



San Juan Islands Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) 2023 Summer Season Report



YCC 2023 Overview

2023 was the 16th year of the San Juan Islands Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) program and one of the most successful ever. Seven crew leaders supported forty crew members in three crews across San Juan, Lopez, and Orcas Islands, contributing over 3,500 hours of stewardship in our local communities and the broader Salish Sea ecosystem.

After a one-year hiatus on Lopez Island due to low enrollment, program leaders were proud to engage a full crew of 15 middle school-aged Lopezians working to support the island where YCC began.

Activities across the islands included trail building, forest health assessments, noxious weed removal, wetland restoration, habitat maintenance for endangered species, and beach clean-up.

As much as possible, crew activities were organized into weekly environmental education themes, such as Marine, Nearshore, & Wetland Environments, Land Management Ethics, Forest and Fire Ecology, Endangered Species Recovery and more.

Projects were made successful due to huge contributions in coordination and support from many dedicated local, regional, state and federal partners, including:

Bureau of Land Management - San
Juan Islands National Monument
Port of Orcas
San Juan County
National Park Service
San Juan Preservation Trust
Washington State Parks
San Juan County Parks & Fair
Lopez Island Family Resource Center
Lopez Island Fire and EMS
Port of Friday Harbor

Lopez LIFE Trail
The Whale Museum
University of Washington Friday Harbor
Labs
San Juan County Noxious Weed
Control Board
San Juan County Solid Waste
San Juan County Land Bank
Orcas Island Fire and Rescue

The success of the 2023 season reaffirms the many ways in which the YCC plays a key role in strengthening our community by creating personal and professional growth opportunities for our youth, enhancing relationships across a multitude of community demographics and organizations, and maintaining a heightened sense of land stewardship and ecological awareness that remains at the heart of our county culture.

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Summary of YCC Stewardship Hours Worked Per Agency, Per Island in 2023

Agency Partner	San Juan Hours	Lopez Hours	Orcas Hours
WA State Parks	0	28	98
San Juan Preservation Trust	320	96	21
San Juan County Land Bank	231	283	105
Port of Orcas	0	0	93
San Juan County Parks and Fair/Public Works	288	154	0
San Juan County Solid Waste	30	28	24
San Juan County Noxious Weeds	192	48	120
LIFE Trail	0	138	0
Lopez Island Family Resource Center	0	31	0
Port of Friday Harbor	48	0	0
San Juan County	164	0	0
Crew Member Training	276	234	225
Total Hours	1,549	1,040	986

Crew Leader Training

All crew leaders attended a week-long pre-season training covering topics including:

Group management strategies and safety protocols,

Tool safety,

Plant identification and ethnobotany,

Activities to aid in reflection,

Meditation and the mental health mindfulness,

Delegating roles and responsibilities Setting a professional tone,

Becoming a trusted, positive mentor

Crew Leader Bios

Julie Curtis, Program Coordinator

Julie joined the District in the Spring of 2023 as the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) Program Co-Coordinator. Julie has a diverse professional background in program management, with a strong emphasis on community and relationship building. After receiving her B.A. in Environmental Studies at the University of San Diego, Julie served as a Food Security Advisor with the Peace Corps in Benin, West Africa. Since then, Julie has worked as an auditor, expedition guide, and operations manager - all experiences that grant her a unique perspective to share with the YCC Program. After falling in love with Washington's rugged beauty while hiking the Pacific Crest Trail in 2019, Julie has been thrilled to call San Juan Island her home since 2021. She is an advocate for protecting wild spaces while building a more equitable and diverse future of environmentalism. In her spare time, you'll find her hiking with her dog, kayaking, camping, road biking, or participating in the many wonderful community events the islands have to offer.

Mike Rosekrans, Program Coordinator

Mike (aka "Billy Bob") joined the District in the Spring of 2023 as the Youth Conservation Corps Program Co-Coordinator. Mike has spent his career engaging youth in environmental education programs, developing curriculum for educational institutions, and mentoring aspiring outdoor leaders and educators. Mike earned his M.Ed from Western Washington University in partnership with North Cascades Institute in 2016 with a focus on nonprofit administration and environmental education. After a season in Denali, five years in Yellowstone, and a thru hike of the Pacific Crest Trail with his wife, Mike returned to Western Washington and began working with the islands' youth through the Lopez Island School District and the Lopez Island Family Resource Center and is excited to be working with the YCC. Mike loves to hike and explore the verdant forests and glaciated peaks of the Pacific Northwest while advocating for endangered and threatened species that make their homes in the waters of the Salish Sea and the mountains and forests of the Olympics and Cascades.

Luke Fincher, San Juan Island Crew Leader

Luke brings many years of YCC experience with him. He joined the YCC as a crew member when he was 11 years old and has worked up to being a returning crew leader

and valuable member of the team. Throughout his journey with YCC, he has grown in many ways (not just height!). He describes his experience: “being in this program has been an incredible experience, and it has given me an even greater appreciation for these beautiful islands that I get to call home. There is an indescribable feeling that I get knowing I am making a difference, and I just feel absolutely connected with the world around me.” Luke is currently pursuing his BA at Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA.

Siri Dye, Lopez Island Crew Leader

Siri was born and raised on Lopez Island and graduated from Lopez high school in 2020. She is currently in her senior year at Franklin University where she studies environmental science. She loves wildlife conservation and management, so someday hopes to study large carnivores (specifically bears!). In her free time, she loves to sail, hike, and read. She was able to spend this summer finding time for those activities, while also working with YCC. Siri claims “her experience with the crew and Mike made for the most transformative and educating summer I have had in my post-high school years on Lopez. I enjoyed every single moment and I hope to be back again!”.

Greison Deffer, Orcas Island Crew Leader

Greison joined the YCC crew for the first time this year in 2023 as a crew leader for the Orcas Island team. Studying biology and ecology, he has taken several courses in environmental sustainability through an engineering program, and he hopes to apply his knowledge to educate the younger generation on more sustainable practices for the environment and the science that goes on behind our building of a more eco-friendly world. Still in high school, Greison is currently finishing his senior year in Nevada, and is looking forward to college, where he could contribute more to the Orcas community and spend more time in the wilds of the San Juans.

Rowan Rowley, Orcas Island Crew Leader

Rowan is currently working towards his B.S. in Geology at Central Washington University. Rowan brings years of experience in both volunteer environmental work and trail maintenance including experience leading high schoolers and upper middle schoolers in a wilderness environment. During high school, Rowan was a member his school's woods team, a group that maintained the extensive trail system surrounding the school and did basic forestry work. He also worked as a junior counselor at a boys' camp in New Hampshire in which he organized and led hikes and other activities in the woods. Rowan resides on Orcas Island during the summer months and loves sharing his passion and knowledge of the local ecology. The opportunity of being a YCC Crew Leader excites Rowan as he loves doing work outside and getting to know and work with young people.

