

Backcountry Leadership Program 1



Dear NYC'er,

Yee-Haw! It's finally here, that crazy journal your crewleaders promised months ago! In your hands you hold the final compilation of all those journal pages you spent hours around the kitchen table and on the long van rides writing! As the winter sets in, the office world at NYC becomes a bit less chaotic, and we can take the time to say, "**Thank you for an amazing season!**" NYC crews could not have accomplished what they did without the effort, commitment, and strength each and everyone of you gave.

After you left graduation, you probably ate some good chow, talked non-stop about the adventures you had and the tough times you endured, and finally—after a long session—got to take a long shower (hopefully a few!). But, as the warmth of your return wore off, I hope everyone was able to spend some time reflecting on what your experience meant. You were part of an extraordinary time! While you were slogging through the woods, huddling around the fire, seeking any type of moisture available, sharpening pulaskis, or finishing the last remnants of a too-large meal; up to twenty-six other crews were doing the same things across Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Northern California. The work completed by NYC crews went farther than ever before, pleased a record number of project sponsors, helped out the natural areas and communities in the Northwest, and, most importantly,..... showed the general public that teens are responsible enough to complete a hard job with style!

We hope you came away with a greater understanding of who you are, how you want to live your life, and what you are going to do with the gifts you possess. Don't forget those early morning sunrises, the feeling after a hard day's work, and the endless mountains and trees. Remember the laughter, the tears, and the exploration. Always know that you are limitless and can accomplish the seemingly impossible, the amazing and the beautiful. All you have to do is believe in yourself!

Don't forget about all those early morning sunrises, the dirt smile after a long day of work, trees the size of skyscrapers, rivers and mountains without end, and a place away from highways, radios and Burger Kings. The big outdoors is a place for everyone to visit, explore, and enjoy. Make sure you get out there as often as you can and figure out how you can help to keep these places around for future generations to experience. Sit down, grab some gorp, and relax as you take a trip down memory lane. Keep NYC in mind for next summer and drop us a line. Remember: "Use Good Judgement!" but don't forget to rub a little sunshine on your face.

Take Care,

Ethan Nelson
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BLP 1

**Payette National Forest
Krassle Ranger District
Caton Lake Trail**

Week 1: June 6 - June 15

Did some driving to get to the trailhead. Then we carried our packs they weighed from 90 lbs to 120 lbs, very heavy for 6 miles. The crew was very tired after the hike. We worked the next day, people weren't pumped for work but we did it.

Nolan P

Well the hike was hard and we only worked a 6 ½ hour day. After work we had to backpack up the hill and get the pounds of food we left behind.

Emily S

Well we want to finish the turnpike this week. The going has been slow as we deal with all the muck and big rocks. We have a system down so I think our speed will pick up tomorrow. It feels good to be sitting in camp with most of the things done around camp. All our energy is doing really well considering the death hikes we did the last two days. I was dehydrated but I'm doing ok now. Mike looks like Dracula because his hair is so screwy. I'm getting antsy cuz its cold and I want to eat dinner. Things will be better next time.

Willoughby C

So far at work we're moving. We are almost done with our turnpike, it's looking lovely! We still have a lot of hours to make up and plenty of rocks to move. So far we have lost one crewmember and our replacement is coming in. The girls all wish it was another boy. Today David slammed the rock bar into his toe, breaking it, and leaving himself the only person who could reset it. Hearing Kat with a truly ungodly scream. The day ended as all do and tomorrow will be another lovely day full of coffee and bad jokes.

Emily S

Today we were down 3 people. So we had to work extra hard, of course everyone was up to the challenge and tried their hardest. We accomplished a lot and by the end of the day we were all proud of the work that got done.

Jason N

**Payette National Forest
Krassle Ranger District
Caton Lake Trail**

Week 2: June 16 - June 22

This weekend was definitely lacking in R & R, and overloaded with sickness and crisis. The weekend began with an outbreak of strip throat and concluded with a trip to Cascades Medical Clinic, having an appendectomy in Boise, Idaho's hospital. Half of the crew hiked 16 + miles (two who were in pain) within a 12 hour span, but we lived to tell about it.

Dagmara M

We are outside the little town of Cascade, 5 miles in the backcountry. Our project is turn pikes-rock and wood. We are laying and breaking rocks, log drag and log placement. The turnpike is to prevent a marsh.

