

ENVIRONMENTAL news

Palouse - Clearwater Environmental Institute

There ain't no cure for the Summertime Blues: AmeriCorps Team Works Hard to Restore Paradise Creek

by Amanda Cronin

Their motto is "getting things done!"; it couldn't be more true. Five days a week the AmeriCorps team, *Blue 1*, shows up to the PCEI office with smiles on their faces ready to work. The team members have worked on a total of four service projects since September 2001 and they remain cheerful for their last project or "spike" with PCEI. In Virginia City, Nevada they restored a historic opera house, in St. George, Utah they got buff building trails and in Sacramento they made a difference tutoring and mentoring at the Boys and Girls Club. The eight members of *Blue 1* are ages 18-24 and come from a variety of backgrounds; some are recent high school graduates, others are college graduates,



AmeriCorps members Nick Canady and Bud Trnka prepare logs to be used as habitat structures in Paradise Creek. Photo: Renee O'Connell.

team. Beginning in July the team will be working on the Paradise Creek "remeander" and habitat restoration project near the intersection of Mountain View Road and White Avenue. The team is working primarily with PCEI's Watersheds program but has also been of great assistance at the Moscow Community Garden and with the Environmental Education's summer series at Virgil Phillips Farm. We sincerely appreciate the hard work and great attitudes of the AmeriCorps team—thank you, *Blue 1*!



AmeriCorps members and PCEI staff take a break from work on one rural stream restoration site. Photo: Tom Lamar

still others have spent time working or traveling since high school. Why did they decide to join AmeriCorps? Jakita Allen, a "military brat," most recently from Florida, wanted to experience rural America, she aimed to get a "better idea of what goes on throughout the U.S, while helping people." Regan Wade echoed this call to service; "helping out other people teaches me to be a better person." Nadine Pagerie, a recent graduate of the University of Rhode Island foresaw AmeriCorps as a way to "narrow her focus and define her interests".

The team arrived in Moscow on May 24th and they will be with us until July 24th. Under the hands of AmeriCorps, 4,160 native trees and shrubs were planted in our watershed during May and June. Past restoration projects also received much needed weeding, watering and blue tube (tree protector) maintenance from the



Blue 1 team leader Jakita Allen (left) and Nadine Pagerie drill holes in logs for Paradise Creek. Photo: Renee O'Connell.

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PCEI Welcomes three new Watershed Program Assistants: Nathan Queener, Kris Bruestle, and Eric Crook!

by Amanda Cronin

The watersheds program is currently working on 15 restoration projects throughout the Paradise Creek watershed! Perhaps you're wondering how we get all this work done? The answer is: our three watershed assistants. Eric Crook and Kris Bruestle joined the watershed team in April, while Nathan Queener started work in May. These three guys spend all of their time in the field, working on various restoration projects, as well as overseeing the work of our AmeriCorps team. Hailing from around the inner Northwest and the midwest, Kris, Nathan and Eric bring a plethora of knowledge and experience to PCEI.

Eric Crook is originally from Pocatello, ID. After four years as a paratrooper in the U.S. Army, Eric attended Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. At BYU, Eric earned a B.S. in Resource Conservation. Wishing to specialize in the conservation field, Eric moved to Moscow in 2000 to begin a Master's degree in Environmental Science. Volunteering with various local conservation districts inspired Eric to write his Master's thesis on erosion control practices as they relate to soil moisture and seedling emergence. This summer will be very busy for Eric as he finishes his thesis, works at PCEI and finds time to relax with his girlfriend, Cassie.



From left to right: Nathan Queener, Eric Crook, and Kris Bruestle enjoy a moment during another hot day along Paradise Creek. Photo: Amanda Cronin.



Kris Bruestle cuts logs for habitat structures. Photo Renee O'Connell.

Growing up in rural Latah County, near Troy, gave Nathan Queener an early appreciation for outdoor work. During the school year Nathan lives in Missoula, Montana where he will be a junior at the University of Montana with a major in Environmental Studies and minors in Spanish and Wilderness Studies. Nathan has completed a variety of conservation related internships and summer jobs including: working at the University of Idaho Forest Resource Nursery, interning with the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute and volunteerings with the Montana State Public Interest Research Group. A dedicated cyclist, Nathan commutes by bicycle to and from his home in Troy to PCEI most days this summer, so watch for him early in the morning!