Environmental Education

The San Juan Islands and the surrounding Salish Sea ecosystem is a richly diverse collection of life zones and various habitats, all of which need protection and care. In addition to providing habitat and ecological restoration, YCC crew members spend a portion of each day dedicated to environmental education lessons specifically focused on ecological issues related to the Salish Sea. In order to attach meaning to our work of building trails, monitoring endangered species, removing noxious weeds, and restoring native habitat, we must first learn why these topics are of importance. Through educational lessons, YCC crew members delve deeply into topics that either threaten or help to ensure the health of our natural environment so that they may become stewards of the land for future generations.

Environmental education lessons are taught each day by crew leaders and/or experts from local partnering agencies. Crew leaders are provided with an environmental education curriculum binder and spend two days of staff training becoming familiar with environmental education themes and facilitation strategies for field based experiential education. At the San Juan Islands Conservation District, we believe that stewardship and connection to the land come from an intimate relationship to place. The YCC program accomplished this by giving crew members the opportunity to have reflective journaling time, free exploration/sit spots, and environmental-based activities that help our youth stewards become more knowledgeable and caring individuals in relation to our stunning oceans, forests, rivers, and mountains of the Pacific Northwest.

Each week, crew members are presented with an environmental theme that ties in with the week's conservation work. The 2023 environmental education themes for each week were as follows:

1. Practical Skill Training
2. Sense of Place
3. Wilderness Skills
4. Marine, Nearshore, & Wetland Environments
5. Land Management Ethics
6. Forest and Fire Ecology
7. Endangered Species Recovery
8. Art and Environmentalism

These themes provide guidance on what lessons to provide the crews each week and give space for the students to build upon their growing knowledge and skills. The program began with a practical skills training week where crews dedicated an entire week to getting to know each other, how to safely use their tools, and participating in First Aid/CPR training. Week two was dedicated to creating and discussing a personal and shared sense of place, encouraging a sense of responsibility and stewardship. Week three and four - wilderness skills and marine, nearshore and wetland

environments -taught crew members fundamental outdoor skills such as knot tying and shelter building, and how tides, rivers, and estuaries impact the local flora and fauna.

In week five the crew learned about the history of land management in the United States and how ethical environmental policy can protect nature and what we can do as young people in America to help ensure the prolonged health of our environment. During week six, crews discussed the importance of forest succession, and the role fire plays in our forest habitats and how indigenous cultures utilized fire to ensure a healthy habitat since time immemorial. Week seven led the crews to discuss how protecting our oceans and forests can lead to reestablishment of threatened and endangered species. The program ended with a relaxed theme of art and environmentalism, in addition to the San Juan crew providing waste management at the San Juan Island County Fair. This last week provided a space for students to “dig in” to their experience over the summer and reflect on their performance and growth as an individual and team member.

Summary of Projects

Washington State Parks

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Moran State Park (Orcas), Obstruction Pass (Orcas), Spencer Spit (Lopez)
- **126** collective hours of youth stewardship with Washington State Parks
- **Projects Include:** Trail Brushing, Beach Cleanup, Noxious Weed Removal, Sign Construction, Creek Cleanup

Moran State Park (Orcas YCC), July 5 & July 24- July 27

- 84 hours of trail/campground cleanup, trail brushing, creek clearing, new sign construction
- 1 Summit of Mount Constitution

The Orcas crew met the morning after the big Fourth of July festivities to help clean up the trails, campgrounds, and day use areas around Cascade Lake. Despite the busy time of year, they were pleased to find the area well maintained and free of most litter and trash. Crew leaders made a fun morning challenge, offering candy to whomever collected the most trash. The hike around Cascade Lake was a good warm-up challenge for what was to come later in the season, and the crew ended up cleaning the trail while hiking the entire 4-mile loop before lunch. Their efficiency allowed them plenty

of time to swim and play soccer in the afternoon, along with some solo quiet time with nature.

The crew resumed work at Moran for the week of July 24-27, working under the guidance of Hobbes Barber, Moran State Park's Interpretive Specialist.

Throughout the week, the crew removed and replaced old signage at Point Lawrence, cleared debris from Cascade Creek to reduce flooding in the campground, and cleared invasive plants around the day use area.

Due to their efficiency with work projects, there was an extra day where they were able to challenge themselves with a summit up Mount Constitution. A few of the members took it upon themselves to make it as far as possible by hiking in silence

in order to earn a grilled cheese. The views from the stone tower on top were stunning and made the difficult climb all worth it.



Obstruction Pass State Park (Orcas YCC Crew), July 6

- 14 hours of beach cleaned
- 1-5 Gallon bucket of trash removed from beach

The Orcas crew had a last-minute cancellation from a partner, so went down to Obstruction Pass for a day of education, games, and swimming. As this was meant to be the day for Leave No Trace (LNT) training, crew leaders taught lessons with booklets that the crew made, going over the 7 points of LNT. The rest of the day was dedicated to team building, so the crew went on a beach expedition to the point overlooking Obstruction Island and played with the frisbee out on the beach and enjoyed swim time.

Spencer Spit State Park (Lopez YCC), August 16 & 17

- 28 hours of noxious weed removal
- 12 hours of trail brushing
- 2 industrial bags of thistle removed

To wrap up the Lopez YCC season, the crew spent its final two days at Spencer Spit State Park brushing trails, removing thistle, and cleaning up the beach area. It was a fun and mellow two days that allowed the crew to enjoy their accomplishments and spend some well-deserved free time together playing in the woods, exploring the beach, and swimming.



The crew met camp hosts Murray and Mike who had the work project plan ready for the crew. On Wednesday morning, half the crew went to brush back nettles along a trail, while the other half focused energy on a beach clean-up and thistle removal. The crew worked very efficiently and by noon had completed their tasks, leaving the rest of the day for working on art projects and swimming.

On Thursday, the crew was once again greeted in the morning by Murray and Mike who generously bought the crew members cookies. Fueled by the sweet treat, the crew set out to work on weeding the area around the water tower. Again, the crew was highly efficient which allowed the final afternoon of YCC to be enjoyed finishing their art projects (a YCC plant ID Guidebook/Map) and to do some quiet spot reflective journaling on the season.



