.”

-JON BENNETT, PARK SUPERINTENDENT



BUILD. RESTORE. INNOVATE. DEVELOP. GROW.

IN 2015, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, CONSERVATION LEGACY'S BRIDGE NETWORK PLACED SIX AMERICORPS VISTA TEAM MEMBERS WITH GROUNDWORK USA IN DISADVANTAGED AND UNDER SERVED COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE NATION.



VISTA TEAM MEMBERS worked to provide economic opportunities for young people, improve access to healthy food and address local environmental issues. Dedicated to the belief that by changing places, we can change lives, Groundwork USA is a national organization with local roots, engaging local businesses, residents and government officials to revitalize neighborhoods and transform community liabilities into community assets. BRIDGE Network worked hard to support each of the six members as they served out their terms of service.

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS:



DEVIN POWERS: **GROUNDWORK SOMERVILLE (MASSACHUSETTS)**

Devin Powers is helped address the issues of youth poverty/unemployment and food insecurity. Devin worked to create outreach and recruitment materials and job opportunities for the youth jobs program, The Green Team, which operates an urban farm and mobile farmers market in Somerville. He also helped increase awareness throughout the community regarding Groundwork's services, such as the affordable produce available at the mobile market, in order to bring more food to low-income families.

KEVIN BLANCHETTE: **GROUNDWORK LAWRENCE (MASSACHUSETTS)**

Kevin helped to create the next generation of community stewards by working with the Green Team Youth Program. He developed opportunities for under-served populations, particularly at-risk youth, to engage in experiential outdoor learning on public lands. These educational opportunities will raise awareness of the economic opportunity presented by continued study, employment, and careers in conservation related fields.

ROCIO MORALES: **GROUNDWORK ELIZABETH (NEW JERSEY)**

Rocio Morales assisted Groundwork Elizabeth's work in promoting healthy open space and community gardening programming. Because of this work, participants have access to healthy foods through community gardens. The Ground Work Elizabeth Gardens serve hundreds of under-served community members working hand in hand with members of other related organizations and with the Green Team. Rocio, in addition, encouraged an ongoing relationship with Morristown Historic National Park and worked there to assist the park in farming and trail building.



TRACEY POLLOCK: **GROUNDWORK MILWAUKEE (WISCONSIN)**

Tracey Pollock worked with Groundwork Milwaukee in three primary areas. Tracy helped to build life and job skills for diverse youth and young adults by mentoring their Green Team members in their First Green Job program. She also worked to improve access to healthy foods and to healthy environments by supporting the Milwaukee Urban Gardens Program. In addition, Tracy assisted in outreach through the River Ambassador program.

LORENZO PLAZOLA: **GROUNDWORK RICHMOND (CALIFORNIA)**

Lorenzo Plazola worked with Groundwork Richmond's Greening Projects focused on putting young people to work in the identified low-income neighborhoods most impacted by climate change issues.

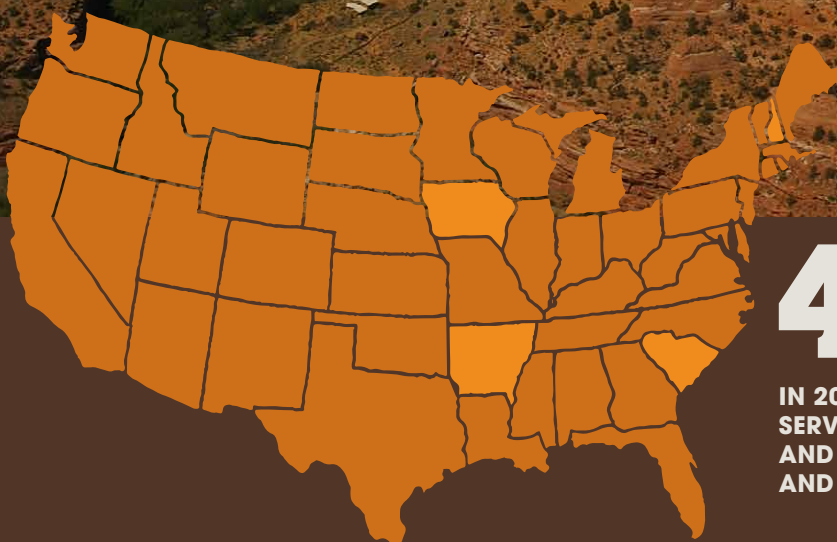
"Lorenzo worked to send himself and the Green Team youth to the Groundwork Summit in Yellowstone National Park, where they participated in service learning and restoration projects and were introduced to many different careers within the National Park Service. During this trip he transitioned from VISTA to an official Groundwork staff member. Lorenzo's experience was life changing and he is now considering a future in the park service." -Supervisor, Sarah Calderon

PAMELA SEGURA: **GROUNDWORK HUDSON VALLEY (NEW YORK)**

Pamela Segura worked to bring about economic empowerment throughout Yonkers. Pamela was highly involved in Groundwork Hudson Valley's youth corps conservation projects, supporting various activities including building local trails, restoration, and promoting stewardship in the Saw Mill River parks. She also developed a River Warden project wherein residents of municipal housing units receive a monthly stipend to report illegal dumping in the Saw Mill River.

PLACES

WE SUPPORT DIVERSITY; CULTIVATING LOCAL ACTION TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITIES AND ADDRESS UNIQUE NEEDS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.



