



the GreenWay

SCA's Conservation Quarterly

Fall 2011



Two years after the devastating Station Fire, The Los Angeles Times says restoration efforts by SCA members have enabled Angeles National Forest "to look like its old self again."

Impact of SCA Summer Will Endure

The Student Conservation Association's 55th summer season was punctuated by achievement, adventure, and transformation.

Twenty-year-old Kayla Morain was open to new challenges when she arrived at Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge, but capturing alligators went well beyond her expectations. "I had never even seen an alligator until this summer, and now I'm catching them in their own territory!? Crazy!" Kayla exclaims.

Her work helped the refuge access the overall health of the alligator population as well as the habitat that sustains them. "I wouldn't have traded the experience for anything, she says. "Through this, I can see myself continuing in conservation."

Max Bearak, a senior at Carleton College in Minnesota, hiked hundreds of miles with a GPS unit through Nevada's Humboldt National Forest to chart natural springs, abandoned mine shafts and other features. He later blogged in *The New York Times* "I had come seeking physical work and the outdoors, and I received it in full...following that call is a decision I'll never regret."

The services rendered by SCA members bring immediate and tangible benefits to our environment, but ultimately SCA's mission is to launch these young adults on a lifetime of stewardship. To that end, this year SCA implemented a series of career and workforce development initiatives. These include a pilot NPS Academy with the National Park Service, in which dozens of diverse college students trained for a range of park positions (see Page 4), and Pathway to Parks, a green job readiness

(continued on page 3)

THIS ISSUE:



SCA Expands Native American Engagement
page 2



NPS Academy is In Session
page 4



Extending the Wilderness Legacy
page 6

CONSERVATION BEGINS HERE
Student Conservation Association
thesca.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Speak Up for Service

Recently, I attended a town meeting in Washington, D.C. at which National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis introduced *A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement*. The document, unveiled as the Service approaches its 2016 centennial, details thirty-six actions and outcomes that will define the next hundred years of America's national parks.

Reflecting the vision of NPS leadership, partners such as SCA, and citizens' testimony from the America's Great Outdoors hearings, *A Call to Action* highlights the alignment between the park service and SCA. These include an emphasis on youth engagement, expanded conservation service and career opportunities, and broader outreach to engage and serve more diverse constituencies.

At the same time, however, concerns are growing that others in the federal government are looking to cut or even eliminate funding for landmark national service programs such as AmeriCorps, which not only provide young people with valuable skills and leadership-building opportunities but also aid people and communities who are most in need.

And, much like SCA, AmeriCorps also provides young adults with the hands-on experience necessary to secure a job at a time when unemployment—particularly among youth—is chillingly high.

Now is the time to increase, not reduce, national service programs and I hope you will join SCA in sending this urgent message to officials in Washington.

Thank you.

SCA Adds Tribal Engagement to Diversity Initiatives

“Waubay” is a Sioux word that means “nesting place for birds.” Yet one might have to look long and hard for other Native American influences at Waubay National Wildlife Refuge, a waterfowl sanctuary in South Dakota, or elsewhere within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. That’s why SCA launched a new tribal intern program this year at 16 refuges from Alaska to Iowa.

“It’s important to attract interns from surrounding communities, particularly tribal colleges,” says Kevin Kilcullen, FWS chief of visitor services. “We want students to see our career opportunities and come work for the Fish and Wildlife Service. SCA has been a great partner in helping us move this effort forward.”

Participating students rate the experience highly as well. Dera Lyotte, a Rosebud Sioux attending nearby Sinte Gleska University, spent the summer banding birds and conducting research at Waubay. “I grew up outdoors,” she says. “I was taught to be one with the earth. This is a good opportunity, a brand new adventure.”



Micah Knabb says his SCA internship provided “valuable awareness in planning my future.”

The SCA tribal intern program yields new skills and insights and places members on a path to professional careers. The Fish and Wildlife Service, which also partners with SCA on other youth diversity initiatives, depends on these programs to develop a more inclusive workforce while building stronger connections with under-represented communities.