Sajji C

We finished our second turnpike today. We busted it out in two days; I think that is pretty good. I am not a fan of the journal entry, right now there is a discussion going on about shaving in the backcountry. None of the guys on our crew shave out here. It's odd for me as I do not have to shave at all. I guess I got what you call a fresh face. Blah, blah, blah, I am having writers block right now. Hmmm, we are having grilled sandwiches and bear creek for dinner, yum anyway. I think I'm going to go help with that right now.

Willoughby C

This week our crew worked on various projects. We completed a rock turnpike as well as a log turnpike. Towards the end of the week, our crew began trail maintenance. A decrease in the number of crewmembers, strenuous rock moving, and seemingly endless work days were some of the challenges we faced as a crew. In turn, completing both of the turnpikes was a tremendous accomplishment. It proved that we could complete any task regardless of the demands. Today, Friday, our crew worked through the cold and rain. At times it was difficult, but we made it through whole heartedly.

Laura L

Payette National Forest Krassle Ranger District Caton Lake Trail

Week 3: June 23 - June 29

This weekend our crew had cold on there minds. It snowed this weekend and everybody hated it. The crew gathered under the tarp and kept warm. It finally melted away to get a couple of people wet.

Nolan P

Our project this week is varied like always but with a more specific primary goal. We started with bars and we're working on a re-route now. The re-route is just a mass of small projects more than anything. There's a lot of rock and tree removal to be done, and it looks like there's a good chance of retaining walls in the near future. There is some trail digging in the process too.

Mike S

Our goals for the week include digging new trail, removing large boulders, and reaching the first climbing turn by the weeks end. In addition our final goal is to find some hot springs after work on Friday. ☺

Laura L

Payette National Forest Krassle Ranger District Caton Lake Trail

Week 5: July 7 - July 13

Over the weekend our crew departed and each found their way not so deep in the woods. While everyone was at peace alone the only 2 other people showed up. 2 dirt bikers zoomed down the trail. The dirt bikers and Will's harmonica and singing were all we heard. Many found their thoughts wondering to far off food boxes, filled with marshmallows and cookies. Others longed to see each other. When the night was over the crew again found each other.

Emily S

Well we are on the same project that we have been on the past week, so..... Last night we had thunder and lightning all night. We had Vik go outside last night to check the gear in the rain. What a good guy he is. We ran out of hot cocoa, we were not happy.

Sajji C

An eventful day began as Kat and I (Emily) hiked out and made our way to the well known Cascade Medical Clinic. As expected I hiked in with a wonderful illness, strep throat. Although while Kat and I vacationed in Cascade, the crew continued on starting Tuesday with the beaver crawl at safety circle. While I don't know much about the days work. The crew enjoyed an Emily free, vegetarian free dinner of tuna patties.

Emily S

Jason led us with ease today, fighting off bears and dragons with lasers. Of course his charm and beauty could not lead us astray. Huge rocks were sculptured into bomber walls. Laura and Mike almost completed the best one yet. And Gabe, an amazing stump moving machine pulled out the biggest one yet in only 10 minutes. When we arrived home, tired and wasted the spirits were lifted by a shiny new face, Patti!

Emily S

Boom, Boom !!! Yet again the crew found themselves running fiercely for their lives. This time not from the laser, nor from untamed pirates. Instead today on the last Friday Sea foam BLP found their lives flashing like exploding rocks as Patti, the seemingly harmless contact blew Shxx (stuff) up !! Crazy times were had. Holy Moly! Laura went crazy and couldn't stop laughing as poor Emily Slaved away trying to push Madaline out of the trail and save the crew from hours of exhausting labor. Oh, our days are long, our feet are sore, but our love for this here place we call Caton Lake, is undenyng. By the way Ethan, just joking!

Emily S

Payette National Forest Krassle Ranger District Caton Lake Trail

Week 6: July 14 - July 20

This weekend we went to Caton Lake. It was super fun. We noticed the local wildlife. Lions, tigers and chimps, Hurray!!! Oh the fun we had, did I mention it was super fun, hurrah!!!! Super Hurray?? Man it was fun, the hike was far and long and super FUN!!! Hurray!!! Much fun was had for all.