48

IN 2015, CONSERVATION LEGACY PROGRAMS SERVED IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN 48 U.S. STATES AND TERRITORIES, INCLUDING GUAM, PUERTO RICO AND THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS.

COLLABORATION IN COLORADO

SAN JUAN NATIONAL FOREST & SOUTHWEST CONSERVATION CORPS

The SJNF covers 1.8 million acres in the southwestern corner of Colorado and is the ideal setting for traditional, wilderness based corps programs. SCC offers Veterans Fire Corps, Sustainable Forestry Teams, Regional Conservation Corps, High School Camping Crews and Individual Placement programs- all on the San Juan National Forest, serving youth 16-18, young adults 18-25 as well as recent era veterans, with meaningful service projects.

The SJNF is also home to the Weminuche Wilderness. At three quarters the size of Rhode Island, the Weminuche is the largest Wilderness area in Colorado (499,771 acres). The Weminuche spans the Continental Divide, North America's geological backbone, with its headwaters diverted to both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans and has been a seasonal home away from home for many of SCC's backcountry crews. With the support of SJNF staff, SCC has been facilitating iconic and transformative wilderness experiences for young adults for 17 years.

Southwest Conservation Corps works with the SJNF on projects in developed recreation, fuels management, route inventory and management as well as intern capacity in forestry, hydrology, range management, visitor services, wilderness management and recreation. Additionally, SCC has sent many of its best and brightest alumni to work for the SJNF over the years. Aside from providing ground level capacity, SCC has also been part of several noteworthy collaborative partnerships to work not only with SJNF managers, but other local and national nonprofit organizations to bring capacity to the SJNF and also help forest managers achieve some of their goals at a landscape level, working across land boundaries to accomplish Forest and community priorities.

SCC is an active member of the San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership convened by Mountain Studies Institute (MSI).

In 2015, leveraging Washington Office USFS funding for fuels management on Forest land, SCC and MSI obtained Colorado State Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant funding to treat private property forest adjacent to Forest treatments, all to protect the Dutton/ Four Mile Ditch, the water supply for the community of Pagosa Springs, CO. After the devastation of the West Fork fire, Forest fire managers, government officials, community members and nonprofits came together to pro-actively address and protect this vital water supply and watershed.

Another example of a leading effort is the Connecting for Conservation (C4C) collaborative, which has connected federal agency partners, including the SJNF, with local stakeholders, government and nonprofit organizations to achieve collaborative planning for landscape scale projects such as forest management, watershed protection, invasive species removal and youth engagement in the outdoors and on public lands.

SCC and the SJNF continue to look for opportunities to not only develop projects and find funding together to implement these projects, but to work together to engage the next generation of youth, young adult and recent era veteran natural resource professionals and conservation stewards.

In 2015, SCC nominated Kara Chadwick, SJNF Supervisor, for our 21st Century Service Conservation Corps (21CSCC) Champion of Change. Through dedicated partnership, constant communication and proven results and outcomes on the ground, SCC has enjoyed support and partnership at every level with the SJNF, from the ground to its upper management. It is a relationship that we are proud of and continue to work hard to maintain.



A GRAND VIEW OF SERVICE

THE GRAND CANYON HAS BEEN A PLACE HUMANS HAVE CALLED HOME FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, SHELTERING THE MIGHTY SOUTH BOUND COLORADO RIVER. TODAY, THE CANYON SEES FIVE MILLION VISITORS EACH YEAR.

CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION EFFORTS HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE CRITICAL.



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS, ARIZONA CONSERVATION CORPS AND THE ANCESTRAL LANDS PROGRAMS HAVE PROVIDED OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN THE CANYON

on trail, preservation, restoration, plant cultivation, invasive species management, interpretation and youth engagement projects. These programs have dedicated themselves to supporting stewardship among the 11 tribes traditionally associated with the Grand Canyon and surrounding area by providing the following opportunities for youth and young adults:



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS IN THE CANYON:

Starlivia Kaska represents the next generation of stewards specializing in water issues. Starlivia served at Grand Canyon National Park as part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Native American Water Corps, an internship program operated by Conservation Legacy's Environmental Stewards program. After attending a month-long training program at the University of Arizona, Kaska began her internship at Grand Canyon National Park. Kaska is from Supai, Arizona, the capital of the Havasupai Indian Reservation.

Starlivia reflects on her work: "I have done a lot of things in the last three months, so it is hard to say what I am the most proud of. I have learned the basic routines around this wastewater treatment plant. I use my knowledge of the routines to perform most daily duties and record data so that the plant has records of what is happening every day. Out of the things I do on most days I am most proud of being able to run the plant by myself. I

am proud that I was able to observe and learn how to keep track of everything that needs to be recorded and performed daily to follow regulations. I am here and knowledgeable enough to help out with running the plant if someone needs help."

ARIZONA CONSERVATION CORPS IN THE CANYON:

The Grand Canyon National Park and Arizona Conservation Corps worked together to support an Ancestral Lands trail crew, comprised of Corpsmembers from tribes traditionally associated with Grand Canyon. The crew rotated through many divisions within the National Park to get an immersive look at the Park Service's operations, culture, and offerings.

It was a whirlwind summer for the crew, who lent their efforts to butterfly surveys, trail maintenance, picnic table construction (delivered by helicopter to Indian Gardens!), apartment repair and painting, invasive species removal, preservation and reconstruction of kivas, and visitor interaction at interpretive sites. Their experience culminated in an end-of-season raft trip along the Colorado River through the inner Canyon to get an eye-popping view of the place they'd served for the summer.