Just days after graduating from Ohio University with a biology degree, SCA intern Micah Knabb reported to Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge in Utah. Micah, a Cherokee, surveyed grasslands, inventoried bird species, and studied abnormalities in Northern Leopard frog populations.

“College trained me to be a wildlife biologist and SCA and the bird refuge have given me incredible experience in this field,” Micah says. “They have also allowed me to explore other areas of conservation and public outreach, and this has given me valuable awareness in planning my future goals.”

Additionally, SCA fielded a crew of Arizona high school students—all of whom were Native Americans—at Canyon de Chelly in Tsaile, AZ. For five weeks this summer, the crew reseeded disturbed roadsides, repaired hiking trails, and prepared the foundation for a traditional Navajo Hogan while also focusing on Native American history. One parent remarked “I’ve seen how these students, including my own daughter, have grown and matured in this unique program.”

Read Micah’s blog from Bear River at thesca.org/tribal-intern

Impact of SCA Summer *continued from page 1*

program in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the City of Phoenix.

Yet not all SCA members serve on public lands. In collaboration with ARAMARK's Environmental Internship Program, 10 SCA interns recently thrived in corporate sustainability. At JPMorgan Chase in New York City, where ARAMARK provides food services, SCA's Abby Ray instituted a sustainable dining program that yielded immediate results.

"I drove composting and recycling programs at two facilities and initiated a recycling program at another," Abby states. "In three months at just one of those sites, we were able to keep 35 tons of compost and 58 tons of recycling out of local landfills."

By summer's end, three of the SCA interns had already been hired into permanent sustainability positions.

In California, SCA completed the second year of its ongoing recovery effort in Angeles National Forest, parts of which are still reeling from the 2009 Station Fire. "It's green now, it looks more lively," observes SCA's Melissa Madrid, a local resident who frequently visits the forest with her family. "It doesn't look like we're walking into something dead anymore." *The Los Angeles Times* agreed, reporting that thanks to SCA "the area is starting to look like its old self again."

And, as summer turned to fall, the SCA-Southwest Airlines *Conservation in Action Tour* pulled into Houston, its final stop on a 25-city excursion on which thousands Southwest employees and others joined in conservation service projects from coast to coast. "It's great to help these local parks," says SCA's Eric Hopkins. "They tell us, 'hey, we have three people working here. What you did today would have taken us two months!'"

"This has been the experience of a lifetime," adds Diana Forbes, 23. "I got to travel the country, do something good for the environment, and do something for myself, while giving lots of people a little taste of what SCA is all about."

We'd like each issue to be better than the one before.

If you have suggestions for stories you'd like to see published or ideas on how to improve the newsletter, write to us at thegreenway@thesca.org



Get **Hands On**, SCA's email newsletter for alumni and friends. Read and subscribe at thesca.org/hands-on



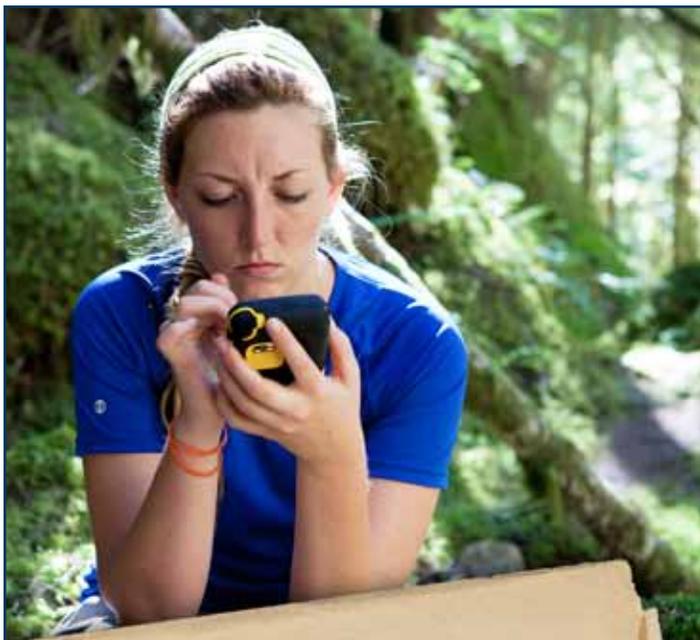
Follow us on Twitter @ twitter.com/the_sca and stay current with updates from thesca.org



Become an SCA **facebook** fan! Connect and share with thousands of conservation-minded people. facebook.com/StudentConservationAssociation



Watch and listen to member stories on SCA's YouTube channel youtube.com/user/conservationinaction



Back at the ranch...20-year-old college student Serena Doose tackled a very different problem in the woods of Maine: her own self-doubt that she could "hack it" in the backcountry.