A midwest native, originally from Cincinnati Ohio, Kris Bruestle followed his interest in conservation west to the University of Idaho. Kris began his college career at Hocking College in Ohio and then transferred to the UI where he graduated in May with a B.S. in Ecology and Conservation Biology. Kris has applied his academic course work to various internships and jobs related to conservation and restoration including working as intern at PCEI last summer and doing restoration work with Wildlife Habitat Institute. In addition to his restoration background, Kris is an accomplished carpenter and has spent several seasons volunteering at Sequoia National Park in California. This summer Kris will spend his time working and playing outside, mountain biking, rock climbing and paddling with his fiancée and PCEI Environmental Education Intern, Renee O'Connell (see page 4).

The work of Eric, Nathan and Kris is invaluable in accomplishing the goals of PCEI and restoring the Paradise Creek watershed. We thank these three for their energy and commitment to restoring our watershed. Be sure and wave hello to Eric, Nathan and Kris whenever you see them out working in the creek!

It's off to work we go! - how do YOU get to work?

by Polly Fulford

On most summer mornings, Kevin Brackney can be seen zipping on his bicycle down Moscow's streets to meet the PCEI VanPool which travels to Lapwai, Idaho. The VanPool deposits him back in Moscow every evening just in time for his daily swim at the city pool.

Kevin rides the VanPool each day and has been for the last year since he accepted his position with the Nez Perce Tribe as a hydro-geologist. The option to ride the 90 mile roundtrip VanPool was integral to Kevin's acceptance of the position. Kevin and his wife, Elisabeth, have been members of PCEI since 1991. They have lived in Moscow for the past twelve years and have enjoyed the bicycle friendly town. Kevin learned of the VanPool through the PCEI newsletter.

Kevin enjoys riding the VanPool because of the "good conversations" and "comraderie" with fellow riders. He enjoys meeting the diversity of people that ride the VanPool including doctors, technicians, and administrative staff. When he is not chatting with fellow riders, Kevin has time to read and write during his commute. Sometimes he even snacks on cookies made by fellow commuters! The scenery is also a bonus of the long ride. He loves seeing Hells Canyon every morning as well as the ospreys nesting and the great blue herons. During fishing season, he can track the salmon and steelhead run because of the position of the fishermen. However, Kevin's favorite experience on the VanPool happened last fall. Each day for a week the VanPool passed by three adorable baby owls looking eye level from rocks on the side of the road!

Occasionally, Kevin must drive his own car which is never as fun or environmentally friendly as riding the VanPool. He is surprised at the number of people who live in Moscow, work in Lapwai, and choose to drive a car each day. Kevin said it feels good to know that each person riding on the VanPool is one less vehicle on the road.

Kevin is just one of the many supporters of PCEI VanPool. PCEI has operated the VanPool network since 1995 and has three routes that run from Moscow to Lewiston, Lewiston to Moscow, and Moscow to Lapwai. For more information about the vans and their routes, contact Polly Fulford, VanPool Coordinator at PCEI (882-1444).



On most days, Kevin Brackney rides his bike to the VanPool pick-up spot in Moscow to join his co-workers for the ride to work in Lapwai, Idaho. Photo: Polly Fulford.

Check out our web site:
www.pcei.org

This newsletter (ISSN# 1087-9374) is published quarterly by the Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute (PCEI). 3rd Class postage paid in Moscow, ID. The Mission of PCEI is to increase citizen involvement in decisions that affect our regional environment. Through community organizing and education, we strive to enable members of our community to find effective and sustainable solutions to local and regional environmental problems. PCEI is a non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible. Articles for publication and letters to the editor are welcome and must include the name and address of the author. Opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of individual authors and not necessarily those of PCEI.

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Education Intern helps Summer Programs Sizzle

By Michelle Hazen and Greg Fizzell

Our local Universities are a priceless resource when it comes to producing highly skilled individuals wanting to gain practical career experience. The PCEI Education and Outreach program is always eager to garner the abilities of such professionals and Renee O'Connell is no exception.

Renee has been a dedicated intern to PCEI since January 2002. She began working on a once weekly basis in preparation for PCEI's Summer Nature Camps. As the summer grew closer, Renee's responsibilities increased a great deal. Aside from the Day Camps, the University of Idaho College of Natural Resources graduate began coordinating the Moscow School District Adventure Club Phillips Farm Program and associated Tuesday evening activities. Renee first became involved with PCEI in 2000 by participating in our annual stream clean up. She later participated in several watershed restoration projects.

Originally from Columbus, Ohio, Renee enjoys spending time with her dogs (Scout and Skylar), hiking, mountain biking and rock climbing. After completing her internship with PCEI, Renee plans to return to Ohio, and marry her fiancée (and PCEI Watershed's Assistant), Kris Bruestle (see page 2).