Corpsmember Noelle Kooyahoema might just take them up on that offer, saying she "plan[s] on doing AZCC for the next few years, gaining more experience and knowledge to become a Park Ranger." Her co-worker, Lance Tubinaghtewa, plans on spending more time in Corps programs, but regardless of his future plans, says that the experience "changed the way [he] views service forever.

"IT FEELS SO GOOD TO BE A PART OF SOMETHING THAT BRINGS US BACK TO THE PLACES OF OUR ANCESTORS."

NPS CAREER INSTITUTE INTERNS IN THE CANYON:

Marna Craig and Shayden Joe, working as ALCC- NPS Career Institute Interns in Grand Canyon National Park, were very successful in their positions. Together they facilitated a great Youth Play/Learn/Serve event, engaging more than 26 Native youth. Marna so impressed the Park that they offered her a seasonal employee position. Marna has decided to return to university to finish her education, but she hopes to return to work for the park after she earns her Bachelor's degree in Computer Science. Shayden will go to college in the Spring, working towards an Engineering degree.



DISPATCH FROM THE WORLD'S FIRST WILDERNESS AREA

ARIZONA CONSERVATION CORPS CREW 333 CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TRAIL, GILA NATIONAL FOREST

"People all over the world travel to hike the Continental Divide Trail (CDT); a trail that spans from the most Northern end of Idaho to the most Southern end of New Mexico. It has seen many hikers, created many memorable experiences for those who have traversed any part of it, and consequently, has gotten worn down over the years. Our crew is fortunate enough to do maintenance on one of the most southern portions of it, located in the Gila National Forest. Over the spike during one of our education sessions, we learned that the Gila is also the first established wilderness area in the U.S. The Gila is a beautiful place, like most wild places. It's filled with an expansive range of high altitude trees, like Ponderosa, Juniper, and Spruce, and harbors low desert fauna like Prickly Pear and Globemallow.

The Mentor Development Program crew gave another productive week in the Gila, while gaining technical skills and leadership strategies. The crew rejuvenated 6,500 ft of the Continental Divide Trail. Some of the trail was unrecognizable at the start of the week, with no visible tread, trail markers nor structures. Over the course of six days, the crew installed 18 water bars, 15 check steps, 21 drains, 80 CDT signs, 22 cairns, one rock apron, and one rock retaining wall. The sawyers also removed nine logs which

were blocking the trail. The crew met only one hiker, "Peru," who expressed gratitude for the hard and precise work done.

Rock work was a new experience for some members of the group— they learned that it can be frustrating but extremely rewarding. The crew's leadership provided gentle but tactical guidance during the rock apron and retaining wall projects and were especially appreciative of the opportunity to teach. This relates to an important soft skill gained during the week: the crew learned more about give-and-take while solving problems. In trust-based leadership, it is important that leaders listen to the ideas of their corpsmembers, and act on them if they are more logical than their own.

Some of the highlights of the week were the weather (which fluctuated from bluebird skies to thunderstorms!) and wildlife sightings. The crew saw turkeys, elk, coyotes, scorpions, brown recluse and black widow spiders, and butterflies—not to mention copious populations of ants! The leaders of the week, Hailey and Kristina, also prepared educational talks on wool processing and cloud seeding, respectively. These were well-received and an important learning experience for public speaking and discussion facilitation. As has become a bit of a tradition, the crew stopped at Ella's Café in Reserve for much needed coffee and breakfast."





WE ARE THE FUTURE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PRESERVE AMERICA YOUTH SUMMIT

Preserve America Youth Summit (PAYS) is an innovative program that provides a diverse group of middle and high school students and their educators' interactive, goal-focused, results-oriented experiences that foster their knowledge of our nation's cultural heritage. This program demonstrates the complexity of balancing sustainable use with historic preservation and cultivates life-long stewards of historic places and public lands. Youth gain invaluable experience being treated as "consultants" providing ideas and producing recommendations on critical current issues. This experience empowers youth to learn more about history, culture, and historic preservation, as well as provides specific trade-related skills through service projects.

PAYS explores places of national importance that tell the stories of the America's diverse culture and works to develop a curriculum around four study themes: advancing the appreciation of historic places, preserving America's special places, connecting people to places and parks and enhancing leadership and stewardship.



Over multi-day programs, the youth summits are not just a field trip or service project or history lesson, but provide immersive sensory-based experiences that are multi-disciplinary and instill a stewardship ethic while fostering future leaders. PAYS provides a forum for interaction between students, educators, NPS staff, preservation experts, and community leaders to motivate and shape future efforts to raise appreciation and excitement about National Parks, public lands, historic places, heritage tourism, archaeology, and historic preservation. This energy lasts beyond the Summit. The results have been transferred to the classroom and the individual communities in which these students live and to the places visited.

In 2015, 220 youth participated in Summits that were held at in Aztec, New Mexico, San Antonio, Texas, Fort Collins, Colorado and the San Luis Valley of Colorado in partnership with the following National Park Service sites: Aztec Ruins National Monument, Cache La Poudre River National Heritage Area, Chaco Culture National Historic Park, Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, Salmon Ruins National Monument, San Antonio Missions National Historic Park, Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, Trujillo National Historic Landmark.