Halfway through her internship, Serena suddenly realized that "I'm living up to my own expectations...my knowledge of how nature works has exponentially expanded. I'm also beginning to trust myself more... SCA led me out of my comfort zone so that I would come back after the summer knowing more about myself."

SCA relies on generous individuals like you to give students like Serena life-changing experiences through conservation service.

Please help us by making a secure gift online at thesca.org/sayYES

Scene + Heard



The 2-Minute Interview with Alan Yee

Alan Yee just served his tenth hitch with SCA—and all before college! The 18-year-old routinely participates in two crews each summer as well as SCA's school year program in his hometown of Oakland, CA.

A ten-time SCA alumnus—what keeps pulling you back?

I live in a very urban area. The sounds here are all cars. Out there, it's birds, roaring rivers, and the wind through the trees.

What about the hard work?

It's not the easiest thing to do but it's only eight hours a day.

What have you learned through your experiences?

Leadership skills, the importance of service. That we all have our part to do.

You've served at Muir Woods, Acadia, Grand Canyon. What's your most memorable SCA moment?

Inyo National Forest in 2009. My crew leader and I woke up early and hiked to the middle of a valley with a \$20 million view. Then we had a snowball fight.

How are you able to keep all those crews straight?

Every crew is unlike the last one but we share one commonality: we love the outdoors.

What's your next stop?

I've just started college and plan to major in marine biology. All life on earth is tied to the sea.

And when should SCA expect to see you again?

Oh, I'll be back. I'd like to lead crews. I'm not done with SCA yet!

For more about this and other SCA programs, visit thesca.org



"I learned so much!" at Yellowstone, says SCA intern April Hamblin.

NPS Academy is In Session

Last March, 30 college students spent Spring Break at Grand Teton National Park learning about professional opportunities in the National Park Service. Over the summer, they interned at parks including Acadia, Fort McHenry and Glacier in roles ranging from resource management to interpretation.

Welcome to NPS Academy.

A joint project between SCA and the park service, NPS Academy is designed to build a 21st century workforce for America's national parks: highly motivated, contemporarily skilled, and ethnically diverse.

April Hamblin, a 20-year-old environmental science major from Millville, NJ, conducted bee mortality studies at Yellowstone National Park. She also surveyed pika (tiny mammals related to hares), wetlands, and some of Yellowstone's lesser known features: graves.

"More than 200 people are buried in Yellowstone, many in frontier cemeteries," April notes. Among them, she says, are "Uncle" John Yancy, a concessionaire who built Yellowstone's first hotel, and numerous soldiers. "The headstones are simple. Most contain only names or words, like 'baby.' One read 'blossomed on earth only to bloom in heaven.' That one really got to me.

"It was so interesting," she adds. "I learned so much. Working in the park really opened my eyes to career options."

To the south, at Grand Teton, journalism major Carl Foster developed an Academy social network. The park service is not always known for its cutting-edge ways but with so many participants having little or no previous backcountry experience, it wanted Carl to fashion an online community for the team. "When they said they created this new position just for me, I knew I'd be the best they ever had," he says with a smile.

Carl, from urban Texas, admits he didn't bring the environmental credentials of some of his colleagues. "I'm used to commuting past chain stores and gas stations," he says. "Here, I drive by bison and elk." The experience, he says, now has him looking for a communications career within the park service.

Give other young people similar life-altering opportunities. Visit thesca.org/donate

Put Yourself on Firm Financial Footing



Get a Rock-Solid Return with an SCA Annuity

You can enjoy a solid return for life and save taxes with an SCA charitable gift annuity. In exchange for your gift (minimum \$5,000), you will get a set dollar amount each year beginning immediately or on a specified future date.