San Juan County Parks and Fairgrounds

Summary

- **Projects Sites:** Odlin County Park (Lopez), Shaw County Park (Shaw), San Juan County Fairgrounds (San Juan)
- **400** collective hours of Youth Stewardship with San Juan County Parks and Fairground
- **Projects Include:** Trail Brushing, Noxious Weed Removal, Campground Cleanup, Waste Management and Outreach at the San Juan County Fair

Odlin County Park (Lopez YCC), July 17- 20 & August 7

- 44 hours of thistle pulling
- More than 300 pounds of thistle removed
- 62 hours of trail brushed
- Over 2.5 miles of trail at Odlin cleared

In the middle of the season, the Lopez crew spent a week working at the familiar site of Odlin County Park. Many of the crew members have spent time camping with families, attending sporting events and potlucks, and participating in environmental education programs at Odlin, so this was a homecoming for many of them.

On Monday morning, the crew met for a morning circle and an opportunity to explore sit spots for reflective journaling time.

Work began around 10:30, and the crew dove right into pulling

thistle. Within a few short hours, they had already removed over 100 pounds of noxious weeds. In the afternoon, Siri led an awesome beach scavenger hunt before the kids wrapped up the day with some swim time.



Tuesday brought more thistle pulling in the morning before a lesson on tides and how they work, and the impact they have on our marine ecosystem. The crew removed over 200 pounds of thistle from the wetland area and the group campsite by early afternoon, all the while taking tide measurements every hour on the hour. During the afternoon,

they were joined by guest educator, Emma Ewert, who led an engaging lesson accompanied by an activity on how tides work in the Salish Sea.

Wednesday gave the crew a break from thistle, and they instead focused on brushing and widening the Odlin South trail system. After lunch, the crew went to their sit spots for reflective journaling time followed by the day's environmental education lesson, which focused on how the Skagit watershed impacts the health of the Salish Sea. The lesson consisted of crew members having a "mini" plot of land along the Skagit River, such as a farm, marina, or mine. The crew built their plots using natural materials from the beach and concluded by presenting their plot to the rest of the group. The activity led to a great discussion on how the pollution from all these various establishments winds up in the Skagit River and eventually drains into the Salish Sea, impacting everything from eelgrass, clams, salmon, and orcas.

On Thursday, the crew finished up thistle pulling and trail brushing with Odlin employee, Michael. The crew played a few games during lunch, which led to the final sit spot/reflective journaling time at Odlin.

The Marine and Nearshore themed week concluded with a game centered around bioaccumulation in our marine environments, which the crew seemed to really enjoy. That left the remainder of the day free for swimming and beach exploration.



Shaw County Park (Lopez YCC), July 31 & August 1

- 48 collective hours of campground and roadside cleared from brush/invasive plants
- 1,180 cubic feet of brush/noxious weeds removed from roadside and campground

The Lopez Crew began the week with a bit of a change by heading over to Shaw Island. After the morning ferry ride, crew members hopped on their bikes and rode the quiet, forested roads of Shaw Island over to the park where we helped park staff trim brush from the main park road and campsites. Tuesday followed with the same project in the morning. With the crew's hard work and efficiency, they were able to remove nearly 2,000 cubic feet of brush from the roadside and campground.

Afternoons were spent exploring the park's extensive sandy beach and playing Kuub (a Nordic lawn game)

before capping each day off with a bike ride back to the ferry landing and ice cream at the Shaw Island store before the ferry ride back to Lopez.



San Juan County Fair (San Juan YCC), August 16 - 19

- 246 collective hours of tabling/outreach and waste management at San Juan County Fair

YCC partnered with San Juan County Solid Waste for the second year in a row to manage waste at the San Juan County Fair. The County Fair draws in over 22,000 people each year during the four-day event in August. As the event has grown in scale, so has its impact on the island's fragile waste system. To mitigate some of the negative effects, YCC was brought on to





work as "trash talkers" to help divert fair waste from the landfill and educate folks on waste management.

The crew worked in three-hour shifts during the lunch and dinner rushes to maximize their efforts. This was the first year there was a dedicated YCC booth, which served as a helpful education tool and shady break spot for the crew. Stationed around the food court, the crew wore identifying green t-shirts and gloves, and quickly became pros at informing fair-goers where to place their waste: compost, recycling, or landfill. Inevitably, some waste was misplaced, with compostable cups in the recycling bin, or food waste in the landfill bin, etc. Crew members, with their sturdy gloves and determination, would grab the misplaced item and put it in the proper bin. This act of going through fair waste, although messy, was very impactful to fair attendees. By the end of the fair, people were paying much

closer attention to where they should place each item, carefully trying to avoid forcing youth to dig back through their garbage.

Despite spending much of the time elbow-deep in waste bins, the crew had an overwhelmingly positive experience. Community members were grateful for their work, and ultimately, the numbers showed that their efforts had a huge impact. 4,820 pounds of compost was collected throughout the week! This is a big jump from 560 pounds of compost in 2022. This was a great way to end the 2023 YCC season on San Juan!

San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT)

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Turtleback Preserve (Orcas), Hunter Preserve (San Juan), Ihiya Preserve (San Juan), Phelps Preserve (San Juan), Frazer Preserve (San Juan) Schoolhouse Preserve (Lopez), Beecher Preserve (Lopez)
- **636** collective hours of youth stewardship with San Juan Preservation Trust
- **Projects Include:** Roadside cleanup, noxious weed removal, ladder fuel reduction, Island Marble Butterfly plot maintenance

Turtleback Preserve (Orcas YCC), July 11 & 13

- 16 hours of noxious weed removal
- 2500+ individual thistles removed

On Tuesday, July 11, the group met Liz Doane at Turtleback Preserve for a fun day of hiking and learning. The educational nature walk focused on ladder fuels, garry oak preservation, and the work of the San Juan Preservation Trust at Turtleback. The group hiked to Ship's Peak and back down Lost Oak Trail. The main goals of the day were to educate and foster a deeper appreciation for the outdoors through games and activities. The crew discussed Coast Salish land management practices, land trusts and land



preservation, the importance of forest floor burns and species protection, and snags and their function.

On Thursday, the Orcas crew resumed work with Liz and SJPT, joined by Troy Buckley, who provided additional information and an overview of the project. The day began with a long climb up the mountain to the "turtle neck," where the crew began pulling invasive thistles out of various areas. They cut off the flowering buds and pulled the rest of the plant out to die. This will help to reduce the number of thistles in the future, as they cannot reseed or regrow from buried roots. The group was very engaged and began individually counting how many thistles they removed, competing for a candy reward. This was a very effective way to remove large swaths of the plants.