Renee's work has made many summer education opportunities possible, and it is a delight to have her here. Renee invites you to write and say hello at <kidsplanttrees@pcei.org>.



Renee O'Connell and her pizza-loving dog, Scout rest at their home. Photo: Kris Bruestle.

Picnic Shelter grows at Community Garden Site

by Sue Izard

Laila Kinnunnen was thrilled in Spring of 2001 when her design model was first picked by PCEI staff in an open competition among University of Idaho Architecture students. The idea was to bring people and resources together on a Community Garden Shelter project. But I'm pretty sure she is quite proud now, of what she, her professor (and PCEI member), Kurt Rathmann, and fellow architecture students have been able to accomplish this year.

Original designs and the necessary building permit were obtained the previous summer. Footings were poured on a very snowy day in March and in May construction began. Timbers for the shelter were logged by hand, cut to order and donated by PCEI members, Jim & Zoe Cooley, and Jack Carpenter. A generous cash donation for the shelter also came from Hayden, Ross & Co.



This shelter, designed by UI Architecture student, Laila Kinnunnen, is being constructed at the Moscow Community Garden by volunteers from the UI Architecture Department. Timbers for the shelter came from Jim and Zoe Cooley, with generous support from Hayden, Ross & Co. Photo: Sue Izard.

Designed to be a "restful space in place", with an outstanding view of the Palouse, the PCEI Community Garden Picnic Shelter will also be used for garden workshops and activities. Join us in celebrating the finished project at our Open House on Saturday, September 7th (see the calendar on page 8). For more information contact PCEI at 882-1444 or <makeitgrow@pcei.org>.

To the Bat Cave!

by Michelle Hazen

This year at Moscow's Annual Renaissance Fair you may have noticed some rather large bats flying around. You also may have noticed them flying in and out of a bat cave never before seen at East City Park. These large bats were really second-graders from Renee McNally's class at Lena Whitmore Elementary School.

In the beginning of the school year PCEI and Lena Whitmore teacher Renee McNally began discussing how to incorporate environmental education and service learning into her second grade curriculum. Service Learning is the idea that students learn about a subject, then create a project that serves and teaches the community they live in about the subject. For these students the subject was bats.

Throughout the year the second-graders learned about all aspects of bats; they dispelled common myths (for instance, bats are not blind) and studied what good habitat would be for a bat. In the fall, PCEI helped the students make bat boxes. And in the spring we went to Phillips Farm to mount the boxes and hopefully provide a place for the bats to live. This brought the class to the final part of their service learning project. Having researched bats and found a way to help bats, now they had to teach others about what they learned.

After a little bit of brainstorming the students surprised everyone with an outrageous project. The plan was to build a bat cave, dress up as bats at the Renaissance Fair, and invite the children (and adults) at the Fair to take a tour of the bat cave and learn all about bats. The students worked for months creating a structure for the cave, designing the inside of the cave, writing the script, and constructing the costumes. They came up with some creative answers to some difficult challenges. The bat cave at the Fair was a great success, and over one hundred bat cave visitors learned the interesting and helpful nature of bats!



These "bats" and their teacher, Renee McNally, plan their morning of flying around the Renaissance Fair. Photo: Michelle Hazen.

Captain Planet swoops to the Community Garden to launch Youth Education

by Sue Izard



If you've visited the Moscow Community Garden in the last month or so, you may have noticed that two of the larger plots have been subdivided into eight mini-plots. The proud growers working these plots are the youth of the Moscow School District Adventure Club program, a daycare/after school program designed with "choice" in mind.

Each day while at Adventure Club, youth choose activities in which they wish to participate. This summer, the community garden is one such choice- and it is turning out to be a pretty popular choice.

Corn, tomatoes, peppers, sunflowers, cabbage, lettuce and potatoes have been planted so far! Americorps TRIO member, Michelle Hazen, and intern Dawna Jones coordinate activities every Monday and Friday morning for up to ten Adventure Club participants who visit the garden to learn new things.

Soil biology, the importance of worms, composting, and plant health are a few topics that will be covered this summer. One of the neat things about gardens is that children are in a situation where they can observe and make decisions about plant growth and ecological processes on their own- and it is a place to experiment!

For more information about the Moscow Community Garden, contact Sue Izard, Garden Coordinator at 882-1444 or <makeitgrow@pcei.org>.



AmeriCorps member, Debbi Wright teaches children about aquatic insects at Phillips Farm. Members of the AmeriCorps Blue 1 team also played a key role in working with the Adventure Club children at the Moscow Community Garden. Photo: Renee O'Connell.