**INTEGRITY IS OUR FOUNDATION. OUR PROGRAMS ARE COMMITTED TO
STANDING BY OUR MISSION WITH ACTION AND INTENT.**

CONSERVATION LEGACY OPERATES PROGRAMS THAT CULTIVATE LOCAL ACTION TO PRODUCE
ENDURING WIDESPREAD IMPACT IN COMMUNITIES, ECOSYSTEMS AND PEOPLE BY OPERATING UNIQUE
AND FLEXIBLE PROGRAM MODELS SHOWN IN THE CHART BELOW.

PROGRAM MODEL TYPE:	PROGRAMS:				
					
FIELD CONSERVATION CREW (ADULT)					
LOCAL CONSERVATION CREW (ADULT)					
YOUTH CONSERVATION CREW					
INDIVIDUAL PLACEMENT					
AMERICORPS VISTA PLACEMENT					
ANCESTRAL LANDS					
CORPS RIVER RESTORATION					
VETERANS FIRE CORPS					
HISTORIC PRESERVATION					
YOUTH SUMMITS					



LOCAL IMPACT THROUGH LOCAL ACTION

CONSERVATION LEGACY SUPPORTS A UNIQUE AND DIVERSE MIX OF PROGRAM MODELS OPERATED ACROSS THE COUNTRY, ADAPTING TO INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS.

Beyond our successful traditional conservation corps and individual placement programming, Conservation Legacy is leading the way in innovative community based programs, operated at the ground level, with support from local community members and partner organizations. These program models address local needs and help solve a diverse set of challenges unique to each region. We've highlighted a few below.

ANCESTRAL LANDS CLIMBING ACCESS CREW

The 2015 Ancestral Lands' Climbing Access Crew was the first of its kind. The purpose of this initiative is to enhance the experience of participants through exposure to, and education around, rock climbing skills and ethics paired with conservation service work. Individuals joined all-Native conservation crews, learning new job skills, growing stronger, receiving training and providing conservation service through work projects, teamwork and education. The North Face® Explore Fund Grant then provided these young Natives with six days of climbing instruction over the fall season, facilitated by Pangaea Mountain Guides. A deliberate focus was placed on recreation as a means to inspire health and stewardship. The season culminated with a three day climbing excursion and a service event with friends, family, and community members to share skills and encourage future climbers.



ACOMA HIKING CLUB

Southwest Conservation Corps' Ancestral Lands program began in the Pueblo of Acoma in 2008 and continues to grow. The Acoma Hiking Club gives Middle School youth the opportunity to participate in a hiking and service program in partnership with El Malpais and El Morro National Monuments and the NPS Rivers, Trails, Conservation Assistance Program. Through this and other youth programming, Ancestral Lands engaged a total of 236 youth in 2015.

FEDERAL LANDS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Southwest Conservation Corps' Four Corners Federal Lands Internship Program (FLIP) connects regional college students and recent graduates with resource managers to gain the knowledge and hands on skills of working directly with a federal agency. Whether interns participate in natural, recreation, or cultural resource management, the goal of the program is to better prepare the next generation of agency personnel. Interns are recruited and placed to assist with a wide range of agency operations including: water/vegetation monitoring, GPS use and GIS mapping, grant writing, trail maintenance and building, interpretive services, visitor services, outreach and education, program development, invasive species management and any other hands on work.

TRIPS FOR KIDS- CHATTANOOGA

During the school year, Southeast Conservation Corps manages an after-school mountain bike program for teens ages 12-to-15. This five-month program engages youth in two monthly mountain bike rides and one monthly conservation service project. Within this program, participants learn conservation ethics, fortitude and tangible skills through the enjoyment of riding a bike. Upon successful completion of this program, participants earn a new or gently used bike and are encouraged to return the following season as peer leaders.

VETERANS FIRE CORPS

THE VETERANS FIRE CORPS (VFC) is collaborative initiative of the California Conservation Corps, Conservation Legacy and the Student Conservation Association run in partnership with state and federal agencies including the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the Corporation for National and Community Service. VFC engages recent era Veterans on priority hazardous fuels projects while developing the next generation of wildland firefighters.

In 2015, Conservation Legacy engaged current era veterans throughout the Southwest, training and preparing them for jobs in wildland fire while accomplishing priority projects identified by US Forest Service partners. Arizona Conservation Corps and Southwest Conservation Corps served 58 veterans over this time period.

Project work was varied but primarily focused on forest fuels reduction, hazard tree removal, prescribed burn preparation and invasive species removal. The forest fuels reduction was the majority of the project work and was focused on treating high-density areas with heavy fuel loads. Veteran fire crews reduced fire fuel loads that included Piñon, Juniper, Ponderosa, and Oak on public lands through Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona. Invasive species projects were primarily focused on the removal of Tamarisk and Russian Olive.

The other critical component to the impact of the program are the projects VFC members complete during their term of service, especially the benefits to local communities and citizens. Hazardous fuels were reduced on over 4,392 acres of public land in 2015 and many acres of public land located in the Wildland Urban Interface were protected from wildfires. VFC crews also assisted with the creation of fuel breaks, helped with prescribed burns, removed invasive species and improved local trails and waterways.