Ihiya Preserve (San Juan YCC), June 28

- 52 hours of trail maintenance
- 2 miles of trail brushed

After a day of crew training and a day of First Aid/CPR, the crew was excited to have their first full work day. Liz Doane and Ben Hallowell from the San Juan Preservation Trust joined the crew at Ihiya, a small, beautiful preserve tucked away on San Juan Island. Despite having grown up on San Juan, most of the crew members had never been to Ihiya Preserve, so it was a great opportunity to talk about exploring the many beautiful preserves our island has to offer.



Liz started the day with team-building and name games, then Ben led an overview of trail maintenance and tool usage. The crew spent the remainder of the day brushing the 2-mile loop trail, practicing their new skills using loppers, hand pruners, and hand saws. In the afternoon, Liz led a geology game, followed by more get-to-know-you games.

Phelps Preserve (San Juan YCC), July 16- 17

- 112 hours of noxious weed removal

Kathleen Lewis and Liz Doane from the San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) led the crew through an Island Marble Butterfly (IMB) project. IMBs are a critically endangered butterfly species that are endemic to the southern end of San Juan Island. SJPT, along with many other key players, has established habitat plots along a migration corridor in the middle of the island to encourage growth of the species' population (currently estimated to roughly 200 individuals).

This project involved restoration to two uninhabited IMB habitat plots in the Phelps Preserve.

On the first day, the crew learned about IMB life cycles and the efforts that are being taken to encourage population growth. They were given a tour of the first habitat plot,

which was established as a destination for future migrations from the inhabited plot a few miles south at American Camp. With an understanding of the importance of their work, they worked diligently to remove noxious weeds and encourage native plant growth.

The next day, the crew worked at a different plot with three large mounds, rather than rows. Since the crew was already familiar with the work required, they were able to jump right in and start removing noxious weeds, mainly bull thistle.

Hunter Preserve (San Juan YCC), July 31- August 1

- 104 hours of ladder fuel reduction



The San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) owns Hunter Preserve, which is a partially wooded property on Mount Dallas. In an effort to protect the preserve, and neighboring properties, from severe wildfire, Liz Doane and Ben Hallowell from SJPT led the crew in two days of ladder fuel reduction. Ladder fuel reduction involves removing dead and low lying branches and forest floor debris. Wildfires maintain heat and strength by being able to essentially “climb” up dead and dying forest materials, as if it were a ladder.

The crew was very engaged and excited to use loppers and hand saws to remove a notable amount of debris from the forest. They used the debris to create burn piles (to be

burned by SJPT at a later point) and habitats for small mammals. On the second day, the crew was divided into teams to work on creating the small mammal habitats and showcase them to everyone. The crew had fun creating the habitats, including grand entrances, slides and fun names for their homes made of branches and leaves. It was a great way to end two days at Hunter Preserve!

Schoolhouse Preserve (Lopez YCC), June 29 & August 9

- 63 hours of noxious weed removal/road cleanup/brushing
- 1 mile of road cleaned
- 2 industrial size lawn bags of noxious weeds removed

To wrap up the first week of YCC, the Lopez crew was met by Liz Doane and Troy Buckley from the San Juan Preservation Trust at the Schoolhouse Preserve off of Port Stanley Road. Liz opened the day with some fun team building initiatives before Troy gave an overview of the property and the history behind the historic site. The work project for the day focused on cleaning up old fencing, roadside trash cleanup, and invasive species removal.

The Lopez crew was back at the Schoolhouse Preserve on August 9th near the end of the season. Again, the crew was joined by Troy and Liz from SJPT where they resumed work of removing noxious weeds, roadside cleanup, and brushing back some



overgrowing plants. Troy led the group on a walk in the woods and gave the crew a fun lesson on the forest ecology of the preserve. Before work began, the crew was highly engaged in a discussion facilitated by Liz and Mike (aka “Billy Bob”) on wolves and the ecological role that top predators play in various ecosystems. To compliment the morning discussion, Liz facilitated an engaging game, “Oh Deer,” which focused on ecosystem

connectivity and available resources when an ecosystem is more biologically diverse. The crew had a lot of fun throughout the day and made a great impact on the habitat surrounding the preserve while learning valuable lessons about endangered species and the importance of biodiversity.

Beecher Preserve (Lopez YCC), August 8

- 33 hours of ladder fuel reduction along trailside
- 1 mile of trail maintenance

On a somewhat rainy and overcast day, the crew discovered a hidden gem on Lopez Island: the Beecher Preserve. Nestled among the cedars, hemlocks, and Douglas firs on Lopez's plateau, the preserve offered a tranquil escape from the elements.

Led by SJPT's Troy and Liz, the crew embarked on a nature walk through the preserve's trails. As they hiked, Troy and Liz imparted ecological lessons and the history of the surrounding land. The crew focused on forest succession and the history and role of fire in a forest ecosystem.

For their work project that day, the crew focused on trail maintenance and ladder fuel reduction. Troy identified areas where large amounts of down and dead branches had accumulated, and where dead limbs climbed up to the forest canopy. He explained that these ladder fuels increase the risk of intense fires during summer droughts.

The crew set to work with gusto, breaking down the ladder fuels into smaller pieces and distributing them along the trails in low areas that will become muddy during the rainy season. By doing so, they helped to create a safer and more sustainable forest ecosystem.



San Juan County Land Bank

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Cady Mountain (San Juan), Coffelt Farm Preserve (Orcas), Deer Harbor Preserve (Orcas), North Beach Preserve (Orcas), Lopez Hill (Lopez), Hummel Lake Preserve (Lopez), Fisherman Spit Preserve (Lopez), Watmough Addition (Lopez), Otis Perkins Beach (Lopez)
- **619 hours** of youth stewardship with San Juan County Land Bank
- **Projects Include:** noxious weed removal, trail brushing, forest surveying, trail building, beach cleanup

Cady Mountain (San Juan YCC), July 13, July 24-26, August 2-3

- 231 hours of old growth tree surveying

On the first day of the project, the crew met San Juan County Land Bank Field Assistants, Jacob Wagner and Shauna Barrows, at Cady Mountain Preserve. The Land Bank had acquired the initial 40 acres of the preserve in 2002 and has since expanded to 130 acres of protected land. The Land Bank enlisted the San Juan crew to help with surveying efforts to ensure that appropriate conservation methods are being used to protect this special area.

After introductions and warm-up activities, the crew hiked a mile to the top of Cady Mountain, stopping along the way to observe the changing landscape. The crew settled into a mossy outcropping to admire a large and unique-looking Douglas fir. Jacob provided the crew with worksheets where they noted the tree's diameter (using diameter tape), bark texture, and other key factors in estimating trees' age. The tree they were admiring was likely over 300 years old!