Letters to the Editor,

Occasionally, PCEI receives letters to the editor. We recently received these letters from the 5th and 6th graders of the Moscow Charter School, with the names withheld by the teacher for privacy purposes.

Dear Editor,

I am a student from the Moscow Charter School. I am writing to you about this years Earth Day celebration. My main concern is water pollution. How can we stop t? Here is how! We could stop some of it by not throwing as much trash on to the ground. We could also stop some of it by not dumping oil and harmful liquids in to the water.

By polluting water we kill wild life such as: fish, some mammals, bugs, etc... So let's stop water pollution today!

Dear Editor,

I am a student at Moscow Charter School and I'm writing to you about the number of parks we have. This might not be of concern to you, but it is for me. We have a lot of parks that are made just for organized sports. There are not very many just for parents to spend time with their kids.

Parks in Moscow are all made for organized sports. All I want is a few parks where I can just play with my family.

Dear Editor,

I am a student at Moscow Charter School. As you probably know a few days ago was Earth Day. In school one of our homework assignments was to write about a subject that had something to do with Earth Day. I chose to write about acid rain, and this is what I learned. Acid rain breaks down bad minerals underground and can get into our drinking water and can cause serious side affects, such as diarrhea. It can also destroy streams and lakes killing all fish, bugs, by raising the pH level of the water to a deadly level. This rain can also destroy buildings and statues over a short period of time. So, there are some good reasons to use a filter for your drinking water and take some extra precautions to protect yourself.

Dear Editor,

I am a student at Moscow Charter School. Our forests are being cut down making less oxygen and more CO₂. The trees process CO₂ into oxygen. By cutting down our forests, we are destroying our environment.

To celebrate Earth Day people can plant trees, car pool, conserve energy, and many other things. So, please try to prevent deforestation.

Dear Editor,

I am a student at Moscow Charter School. I'm strongly influenced by my mom and my dad's involvement with Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute activities. I share in their concerns for the environmental quality of our community.

I think the community should recycle more. Recycling is important to me because then I will have a better home, along with everyone else. We all need to keep the world more clean by recycling, picking up trash, etc....

Announcement for the Wildlands Issues Colloquium

There will be a new public forum for students, experts and interested citizens to explore issues related to wildlands beginning this fall at the University of Idaho. If you have a general or specific interest in wildlands, and also if you want to learn how to plan, promote and conduct a public meeting, the Wildlands Issues Colloquium may be of interest to you.

Wildlands are undeveloped and uncultivated areas that are sparsely populated. They are geographically large landscapes of quiet grandeur, as well as landscapes of conflict and controversy. Wildlands issues may be ecologically and socially complex. Issues are often the result of conflicting human values, perceptions and choices regarding the use and management of wildlands. Poor or inadequate information and a reluctance of affected parties to communicate with one another may further complicate issues.

Through the colloquium, community members, university students and faculty will collaborate to identify issues and guest speakers for public presentations during the fall of 2002. The Colloquium is listed for undergraduate or graduate credit through the Resource, Recreation and Tourism, Forest Resources, and Geography Departments and the Environmental Sciences Program online at <http://max.csv.uidaho.edu/schedule.htm>. Community members who want to help organize colloquiums, but do not want college credit, can register through the University of Idaho's Community Enrichment Program (please call Peggy Waterman at 208-885-6486).

Please contact Greg Gollberg for meeting times and for additional information at 208-883-5545, or by e-mail at goll9151@uidaho.edu.

Energy Audits to be offered by early 2003

by Elizabeth Ewing

Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute is establishing a new energy audit project for our members. The new energy audits will allow PCEI members to receive information on the best ways to conserve energy for their home. There are various levels of energy audits and it will be custom fit to the needs of the resident. For example, the basic audit will incorporate a walk-thru of the residence and the recommendations for energy conservation will be provided.

The second level of audit will be more in depth, involving a qualitative and quantitative approach. This audit will involve a walk-thru in combination with a study of the resident's usage based on bills in relation to size of family.

Finally, the most intense audit will require the use of advanced equipment and energy usage software. Improvements will be ranked in order of payoff. (Such as investments in a new refrigerator or furnace.)

University student participation is vital to the success of this new program. The energy audit project will serve as a working classroom. By participating in this project the students will become involved with their community.

The energy audits will begin in early 2003. In order to launch this exciting new service, PCEI needs your help. We are currently trying to raise \$4,800 to obtain all the necessary equipment. Currently we borrow equipment from UI and it is subject to availability and is limited to basic equipment. Having our own equipment will allow us to provide the new energy audit service as well as lend the equipment out to our members. Your contribution, as always, is tax deductible.