The combination of completing critical conservation projects and engaging in this work along with other Veterans focused on a common goal is what makes the VFC program so impactful. It contains the mission, structure, camaraderie and sense of professional and personal purpose that is key in helping current-era Veterans adjust from a successful career in the military to a successful career back at home. VFC transitions veterans from military service to equally meaningful civilian service in a structured, safe environment. The transition is facilitated by completing work in local communities protecting people, property and resources from the threat of catastrophic wildfire.



"THE VALUE OF THE VFC GOES BEYOND THE WORK THEY ACCOMPLISH TO AN INVESTMENT INTO THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE SERVED OUR COUNTRY IN A MOST DEDICATED AND SERIOUS CAPACITY. I WILL DEFINITELY RECOMMEND THAT THE GMUG WORK WITH SCC AGAIN."

-DAN HUISJEN, USFS

PROGRAM IMPACT:

58 CURRENT
ERA VETERANS
TRAINED

37,914 PROJECT
WORK HOURS

4,392 ACRES
IMPROVED
(INCLUDING
PRESCRIBED BURNS)

PROJECT LOCATIONS:

ARIZONA BLM

CIBOLA NF

LINCOLN NF

SAN JUAN NF

TONTO NF

RIO GRANDE NF

GRAND MESA,
UNCOMPAHGRE

and GUNNISON NF

PIKE-SAN ISABEL NF

INDICATED THEY WERE **PREPARED**
FOR POST PROGRAM ENTRY LEVEL
EMPLOYMENT IN **WILDLAND FIRE**

90%

74%
GAINED
OR PURSUING
RELATED **POST**
PROGRAM
EMPLOYMENT

75%
INDICATED THE VFC
PROGRAM HELPED
INCREASE THEIR
ABILITY TO
ADJUST FROM
MILITARY TO
CIVILIAN LIFE

ANCESTRAL LANDS: ROOTED IN CULTURE AND TRADITION

IN 2015, THE ANCESTRAL LANDS PROGRAMS WORKED WITH TRIBAL COMMUNITIES TO PROVIDE OVER 200 JOBS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH.



Collectively, in 2015, corpsmembers and interns of the Ancestral Lands program provided over **50,000 hours of project work** ranging from trail work at the Grand Canyon, restoration of ruins at Petrified Forest, inventorying and mapping invasive vegetation within the Navajo Nation and restoration of washes by eradicating invasive Russian olive and Tamarisk throughout the Southwest.

In total, the program **improved over 600 acres and 600 miles of washes, rivers, roads, and trails on public and tribal lands**. SCC, in collaboration with our federal partners, served young adults ages 18-30 and youth ages 7-15 in eight Native American Communities and provided over **2,500 hours of Youth Play Learn Serve hours** with the National Park Service at five tribal communities. **225 Native American school-aged kids were introduced to nearby National Parks** and the great outdoors.

Over the past year, the Ancestral Lands program had a **96% member retention rate**. All of the participants and leadership for the program came from Native American communities. Communities that have been impacted by the Ancestral Lands program include Acoma Pueblo, Arapaho Nation, Hopi Nation, Laguna Pueblo, Navajo Nation, Nez Perce Tribe, White Mountain Apache Tribe, and Zuni Pueblo.

“I HOPE TO BRING THE SOUTHWEST CONSERVATION CORPS TO MY COMMUNITY TO BEGIN IMPLEMENTING CONSERVATION WORK AND TO GET OUR COMMUNITY INTO A BETTER STATE. I AM GLAD TO BE A PART OF SCC.”

-JAMES HIM, NPS CAREER INSTITUTE INTERN



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

ACOMA TRADITIONAL FARM PROGRAM:

IN ACOMA PUEBLO, THE NEAREST GROCERY STORE IS 45 MILES AWAY—IT IS A VIRTUAL FOOD DESERT.

In partnership with the Pueblo, and with support from NMYCC, SCC has established a traditional farm program. 16 youth/young adults using seeds passed down for generations, planted, cultivated, and harvested several thousand pounds of produce for the Pueblo to be donated to the Senior Citizens Center, Acoma Head Start and families throughout the Pueblo. The program blends the teaching of traditional and modern agricultural techniques with teachings about language, culture and heritage. Participants have also constructed traditional Boawishtani ovens for the Senior center. All these activities provided opportunity for Acoma elders to pass down traditional knowledge to the next generation.

LA PLAZITA INSTITUTE (LPI):

SOUTH VALLEY, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Continuing the success of 2014, Ancestral Lands again partnered with La Plazita Institute and Petroglyph National Monument. Crews, made up of urban Indian populations of multiple tribes, often with histories of multi-generational legacies of poverty, completed projects in the park and worked in the Urban community garden providing affordable produce to families throughout the South Valley. While serving in the corps and after service, LPI creates an emotionally, physically, and spiritually safe refuge for these young men and women.

INTER-TRIBAL YOUTH CLIMATE LEADERSHIP CONGRESS (ITYCLC)

25 high school students were recruited for and attended the ITYCLC. Ancestral Lands recruited 25% of the total number of conference participants. The Bureau of Indian Affairs, in partnership with Fish and Wildlife Service funded 80% of these participants.

"The ITYCLC opportunity helped me develop spiritually and professionally through a variety of life altering experiences. I am going to be a part of the generation that is going to restore the balance to Mother Nature—I am a part of the 7th Generation. From the bottom of my heart I'd like to thank you for allowing me this great privilege of expanding my knowledge on climate change. Taa' yisi ahe hee'."