Coast Salish people traditionally managed forests with controlled burning, but since colonization of the islands about 170 years ago, forest management has dramatically declined. As a result, younger and faster-growing trees are encroaching on old-growth trees, putting them in jeopardy of dying off at a faster rate than they would have if controlled burning had continued. Old-growth trees are not only an attractive addition to forests, but they often hold cultural significance, and have a higher carbon sequestration rate and increased climate-resiliency than younger trees.

For the remaining five days of the project, the crew hiked around various points throughout Cady Mountain Preserve, surveying trees that were greater than 36 inches in diameter. Once a tree was determined to be greater than the minimum size, the crew would note the diameter, the presence of fire scars, whether it was a stump or snag, whether it was open-grown, the rate of encroachment from other trees, and then based off that data, were able to estimate the age. There were a few groves of trees that appeared to be culturally modified, likely by Coast Salish tribes, which the crew found very fascinating.



By the end of this project everyone reported that they will never look at trees in the same way again!

Coffelt Farm Preserve (Orcas YCC), July 18

- 24 collective hours of noxious weed removal/brushing
- 10 - 5 gallon buckets of noxious weeds removed

On Tuesday morning, the group met Andrew from the San Juan County Land Bank at Coffelt Farm Preserve. They began the day by removing invasive Himalayan blackberry bushes up and around a fence line to allow native species to thrive without competition. The crew also removed red alders that were growing into the fence, as they could pull the fence away and let goats in to munch on the native species.



Despite a few unfortunate bee stings, the group remained engaged throughout most of the day. The shade provided some relief from the heat, allowing the crew members to work for longer than usual.

The group also found many critters to admire, including goats, frogs, and pigs, which they especially enjoyed.

Deer Harbor Preserve (Orcas YCC), July 20

- 20 collective hours of noxious weed removal, trash cleanup, and trail brushing
- 10 - 5 gallon buckets of noxious weeds removed
- 0.1 trail miles brushed

On the second day of their work week with the Land Bank, the Orcas crew met Marie for a day of beach cleanup, trail brushing, and noxious weed removal at North Beach Preserve. The day was mostly dedicated to general cleanup work around the preserve, including clearing fence lines, removing blackberries, clearing trails, and picking up garbage.

The group was energetic and productive, with a lot of work accomplished when they were focused. Before lunch, the crew worked in the sun, but afterwards they moved to work and activities in the shade, which was a welcomed change as the afternoon sun ramped up in intensity.

In the afternoon, Marie led an activity about reading maps and some general components of the Salish Sea ecosystem, as well as a discussion on waterfront habitats and estuaries. The crew was highly engaged and intently labeled things on the map, while also being given the opportunity to draw their own maps in the sand.

North Beach Preserve (Orcas YCC), August 1st & 3rd

- 48 collective hours of work
- 800 square feet of old fencing removed

The North Beach Preserve is a large plot of land that the Land Bank acquired a few years ago. The original property, consisting of a homestead, is now mostly in ruins. To open the preserve to the public, the Land Bank must clear wire fences, gates, and other debris, while trying to keep most of the plants alive. The YCC crew met on August 1st and 3rd to tackle this project.

The crew was engaged in the work, which was straightforward and easy to learn. They removed large amounts of the man-made materials, which was satisfying and meaningful. The shade provided some relief from the heat, and the kids enjoyed exploring the houses and cabins on the property. The crew celebrated the birthday of their fearless leader, Rowan, with celebratory sodas at the end of the workday on Tuesday.

The goal of the project was to remove all fences. The crew completed about two-thirds of the work, with the remaining fences too covered in or intertwined with plants, and too challenging to remove without power tools. Nevertheless, the crew worked hard and enjoyed each other's company throughout the project.

For the environmental education lesson on Tuesday, the crew discussed the importance of preserving land for future generations and how these projects can recycle materials and provide a place for people to learn about the environment. On Thursday, the crew examined rock formations at the beach, such as caves and sediment that had been worn away in the bluffs. They also inspected the tide pools.

Overall, this was a fun project, and the crew was able to explore and contribute towards preserving a beautiful piece of land.

Lopez Hill Preserve (Lopez YCC), July 6 & July 10-12

- 150 hours of new trail built

Lopez Hill is a 399-acre property that includes the highest point on Lopez Island. It is notable for its mature second-growth forest, diverse freshwater wetlands, and scattered rocky meadows. Originally owned by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, the Land Bank negotiated a 50-year lease in 2009 to manage the property



for its ecological and recreational values, and purchased the property outright in 2018.

Lopez Hill is a quiet, tucked away gem on the island. Mostly known among locals, the trail system offers hikers, horseback riders, and mountain bikers with over 5 miles of trail winding through second growth forest and multiple habitat types.

On the morning of July 6, the crew met Amanda Wedow, former YCC crew leader and current Land Bank employee, to begin building a new trail. Equipped with trail building tools, the crew set off after the morning circle and discussion about wilderness preservation. They also participated in an activity where they took natural objects to create their own "mini" natural area, and discussed how they would work to preserve its unique features.

The crew resumed work on the trail the following week, establishing the trail with Mcleods, removing overhanging branches, and clearing rocks and roots out of the proposed path. They also learned fun new skills and games along the way. On Tuesday and Wednesday, the crew was joined by Ty Grecean who filled in for Mike (aka, Billy Bob). Ty brought great energy to the group, along with some fun new games to play along the trail. Siri led the group in a knot tying and shelter building workshop to tie in their weekly theme of wilderness skills.

When all was said and done, the crew had built nearly a mile of new trail leading to a fantastic old-growth western Red Cedar. They also endured three bee stings, learned some valuable wilderness skills, and discovered the importance of preserving wilderness in an ever-expanding urban world.

Hummel Lake Preserve (Lopez YCC), July 24 (Morning) & August 10 (Afternoon)

- 18 hours of trail brushed
- 2 hours of noxious weed removed

Located on the south end of Lopez Island's largest freshwater lake, Hummel Lake is an 80-acre preserve that includes 1,450 feet of lakefront shoreline, wetland, meadow, forest, and habitat for many bird species. A trail disappears into a small cedar grove, meanders through the forest, and continues along the edge between the forest and meadow eventually winding up at the floating dock. A longer hiking trail starts at the parking lot and wanders through the forest to Port Stanley Road. The trail is a bit of a hidden gem on Lopez Island, with relatively little foot traffic throughout the year. During the summer months, the Hummel Lake Trail can become quite overgrown and brushy. Fortunately, Lopez Island has a YCC crew to take care of that.

Split between two days, the Lopez YCC crew cleaned the mile-long trail brushing back nettles and ocean spray while also removing a few invasives along the way. The crew was joined by Billy Bob's dog Mardy who early on in the year became the crew's official mascot, bringing some positive energy and a boost in spirits.