You will get an income tax deduction for a portion of the value of your gift. Part of your annuity will most likely be completely tax-free. Your gift will help blaze a trail for future generations of conservation leaders.

Sample Immediate Single-Life Rates*

Age 65 – 5.3%	Age 70 – 5.8%	Age 75 – 6.5%
Age 80 – 7.5%	Age 85 – 8.4%	Age 90 – 9.8%

Example: Give \$10,000 at age 80 and get \$750/year (7.5%) for the rest of your life.

**Two-life rates also available.*

Sample Deferred Rates

Age Now	5 Year Deferral	10 Year Deferral
60	6.4%	8.5%
65	7.0%	9.5%

For further information or a personal illustration, please contact Hugh Montgomery at 603-504-3241 or hmontgomery@thesca.org.

A Conservation Caravan

SCA engaged thousands of local volunteers on its summer-long *Conservation in Action Tour*, sponsored by Southwest Airlines: the Official Airline of SCA. An SCA crew traveled the country in a customized biodiesel vehicle and, with the aid of Southwest employees and others, conducted 40 service projects from Dallas to Detroit and LA to DC. “The experience of a lifetime,” said one volunteer. “It was amazing.” The tour’s final stop was at the Houston Arboretum on September 28th.

Watch the crew’s video and read their blogs at Tour40.thesca.org





Monica Patel was one of 12 SCA interns developing inaugural wilderness stewardship plans for national parks from Lassen Volcanic NP to the Everglades.

Extending the Wilderness Legacy

by Monica Patel

With sweat beading on my forehead, throbbing feet, and a racing heart, I collapse onto a limestone cliff. My eyes trace the Buffalo River below. And I realize my position as a Wilderness Fellow at Buffalo National River is directly linked to an American legacy, to the enactment of the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Aldo Leopold, Arthur Carhart, Howard Zahniser, and other advocates raised consciousness toward the beauty and necessity of wild lands. Forty-seven years and over 109 million acres of designated wilderness later, the Student Conservation Association and the National Park Service's Wilderness Stewardship Division have initiated a program to assess current conditions, develop inventorying and monitoring strategies, and produce a viable wilderness stewardship plan. For six months, in north-west Arkansas, I pursue this precise mission.

Every week, I meet telephonically with other SCA fellows stationed at national parks around the country along with Wade Vagias, Natural Resources Specialist (WSD), to discuss complex issues. And as we forge a new path inherent with ambiguity, I hear Wade counsel "we're building the ship as we're sailing it."

Soon, I am presenting to a room of site managers, their faces glowing in the light reflected off a projector screen. I relate an outline for developing Buffalo's wilderness stewardship plan. I then tap into my audience's wealth of knowledge and fill a legal pad full of notes that I could not have acquired by simply reading the towering stacks of management papers on my desk.

Wilderness is often times perceived as synonymous with "visitor restrictions," and can translate to a hot-button issue with the local community, which occasionally has been the case at Buffalo National River. From my personal experiences in nearby towns, local rodeos and the Turkey Trot festival, I know the people here value history. With this in mind, I tailor outreach tools such as brochures, posters, and website content to highlight locals' connections to the legacy of the land.

In doing so, the puzzle of Buffalo's wilderness character has started to come alive for me. My mind is filled with images from a nearby cave and a massive rock wall etched with names and dates, under which are barely discernible prehistoric illustrations. Humans are inclined to leave a part of themselves behind. As I approach the end of my adventure here, I leave an etching of my own in the management plan and educational products that will not only advance stewardship practices but a broad wilderness movement at Buffalo National River.

Living Life the Good Way

by Steve Smith, SCA Director of Risk Management and Safety

Sometimes it's easy to lose sight of what's important. Answering emails or listening to conference calls is important, but not always inspiring. Recently, I had a chance to get out on a rare sunny Seattle day and visit some SCA members in North Cascades National Park.