-Alisha Curley, Navajo Nation

SOCIETY OF AMERICAN INDIAN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ANNUAL CONFERENCE (SAIGE)

Eight representatives from the Ancestral Lands Career Institute attended the annual conference. The interns had the opportunity to connect and network with mentors, and professionals from around the country. It provided an excellent opportunity to make connections to support their conservation goals for their local communities.





LARGE SCALE RESTORATION IN THE COLORADO BASIN

FROM THE GREEN AND WHITE RIVERS IN THE NORTH TO THE GILA AND VERDE IN THE SOUTH, THE FACE OF THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN IS CHANGING AS PARTNERSHIPS TEAM UP WITH WORK FORCES TO LITERALLY CUT THROUGH THE WALLS OF WOODY INVASIVES AND RESTORE NATIVE RIVERSIDE HABITAT.

Over the last ten years the momentum for riparian restoration has been growing, and so have the number of opportunities to become involved. Through engaging members in crew-based and individual placement AmeriCorps programs, a huge collaborative impact is being made on rivers in the Colorado River Basin.

Conservation Legacy partners with other corps programs to complete this daunting work. We've sent Veterans to cut Russian Olive on the San Juan River through the winters, crews of young adults running saws spring and fall on the Dolores, Ancestral Lands crews monitoring weeds on the Little Colorado or treating Tamarisk and Russian Olive across the Navajo Reservation, Arizona Conservation Corps crews rallying through the Verde and protecting endangered species on the Gila. Partner corps like Utah Conservation Corps complete Southwest Willow Flycatcher

surveys, and send troops into the backcountry of the Escalante. Canyon Country Youth Corps has been clearing camps in Westwater Canyon and Labyrinth-Stillwater on the Colorado. Western Colorado Conservation Corps is completing significant work along the Grand Valley Riverfront trail system. And that is just a quick sample.

Tamarisk (Saltcedar) and Russian Olive are the primary targets, originally introduced in the late 1800s to mid 1900s for erosion control. And boy, they are good at what they do! Deep taproots, ability to thrive in saline soils, heavy seed production and few to no natural predators allowed these species to thrive and occupy an estimated 1.6 million acres in the southwest. Couple this with modified river systems, and the impacts include channel narrowing, water table decline, increased wildfire spread, compromised wildlife habitat, human, wildlife, and livestock access issues, out-competition of native species and potential water use. Because of the host of unintended challenges resulting from introduction, momentum for research and ultimately, national attention, was gained.

In 2006, the Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act was signed into law. Concurrently, as the act became law, watershed restoration partnerships began to form and develop plans in anticipation of funding and to serve as demonstration sites for large-scale habitat restoration. The Tamarisk Coalition, a Grand Junction, Colorado-based nonprofit, was established in 1999 to coordinate amongst partners, work towards landscape-scale restoration in the west, share best practices and coordinate projects. The Nature Conservancy began to initiate habitat restoration projects along the San Miguel River out of Telluride, CO, and energies began to build in multiple locations. Private foundations like the Packard Foundation and Walton Family Foundation became interested in the work, funding planning, capacity and projects. Agencies including the Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, and National Park Service, in the midst of federal funding cuts, saw the benefits of collaboration. New approaches to habitat restoration on rivers began to evolve.



This year marks six years of intense project implementation with the Escalante River Watershed Partnership (UT), and the Dolores River Restoration Partnership (DRRP, CO), where multiple conservation corps collaborate with agencies, landowners, and nonprofits to train and mobilize crews and interns. We trained 80 AmeriCorps members this August in Escalante, effectively increasing the towns population by 8% before sending back-to-back crews into the wilderness. This may well have been the largest specific riparian restoration training ever, and is certainly was one of the most logistically complex and remote saw projects out there!

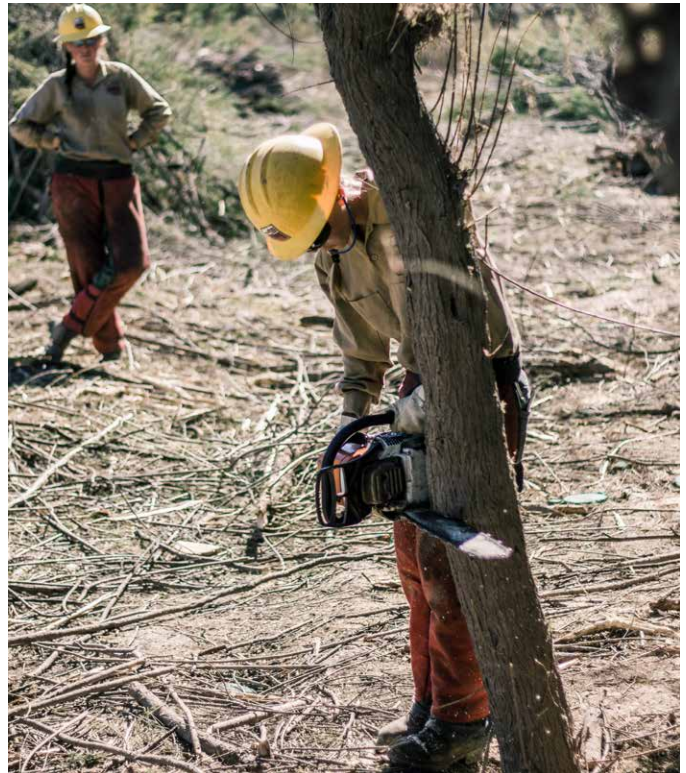
The energy and funding leveraged in these partnerships has allowed for massive accomplishment and the needed creation of an effective career pathway for young adults, from member to leader, to intern/field supervisor/strike teams working directly with agency partners. And, it is working—in Colorado and Utah, 14 of the 22 DRRP strike team members brought on have landed positions with agencies!