Equipment we need includes: temperature data loggers, smoke candles/powder puffs, insulation meter, infrared temperature reader, multimeter, energy usage software, light meter, recording wattmeter, digital camera, blower air door, and a recording anemometer.

Education Staff goes to Boise for New "IdEEAs"

By Greg Fizzell

Michelle Hazen and Greg Fizzell attended the Idaho Environmental Education Association (IdEEA) Summit in Boise April 25-27. A PCEI booth displaying our Education and Outreach programs, newsletters, and brochures was set up in the conference gallery for both days of the conference. Greg and Michelle met many educators from across the state and region representing a multitude of agencies, businesses, and organizations. It is clear that PCEI is well known across the state for its quality programs in both education and watershed restoration.

Greg Fizzell, along with Dr. Steve Hollenhorst from UI College of Natural Resources, presented the McCall Science School concept to approximately 30 participants. After a brief 20-minute presentation by Dr. Hollenhorst, Greg facilitated a group process to gather issues and concerns from the audience regarding the development of the McCall Science School. This presentation and idea generating session will also be given at the Idaho Science Teachers Association Conference this October.

The conference presented a unique opportunity for our new program coordinator to network with other educators and organizations from the far corners of Idaho. Donny Roush, IdEEA Executive Director, is interested in working with PCEI as a statewide project to introduce environment-centered education in several Idaho schools. This concept, known as EIC (Environment as an Integrating Context), is gaining momentum nationwide. Results from national studies have demonstrated that education programs utilizing interdisciplinary, hands-on learning experiences, coupled with use of the environment as an integrating context, perform better on standardized measures of academic achievement in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. They also report reduced discipline and classroom management problems, increased engagement and enthusiasm for learning, and greater pride and ownership in accomplishments. PCEI's education program will be meeting with Donny and the staff of Moscow's Renaissance Charter School late this summer to discuss possibilities for adopting this education model school-wide.

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Please contact me about volunteering

Please keep my membership anonymous

\$25 Basic Membership

\$60 Palouse Protector

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Please direct my gift to the following program:

Environmental Education

Community Garden

Watersheds

VanPool/Transportation

Endowment gift of \$ _____

Mail to: PCEI POBox 8596 Moscow, ID 83843

Calendar of Events:

July 29-August 2, Monday-Friday 8am-12 or 1pm-5pm: *Volunteer Work days* at the Paradise Creek restoration site near Mountain View and White Avenue. To register, call 882-1444 or email <restorestreams@pcei.org>.

July 30 *Tree Identification*, Phillips Farm Evening Series (free) for the whole family! Every Tuesday evening from 6-7:30.

August 3, Saturday, 9am-1pm: *Volunteer Work day* at Paradise Creek. To register, call 882-1444 or email <restorestreams@pcei.org>.

August 5-9, M-F, 8-12 or 1-5: *Volunteer Work days* at Paradise Creek. To register, call 882-1444 or email <restorestreams@pcei.org>.

August 6 *Forest Fire*, Phillips Farm Evening Series (free) for the whole family! Every Tuesday evening from 6-7:30.

August 10, Saturday, 9am-1pm: *Volunteer Work day* at Paradise Creek. To register, call 882-1444 or email <restorestreams@pcei.org>.

August 12-16, Monday-Friday: *Idlers Rest Summer Nature Camp* (\$70/week). There are still openings for 4-6 graders!!! Learn about Marcoinvertbrates in Paradise Creek beginning at it's headwaters in Idlers Rest!

August 12-16, M-F, 8-12 or 1-5: *Volunteer Work days* at Paradise Creek. To register, call 882-1444 or email <restorestreams@pcei.org>.

August 26- September 6, M-F, 8-12 or 1-5: *Volunteer Work days* at Paradise Creek. To register, call 882-1444 or email <restorestreams@pcei.org>.

September 7, Saturday, 3-6pm: *Moscow Community Garden Open House*, celebrating the completion of the new picnic shelter constructed by the University of Idaho Architecture students (see page 4 for more details).

September 9-13, M-F, 8-12 or 1-5: *Volunteer Work days* at Paradise Creek. To register, call 882-1444 or email <restorestreams@pcei.org>.

September 14, Saturday: Latah Trail Foundation's "*Trail Raising Dinner and Auction*," at the University Inn-Best Western. Contact Pam Palmer at 208-883-3741 or by email <ppalmer@moscow.com> to reserve a table.

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Summer 2002!