Fisherman Spit Preserve (Lopez YCC), July 24 - 25 & August 10

- 31 hours noxious weed removal/island marble butterfly plot maintenance
- 3 industrial lawn bags of thistles removed

Fisherman Spit Preserve is a 29-acre property that includes open meadows, woodlands, wetlands, a mile of shoreline and an exquisite sandy spit marking the entrance to Fisherman Bay. The scenic setting is visible from numerous locations and travel ways, including Lopez Village, San Juan Channel and Fisherman Bay. The public has enjoyed traditional access to the property for many years.



Community residents value this property for its recreational opportunities and unique landscape, but the property contains important ecological and cultural resources, too.

The Lopez crew became quite familiar with this property over the summer of 2023. Removing hundreds of pounds of thistle and cleaning up the mile-long stretch of beach, the Spit Preserve and all of its patrons largely benefited from the presence of the YCC crew.

On the first full day of work at the spit, Amanda joined the crew to introduce them to the Island Marble Butterfly plot on the preserve. This was the crew's first introduction to the critically endangered and endemic butterfly, which they would continue to learn about throughout the summer. From mid-morning until lunch, the crew helped spread soil and help with maintenance on the IMB plots while another group removed invasive Canada thistle and Italian Arum that is scattered throughout the preserve.

On July 24th and 25th, the crew took some time in the afternoon to discuss how public lands are managed in the United States and the history that led to American ideas such as establishing national parks, forest reserves, and wildlife refuges.

Watmough Addition (Lopez YCC), July 26-27

- 54 hours of noxious weed removal
- 25 - 5 gallon buckets of thistle removed
- 3 industrial lawn bags of poison hemlock removed

Toward the end of July, the Lopez Island YCC crew was given the opportunity to help out on some newly acquired properties from the Land Bank that few people from the public have been able to visit. The Land Bank's Watmough addition sits adjacent to the Land Bank and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands that encompass Watmough Head, Point Colville, and Chadwick Hill. In 1993, a seventy-foot section of beach was generously donated to the Land Bank in order to ensure public access to this local treasure. A conservation easement added onto the adjacent 8-acre freshwater wetland helps to further protect the area's fragile ecosystem and prevents development of the adjacent uplands. The BLM purchased the surrounding 390 acres and has designated the property as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. In 2007, the Land Bank partnered with the San Juan Preservation Trust to protect an additional 7.29 acres with approximately 680 feet of high bank waterfront along the south side of the bay. A neighboring property owner generously gifted two parcels in an effort to conserve the character of the bay, protect significant ecological features, and maintain the public access that we enjoy.



Sarah from the Land Bank met the crew on the morning of July 26 and hiked with the crew from the Watmough Trailhead over to the property where the crew promptly began removing massive amounts of thistle and poison hemlock. There was no shortage of either, and by lunch, the crew had already removed several hundreds of pounds of noxious weeds.

The afternoon provided the opportunity for some exploration of the property. With expansive prairie habitat and rocky shorelines bordered by groves of Douglas fir and Sitka spruce, the property offered some exciting reflective sit spots and discovery. It also had

two sandy beaches for some much needed cool off time during the heat of the day. For the environmental education lessons, the crew continued to explore the role that public lands play in preserving pristine habitats and restoring ecosystems back to health.

Otis Perkins Beach (Lopez YCC), July 5

- 36 hours of beach cleanup
- 5-5 gallon buckets of litter removed

Tired from a raucous night of parades, barbecues, music, and fireworks, the Lopez crew met the day after Fourth of July to help Amanda Wedow of the San Juan County Land Bank clean up the Otis Perkins beach and the tombolo after the previous night's festivities. This long, low tombolo was acquired for its extraordinary ecological, scenic and public access values. This natural geologic feature (connecting an island to another island) acts as a buffer between San Juan Channel and Fisherman Bay. The tombolo and its surrounding tidal flats and shoreline provide habitat for numerous wildlife, waterfowl and marine organisms.

The crew split into three groups to cover the area and remove as much trash and microplastics as possible. After three hours of exposed, hot summer sun, the crew had filled over five 5-gallon buckets of trash. After lunch, the crew walked down to nearby Fisherman Spit Preserve where they had reflective journaling time with prompts related to sense of place and what makes Lopez and the San Juan Islands special. The day was hot and active, but the crew powered through a tiresome day to get some excellent work done while connecting to a special place on Lopez Island.

San Juan County Noxious Weeds

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Cedar Rock Preserve (Shaw), Harman Road Public Works Dock (Lopez), Jackson Beach (San Juan), Lime Kiln State Park (San Juan)
- **226** collective work hours
- **Projects Include:** Noxious weed removal

Cedar Rock Preserve (Orcas YCC), June 28 & 29

- 77 collective hours of noxious weeds removed

On Wednesday, June 28 the Orcas crew had their first real day out on the job, pulling up Scotch broom at Cedar Rock Preserve, a property owned by the University of Washington on Shaw Island. The noxious weeds form little black pea pods that rupture if left long enough, so the Orcas crew was there to remove them before they could proliferate further. Most of this work involved lopping, sawing, or using the weed wrenches to remove the plants. Most of the crew members were rather excited to get going on the project, and with very clear goals of where they were trying to get to, they did a good job focusing on the project and ended up being very productive throughout the day.

The crew was joined by Jason Ontjes from San Juan County Noxious Weeds who led the daily environmental education lesson. Jason introduced the local ecosystem and provided context for why the Scotch broom required removal. Since it is a noxious weed, it will continue to spread and dominate the natural ecosystem, not allowing other plant species to grow in the area.

To wrap up the first week, the Orcas crew was back at Cedar Rock Preserve to continue the project of Scotch broom removal. This day involved moving off of the cliffs and getting into the lower valleys where the weed was much denser. All in all it was a great way to begin the season of service work for the Orcas crew as they were able to learn about the local ecosystem, get their hands dirty and use some tools, all while providing a valuable service to benefit the island's natural habitat.

Norman Road Public Works Dock (Lopez YCC), June 28

- 42 collective hours of Scotch broom removal
- 372 cubic feet of Scotch broom removed

The Lopez crew was excited to start their first real day of service work, and they tackled the day's project with enthusiasm. The morning circle consisted of a stretch and discussion on the importance of environmental stewardship. The crew was introduced to Aldo Leopold, whose quote, "One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds...", resonated with them throughout the season and built the framework for their first service project: removing Scotch broom.



Amanda Wedow from the Land Bank lent out weed wrenches, since Scotch broom has a taproot that requires a good amount of force and leverage to remove. The crew worked steadily until lunch, teaming up to tackle the biggest brooms possible. Soon, they built forts and mazes through the brushy forest of broom.