Although North Cascades is the least-visited national park in the lower 48, it's hard to imagine why with glacier-carved valleys, old-growth forests, and towering granite peaks. I dropped in on five interns performing a range of projects from fire monitoring to habitat restoration, and also checked in with a trail crew. Between visits, I explored a section of Cascade Pass where the crew had been the previous day.

Almost immediately, a black bear lumbered across the path just in front of me. I watched him scamper up a slope and disappear into the thick forest, both of us undoubtedly buzzing with excitement. I proceeded further up the trail, climbing through the dense cedar forest into open alpine slopes of wildflowers, talus and snow.

At the pass, two mountain goats cavorted in the snowfield above me, and I played interpreter for a few delighted but curious families. All too soon, it was time to race down the switchbacks to meet the SCA crew and Mike Brondi, their park supervisor.



Building trails in the North Cascades

Mike is a local legend as he has been working alongside SCA crews for many years. When I mentioned my bear sighting, he grew still for a moment, though genuinely happy. "When you see a bear," he said, "it means that you're living your life in a good way because you're putting yourself in the right kind of places."

Mike went on to explain "how much my own life is enriched by the opportunity to work with the young people from SCA." It occurred to me that this day had captured many of the best parts of my job: partnerships with land managers, interactions with park visitors and, of course, the inspiring example of SCA volunteers.

That is what I will try to remember when the phone rings for my next conference call.

A Note from SCA's Senior Vice President for Advancement, Dave Evancich:

Thank you to all our generous friends whose support this year has enabled SCA to provide life-changing experiences to more than 4,200 students this summer and beyond.

Our members had an amazing summer while completing critical work for our friends working in the parks and they did it with the utmost safety and professionalism.

Please remember that, although school is back in session for many students, there are still many more hoping to head into the field this Fall after park visitors go home. Please consider making an additional gift to SCA this season at thesca.org/sayYES

*Thanks! - Dave
devancich@thesca.org*

Download the ParkFinder App Today!

Find the parks nearest you with the activities you want to do. SCA has teamed with American Park Network and Ford to offer the Oh, Ranger! ParkFinder app for iPhones, iPad and iPod Touches. It's filled with information on more than 6,000 public lands, easy to use and—best of all—free!

Learn more at thesca.org/parkfinder





The American Institute of Philanthropy and Charity Navigator rank SCA among America's top conservation charities for fund-raising efficiency.

SCA is a nationwide conservation force of college and high school volunteers who protect and restore America's parks, forests, and other public lands. SCA's active, hands-on approach to conservation has helped to develop a new generation of conservation leaders, inspire lifelong stewardship, and save our planet.

Chairman of the Board: Dean Fischer
 President/CEO: Dale Penny
 Editor: Deirdre Fitzgerald
 Graphic Designer: Julia Jandrisits
 E-mail: thegreenway@thesca.org

Printed on 100% post-consumer paper, processed chlorine-free, soy ink



thesca.org



Proud Member

Student Conservation Association

689 River Road, P.O. Box 550
 Charlestown, NH 03603-0550

Tell Your IRA Distribution to Go Take a Hike!

ACT NOW!
 This opportunity expires on December 31, 2011



If you are 70½ or older, you can make tax-free transfers of up to \$100,000 this year from your IRA to qualified charitable organizations. Amounts transferred directly from your IRA to qualified charities count toward your 2011 Required Minimum Distribution!

A tax-free transfer to SCA is a great way to tell your IRA RMD to "go take a hike" while putting young people on the conservation trail. Please consider this special opportunity before taking your required minimum distribution.

For further information and a sample letter to send to your IRA trustee/custodian, please contact Hugh Montgomery at 603-504-3241 or hmontgomery@thesca.org.



the **GreenWay**
 SCA's Conservation Quarterly Fall 2011



Enter SCA's 2011 Photo Contest!

Show us how you get out, give back, and get your hands dirty!

Wherever and however you engage with the outdoors—hiking with family, getting muddy in the backcountry—show us and you could win our grand prize: Round-trip airline tickets on Southwest Airlines.

To enter, vote and view amazing photos, visit: contest.thesca.org