Restoration partnerships continue to develop across the west to tackle these issues. New funding sources continue to emerge, focused on riparian restoration, and aiding in partnership accomplishments. Through this evolution, conservation corps have established focused trainings, developed new programs and project types, collaborated at a scale rarely seen prior, and engaged over 1500 young adults in riparian restoration.



Alongside the ecological benefits and the collaborative impacts on these projects are significant social impacts. At the heart of conservation corps is job training—resume building and hands-on experience in conservation project work. Serving populations in need such as at-risk and under served youth, Native American and local communities add extensive, parallel benefits to these projects. In a three-year evaluation between 10 conservation corps programs and a comparison group nationwide, a sampling of results shows significant benefits to corps participants.

Members return to these projects to get scratched by tamarisk, poked by Russian olive thorns, wield heavy, loud saws, and work harder than they ever have because it means a lot and changes their lives. **THERE IS A MOVEMENT, AND IT CAN BE FELT. TOGETHER WE ARE RESTORING ENTIRE WATERSHEDS AND MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE.**



RIVER RESTORATION PARTNERSHIPS

DOLORES RIVER RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP (DRRP):

The Southwest Conservation Corps, Western Colorado Conservation Corps and Canyon Country Youth Corps collaborate within the Dolores River Restoration Partnership to complete restoration activities throughout 174 miles of the Dolores River Corridor in Southwest Colorado and South-Central Utah. As of 2014 this project is in its fifth year of implementation and 60% complete with initial treatments.

ESCALANTE RIVER WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP (ERWP):

The Utah Conservation Corps, Arizona Conservation Corps (Flagstaff) and Canyon Country Youth Corps collaborate within the Escalante River Watershed Partnership in Southeast Utah. The partnership has been in existence since 2009 and work is done on BLM, National Park Service, and Forest Service land as well as in the towns of Boulder and Escalante, UT.

VERDE WATERSHED RESTORATION COALITION (VWRC):

Arizona Conservation Corps (Flagstaff) is a partner in VWRC. They provide field crews who remove and treat tamarisk, Russian olive, tree of heaven and giant reed in the riparian corridors within the Verde River watershed in Central Arizona on both private and public lands. VWRC is a multi-stakeholder group of federal, state and local agencies, non-profits, local businesses and private landowners working together to improve habitat in the watershed. VWRC has been in existence since 2011 when pilot projects were initiated at demonstration sites in the watershed. The 2013 season consisted of concentrated project work from October through March.

GILA WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP (GWP):

The GWP represents people who live in the Upper Gila Watershed of Arizona, the area that drains into the upper portion of the Gila River in our state. The GWP is partnering with the Arizona Conservation Corps (Tucson) to implement a local, year-round crew to treat tamarisk, Russian olive, and re-establish willow habitat for the Southwest Willow Flycatcher, an endangered species. An exciting aspect of this project is the management of a new native plant nursery and greenhouse which will provide important native material for re-vegetation in key locations.

PARTNERS

WITH OUR LOCAL AND NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS, WE WORK TO WEAVE TOGETHER THE EXPERIENCES OF OUR MEMBERS AND THE LANDS AND PEOPLE THAT THEY SERVE WITH A NATIONAL STORY TO IMPART A LEGACY BEYOND OUR INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES.

At Conservation Legacy's core is an honest appreciation of collaboration. In meeting our mission, we would not have success for our members or the communities and ecosystems that we serve without true in-depth partnerships with a diversity of organizations, agencies, tribes, businesses and initiatives.

PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHTS:



PROJECT BUILD

PROJECT BUILD: KEEN UTILITY & THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

Stemming from a successful Fifty for 50 Campaign in partnership with The Wilderness Society (TWS) celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act in 2014, we once again teamed up with TWS to work with outdoor industry footwear company, KEEN Utility to develop a campaign celebrating corps across the country through Project Build. Since 2009, KEEN Utility has been 'Putting Good to Work' through its Project Build program. From working with Homes for our Troops to putting veterans back on their feet, to creating boot libraries for volunteers in need of protective footwear across the country, to now working with the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps in support of the work the corps do across America, KEEN Utility puts good to work, first. In 2015 KEEN Utility provided work boots for 300 corps members across the country and provided a \$50,000 capacity building grant to support the Project Build Partnership. Three Conservation Legacy programs have been selected as Project Build Corps to be highlighted celebrating the work of the 21CSC.



EVERY CHILD HEALTHY OUTDOORS (ECHO) ACROSS ALBUQUERQUE: THE OUTDOORS ALLIANCE FOR KIDS AND THE US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

As a sitting Steering Committee member of the Outdoors Alliance for Kids (OAK), a national advocacy organization dedicated to expanding opportunities to connect children, youth and families with the outdoors, in collaboration with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the community of Albuquerque, NM, we piloted a year of strategic implementation of the ECHO Across America Toolkit with a BRIDGE Network VISTA member leading the effort. OAK's ECHO Across America Toolkit provides a suite of resources to advance opportunities to connect children, youth and families with the outdoors at the state and local level. The goal of OAK's ECHO Across America initiative is to bring state and local leaders together to launch a comprehensive multi-sector plan to get more kids and families outdoors.