The morning was cool with a coastal layer of fog, which made for comfortable working conditions. After lunch, the crew resumed work on the Scotch broom, and when all was said and done, they had collectively removed nearly 400 cubic feet of invasive Scotch broom.

In the afternoon, the sun came out and temperatures warmed, so the crew was able to wrap up a hard day's work with some swim time.

Jacksons' Beach (San Juan YCC), July 5

- 52 collective hours of noxious weed removal

This was the San Juan crew's first day working with Jason Ontjes, Libby Taylor-Mannin, and Michele Smith from the Noxious Weed Control Board. The first part of the morning was spent doing introductions and noxious weed identification. Jacksons' Beach has undergone a transformation, with predominantly native grasses in the area, after efforts from various stakeholders to improve the ecosystem of the heavily used beach. The crew enjoyed learning about the success story of Jacksons' Beach and the power of collaboration. That said, noxious weeds are pervasive and require consistent maintenance, so there was still plenty of work for the crew. The crew broke into three teams, with two teams tackling large blackberry patches, and the third scouting the area for other noxious weeds requiring removal hidden amongst the grasses. The crew moved quickly and were satisfied at the end of the day having created huge piles of chopped blackberry that was to be later removed by the Port of Friday Harbor.



Lime Kiln Preserve (San Juan YCC), July 6

- 55 collective hours of noxious weeds removal

Due to a canceled interisland ferry, Jason was unable to join the crew for their second day with Noxious Weeds. Luckily Libby and Michele are based on San Juan so were able to step in! With their guidance, the crew hiked nearly 5-miles throughout the course of the day, starting at Carefree Lake and moving throughout the Lime Kiln Preserve and south to Deadman's Cove. Breaking into two groups to cover more territory, crew members would yell out when they spotted a noxious weed, (mainly thistle and tansy ragwort) and the crew would get to work snipping the weed and bagging anything flowering to reduce chances of spreading the seed. Lunch break was taken by a rock out-cropping, overlooking the Haro Strait where whales had been reported earlier that day. No whales were spotted, but the views were thoroughly enjoyed. The crew was exhausted by the end of the day but were in good spirits and enjoyed aiding restoration efforts in one of the island's most beautiful natural places.

Port of Orcas

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Port of Orcas/Orcas Island Airport
- **69** collective hours worked
- **Projects Include:** Habitat restoration, brushing, noxious weed removal

Port of Orcas (Orcas YCC), July 10, 12, 31 & August 2, 7, & 9

- 69 collective hours worked
- 25 - 5 gallon buckets of noxious weeds removed

When the Orcas Airport was constructed, a wetland was paved over to make the runway. Now, over 50 years after construction first began, the Port of Orcas is undertaking the ambitious and noble task of restoring the wetland ecosystem that was damaged, and enlisted YCC to help.

Kim Kimple, Port of Orcas Manager, detailed key projects for the crew to tackle. The first project was to remove grasses encroaching on native plants. On the first day of the project, with only three crew members present, the small but mighty crew managed to get almost half the targeted goals for the project accomplished. The crew was back up to six members when returning to the project site on July 12 and became even more efficient and covered the target area.

When the crew returned to the airport later in July, they realized there were still young native plants in the first project area that were previously overlooked. The crew spent the day sweeping the area to make sure the job was completed to the best of their

abilities and all native plants were protected. Once satisfied with their work, they moved on to a new project.

The crew was introduced to a new area of the Port that was dominated by Himalayan blackberry, which is considered to be the most invasive nonnative shrub on the West Coast. With leather gloves, hand pruners and lots of grit, the crew got to work. The intense afternoon heat meant breaks in the shade to play cards and eat the blackberries off the plants they were destroying- the literal fruits of their labor!

Crew leaders, Rowan and Greison, led the crew through many environmental lessons throughout the week. They covered topics such as marshland habitats (various moth and butterfly species' habitat, bird of prey, indigenous plants, etc.), and the various forms and importance of restoration efforts.

When all was said and done, the crew was able to make a substantial dent in the invasive removal project and left the project site in good condition for future restoration.



LIFE Trail (Lopez Island Fitness and Ecology)

Summary

- **Project Site:** Lopez Island School/LIFE Trail
- **138** collective hours worked
- **Projects Include:** trail brushing, invasive species removal

The LIFE Trail gives Lopez islanders the opportunity to restore mind, body and soul by providing fitness stations along a trail that meanders through an idyllic native island habitat

During the final week of the 2023 YCC season, the Lopez Island YCC crew spent time on school grounds to learn about the history of the LIFE Trail and to help clear brush and restore critical habitat. The crew was joined in the morning by Liz Scranton who oversees the current health and management of the LIFE Trail. Liz provided the crew with the story of the LIFE Trail and the importance of the wetland habitat it provides for plants and animals as well as the fitness opportunities for island locals. The crew was then led by Liz on a walk about the entire trail and given direction on what work could be done to improve the habitat of the trail.



It was a hot day, but the crew went right to work removing noxious weeds, brushing the trail, and removing ladder fuels. Only a few hours into the project, the crew had accumulated a massive pile of brush and downed woody debris. The crew was rewarded for their hard work in the afternoon where they were able to escape the heat in Liz's pond where she graciously allowed the crew members swimming access during the heat of the day.

On the second day of the project, the crew resumed work where they had left off the previous day. Being in the most intense heat wave of the summer, the crew went right to work in the morning and finished up the project by noon. Liz once again allowed the crew to have some swim time as they enjoyed cooling off in the pond and eating lunch in the shade.

On the second afternoon, the crew was given permission to use the school for an art project where they were given the opportunity to create their own YCC guidebook which included a plant species of their choosing and the creation of a Lopez Island map with all the sites where the crew had worked during the season. The crew was given water color paints, markers, and colored pencils as well as some informative books on Pacific Northwest flora and fauna. The crew was divided into four teams and went to work creating the Lopez YCC 2023 Guidebook.

Lopez Island Family Resource Center

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Odlin County Park, Lopez Island Community Center
- **31** collective hours worked
- **Projects Include:** Tabling/Outreach at Indigenous Celebration Day, Helping with Blue Heron Canoe Journey

Lopez Island Community Center (Lopez YCC), July 8

- **Indigenous Peoples Celebration**
- **15** collective hours of tabling/outreach

Three Lopez crew members showed up on a Saturday to represent YCC at the Indigenous Celebration Day hosted by the Lopez Island Family Resource Center (LIFRC). Local Tribes and the LIFRC graciously provided the YCC crew members a space to set up their information table and share with people the work of the YCC crew. The three crew members found the experience to be culturally rich and were able to engage with Coast Salish peoples on the unique qualities of our Salish Sea ecosystem. They learned about the importance of indigenous knowledge of the land in the future preservation and health of our island's varying habitats and cultural connection to the natural resources.

