

Inspiring the Next Generation of Environmental Leaders

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In August, a group of young adults spent a week working to create wildlife habitat and remove invasive species at multiple Port of Portland **Wetland Mitigation and Enhancement Sites**.

This work was done through a partnership with the **Northwest Youth Corps** (NYC), an education and job-training organization that helps youth and young adults from diverse backgrounds develop the skills they need to lead full and productive lives.

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The Port's Environmental team began working with Northwest Youth Corps a little over seven years ago. The partnership is one of mutual benefit. Youth Corps members help us manage over 900 acres of wetland areas. In return, they gain valuable on-the-job learning, new life skills and confidence.

On this recent adventure, Youth Corps members learned about native pollinator species in Troutdale, oak habitat at a site near the Portland International Center, the Wildlife Hazard Management Program at Portland International Airport, and bird nesting habitat along the Columbia Slough.



“The opportunity for these teens to meet a variety of professionals working with and at the Port was inspirational. For them to see how the work we were doing had connections to environmental careers was eye-opening,” said Kenny Symonds, Portland Community Crew

Leader for Northwest Youth Corps. “Four out of the eight teens want to continue to pursue a future working with nature. The impact this partnership has made on both youth and habitat for wildlife is a beautiful path towards a future we can all be proud of.”

Hearing comments like this is the best perk of Sarah Wilson’s job. A conservation ecologist for the Port, Sarah loves leading outreach and education – especially with young people. “Before I started with the Port, I worked as a Docent at a science museum and also taught outdoor classroom at an ecological preserve. I find it very rewarding to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards.”

On the last day of their work, Youth Corps members painted and installed 19 birdhouses along the Alderwood Trail between NE 92nd Dr. and the I-205 bridge. If you take a walk along the trail you will see their creative work.