HEROES OF THE 21CSC: THE NORTH FACE & THE US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR (DOI)

In collaboration with The DOI, The North Face donated \$100,000 on behalf of conservation corps heroes as part of the company's continued commitment to care for public lands and recognize inspiring people through the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC). Recipients who embody the spirit of The North Face brand's first-ever global brand campaign "Never Stop," were chosen to encourage people to explore what's possible at the outer edges of their physical and intellectual possibilities and to raise awareness of the need to participate in the stewardship of our public lands. Ancestral Lands Program Coordinator Chako was selected as one of 4 "heroes of the 21CSC" and the program received a promotional video and a \$25,000 donation. This support from the North Face followed a \$10,000 grant from The North Face's Explore Fund which seeded the Ancestral Lands' Climbing Access Crew in partnership with the Access Fund and Pangaea Mountain Guides.



HOTSPOT STEWARDSHIP CORPS: LEAVE NO TRACE CENTER FOR OUTDOOR ETHICS

In 2015 we partnered with The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics to support the goals of the 21CSC and to support the use of Leave No Trace ethics across the next generation of outdoor stewards. This partnership manifested in support of the Center's Hotspot Program. With more than 1.6 billion people visiting public lands each year, many outdoor areas across our nation are negatively impacted by recreational use. We are literally loving our land to death. Through focused training and education efforts, community outreach, and service projects, we can work to give land managers and the public to tools to help prevent the continue degradation of these already heavily impacted areas. Hotspot Stewardship Corps are selected to aid in the service work components and planning in conjunction with the Hot Spot week's schedule of events. Conservation Legacy's SCC, SECC have been selected as Hotspot Stewardship Corps.



UNITED IN SERVICE



**21ST CENTURY
CONSERVATION
SERVICE CORPS**



AMERICORPS

Engaging young adults in intensive community service work with the goal of meeting the critical needs of the community and environment, we are proud to partner with AmeriCorps, providing service opportunities to young adults across the country.

21ST CENTURY CONSERVATION SERVICE CORPS

Conservation Legacy provides strategic leadership to support the Partnership for the 21CSC, with the primary goal of providing leadership to expand and deepen the impact of corps work. The 21CSC is a bold national effort to put thousands of young American's and veterans to work protecting, restoring, and enhancing America's great outdoors and cultural and community resources. The program is operated through a public-private partnership between government, industry, non-profit and community organizations, working together to foster the next generation of community leaders and resource stewards. Conservation Legacy is proud to be a leader of the 21CSC movement.

THE CORPS NETWORK

Conservation Legacy is a proud member of The Corps Network, providing critical leadership to the corps movement and to the nation's service and conservation corps as they tackle some of America's greatest challenges.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND INNOVATION IN HELPING US TO MEET OUR MISSION!

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION AND SERVICE FOR THE TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF SUPPORT WE'VE RECEIVED THIS YEAR. WE COULD NOT HAVE ACCOMPLISHED ALL THAT WE HAVE IN 2015 WITHOUT THESE COLLABORATIONS AND WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO 2016 WITH MANY NEW AND CONTINUED PARTNERSHIPS.





CONSERVATION LEGACY ANNUAL REPORT 2015

FOR PEOPLE AND PLACE

OFFICE LOCATIONS:

CONSERVATION LEGACY SUPPORT OFFICE

701 Camino Del Rio Suite 101
Durango, CO 81301
(970) 403-1149

ARIZONA CONSERVATION CORPS TUCSON OFFICE

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Tucson, AZ 85705
(520) 884-5550

FLAGSTAFF OFFICE

2301 East 5th Avenue
Flagstaff, AZ 86004
(928) 526-3280

BRIDGE NETWORK

115 S. Kanawha St
Beckley, WV 25801
(304) 252-4848

SOUTHEAST CONSERVATION CORPS

2001 N. Chamberlain Ave.
Chattanooga, TN 37406
(423) 664-2344

SOUTHWEST CONSERVATION CORPS DURANGO: FOUR CORNERS

701 Cam. del Rio #101
Durango, CO
(970) 259-8607

GALLUP: ANCESTRAL LANDS

506 W. Hwy 66 #12
Gallup, NM 87301
(505) 870-4810

SALIDA: LOS VALLES

701 E. Hwy 50
Salida, CO 81201
(719) 539-2438

PUEBLO OF ACOMA: ANCESTRAL LANDS

PO Box 208
San Fidel, NM 87049
(505) 552-4084

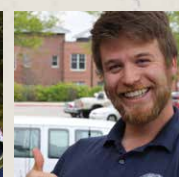
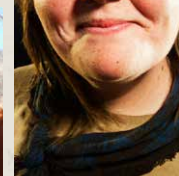
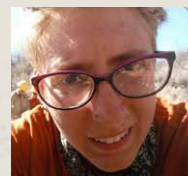
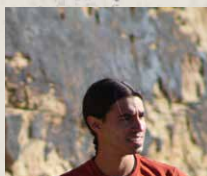
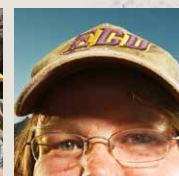
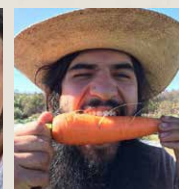


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