Blue Heron Canoe Journey/ Odlin, (Lopez YCC) July 13

- **16 collective hours of service to Blue Heron Canoe Families**

On July 13, the Lopez Island YCC crew was invited by the Lopez Island Family Resource Center (LIFRC) to help with the ceremony and greeting of the Blue Heron Canoe Families at Odlin County Park. 13 crew members greeted the Coast Salish Blue Heron Canoe Families when they arrived, helping to carry traditional canoes ashore, unload equipment, stack firewood, and participate in songs and blessings throughout the day. A few crew members assisted the LIFRC staff in cooking a delicious pasta dinner for the canoe families to cap off the day.



Port of Friday Harbor

Summary

- **San Juan Island YCC Crew**
- **Project Site:** Shipyard Cove & Port of Friday Harbor
- **48** Collective hours worked
- **Projects Include:** Noxious Weed Removal

The day started at Jacksons' Beach in frigid weather that was atypical for July on San Juan. Rather than a morning stretch circle, the crew jumped right into playing active games to stay warm against the cool breeze coming off the water. Once the crew was warmed up, they moved into their work: removing invasive plants along the road by Shipyard Cove and the Port of Friday Harbor. Hand pruners and a weed wrench were used to remove mainly tansy ragwort, and some thistle. As the cold weather broke, the crew enjoyed an afternoon of reflective journaling in the sunshine.

San Juan County Department of Environmental Stewardship

Summary

- **Project Sites:** Crescent Beach/Orcas Island Exchange, Flat Point/Lopez Island Dump, San Juan County Fairgrounds/Jackson Beach
- **82** Collective hours worked
- **Projects Include:** Beach Cleanup, solid waste facility tours



Orcas Island: Exchange/ Crescent Beach/ Indian Beach (Orcas YCC), July 19

- 24 collective hours of beach cleaned
- 3 full trash bags of garbage removed from Crescent Beach

On July 19 the Orcas Island crew was joined by Katie Fleming, Solid Waste Coordinator, from San Juan County Department of Environmental Stewardship for a tour of the Waste Management Plant situated next to the island exchange. The group was enthusiastic about the information provided during the tour as they enjoyed seeing how all of the materials were separated and disposed of and how the facility's work contributes to the environmental health of the Salish Sea. After the tour, the crew went

to Crescent Beach and Indian Beach to collect trash and microplastics where they also enjoyed walking out to Indian Island to explore the tide pools.

Flat Point/Lopez Island Dump/Take It Or Leave It (Lopez YCC), August 3

- 28 collective hours of beach cleaned
- 3 - 5 gallon buckets of trash removed from Flat Point
- 2 items for each YCC Crew Member from Take It Or Leave It

On August 3rd Katie Fleming once again joined for a day of YCC work, this time around with the Lopez crew who met at Upright Channel for a beach cleanup. Before Katie arrived, the crew was given the opportunity to find a natural object that “spoke to them.” Once they had found an object, they were given time to make observations and/or journal about why they had chosen their specific object. After some reflective time the crew was given a large ball of yarn and began passing the yarn from one object to the next based on a direct connection. What emerged was a tight, interconnected web of natural items. The crew soon found that if one object was removed, the string became unattached, the rest of the web could feel a loosening of the tie. It was a great perspective on the interconnectedness of all things in nature.

Katie joined around mid-morning with her two sons who enjoyed playing with the crew. Split into two groups, half of the crew walked north while the other half walked south picking up any trash and sifting through microplastics. Katie introduced the crew members to the term nurdle, microplastics less than 5mm. This led the crew to go on an epic nurdle hunt.

After the nurdle hunt and a lunch along the beach, the crew was shuttled over to the Lopez Island dump where they were given a tour of the waste management facility. The crew was highly engaged, despite the heat, and learned the value of the behind-the-scenes work involved in waste management and the vital role the waste management facility and its workers play in keeping our homes and environment pristine and a place for wildlife to thrive. The crew was given a surprise at the end of the day where they were treated to 30 minutes of personal shopping at Take It Or Leave It where each crew member was given one item of their choosing.

San Juan County Fairgrounds/Jackson Beach (San Juan YCC), August 9

- 30 collective hours of beach cleaned at Jackson Beach

Katie Fleming met the crew at the San Juan County Fairgrounds to prepare for the upcoming work doing waste management at the County Fair. Brandon Cadwell, Parks and Fair Director, and Shane Merritt, Assistance Fairgrounds Manager, joined briefly to

walk everyone through the fairgrounds, pointing out where bins will be placed, where they are emptied when full, and other pertinent information for their work. Then the crew met with just Katie to discuss logistics of their work and brainstorm ideas for their YCC booth. Considering the project goal is to divert waste from the landfill, the crew decided it was only fitting to build booth signage only using waste!

The crew said farewell to Katie and then walked down to Jacksons' Beach for a beach clean and end-of-season party. The beach clean was supposed to only last 30-minutes in order to collect enough waste to build a sign for their YCC booth, but the crew was finding SO much waste that they were determined to collect as much as they could, and doubled their time allotted for beach cleaning. Their reward for such dedication was an end-of-season pizza party! Luke and Julie presented certificates and acknowledged the crew member's incredible work over the summer. A crew member brought 3 cakes to share, so much sugar and fun times were had!



San Juan County

Summary

- **San Juan Island YCC Crew** July 19 & 20, August 7 & 10
- **Project Site:** San Juan County Operations Facility
- **164** Collective hours worked trail building
- **1.5 miles** of trail created

The crew was excited to be working on a project that was brand new to YCC. San Juan County has a relatively new Operations Facility that is situated on a 10-acre plot along Beaverton Valley Road. Grant Carlton, Project Manager with San Juan County, brought on the YCC crew to develop a trail, about 1.5 miles long, around the properties' periphery.

The first day of the project was dedicated to clearing large branches, rocks and other obvious obstacles along the route. The remaining days of the project, crew members were using hoes and Mcleods to break through the dirt, and hand saws, pruners and loppers to remove brush that was in the path. At the end of day four, the crew walked the trail in silence to reflect on the success of their trail work, which they reported to be very meaningful. Throughout the project, the crew had many discussions and activities related to outdoor accessibility and environmental justice. It was a great, long-lasting project for YCC to be a part of!



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San Juan County Operations Facility

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San Juan County Noxious Weed Control Board

San Juan Islands Preservation Trust

Port of Orcas

Orcas Island Community Foundation

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