Anonymous

30 feet left on the trail. We will finish on Tuesday with the trail. It was super de duper for you. 2 days left. Gabe worked the rock walls and finishing work. He also worked at taco time, mmmmmmmmm. Sajji mined the peanuts for jelly beans. It was super fun. Dag hurt her back today, poor, poor Dag. Emily is a sweet heart, she laughed at my lame jokes. Kat cut all the stumps with the chain saw. Gabe worked at Taco Time, mmmmmmmmm Taco Time. Can I get a bean and cheese Taco and a med. Coke.

Sajji C

My Most Challenging Day At NYC Was...

...mentally and physically exhausting day came the Sunday (first weekend), I was sick with strip throat. Hiking out that evening (along with Vik and his rupturing appendix), and going to the medical center at Cascade. It took most of my will power not to break down and head home instead of returning to base camp the following morning.

Dagmara M

...the day Jay and I led. I was building a retaining wall on a climbing turn and was told I had to redo it for the 3rd time because it was too narrow. Because of that and trying to look after and lead the crew was my most challenging day.

Willoughby C

...the first day we hiked in. One of the crewmembers had a very heavy pack and he was very dehydrated and he passed out. So I took his pack for the rest of the hike. His 120 lb pack for 5 miles was very hard on my back.

Nolan P

...the day I got sick. It rained and stormed all night and no one slept and everyone was upset and felt terrible. I tried to work but couldn't do it. I felt like I would die if I kept working, but die if I stopped.

Emily S

...was the first day, the first hike in with a 120 lb pack.

Vik H

...physically speaking the hike in was the most difficult, but that doesn't really matter. The real challenging day was the end of the 2nd week, when it was raining and more and more I just wanted to go home. After all, most challenges are created by myself when it comes down to it.

Mike S

...my first day at work because I didn't know what to do, I had Gabe telling me to work.

Sajji C

...it was the day Emily told me Santa doesn't exist. Aside from that I would say the hike with 90 lb pack. No wait; it was 110 lb, wait, wait.....Lets say 190 lb pack-yea!!!! That was HARD but I didn't really struggle with my 217 lb pack. Man I Rock !!! Not to ring my own bell, but ding a ling!!!

Jason N

...the day it rained really hard, and I stood in the creek for two hours moving and rearranging rocks. Brrrr it was cold!

Laura L

My Three Favorite NYC Experiences Were...

...arriving at our new home after the grueling hike with 120 lbs. Secondly was arriving back with the crew after having surgery for appendicitis. Lastly was the satisfaction of finishing our scheduled 6 week project in just over 3 weeks along with two others that were unscheduled.

Vik H

...listening to it snow all night and waking the boys up to snow balls in the tent. The roaring bonfire and watching the seed books go up in flames. Realizing that I know 10 new and amazing friends, after only 6 weeks together.

Emily S

...waking up to a winter wonderland the day after summer solstice. Meeting so many amazing, unique people. Hiking out at 3 weeks and hot springin' it up.

Laura L

.....lying out looking up at the stars and listening to Vik's singing and Jason's guitar music with the crew on the 4th of July. Having the whole crew finally reach base camp for the first time after

the long hike in. Curling up in sleeping bags all huddled under the kitchen tarp while snow fell all around us- eating toasted bagels and drinking hot cocoa.

Dagmara M

...the enjoyment of working with such experienced individuals knowing that if I didn't have the knowledge to complete a project the guy next to me will. Working hard with people I care about. The food.

Jason N

...listening to Jason and Vik play music on the 4th of July after eating real dutch oven cheesecake. Pooping, in a toilet for the first time in 3 weeks. Chilling in Cascade and eating pizza.

Mike S

...when we all got on the biggest rock that we had to move and we all pushed. Another time was when it snowed and we all gathered under the kitchen tarp to keep warm, and my last favorite experiences was when we all work the rock wall together.

Nolan P

...making pancakes and cinnamon bagels for breakfast. Completing my first rock retaining wall. Hiking out, and spending the day at Catan Lake.

Willoughby C

One Thing I Will Always Remember...

...our last day of work, and the feeling I got knowing we finished our project above and beyond the call.

Willoughby C

...the first day more than any other. Not because I met so many interesting people for the first time. It's one memory that will bring back many others as well.

Mike S

...the view after the 1.5 mile 30 % grade switch-backs. It was to beautiful groups of hillsides off in the distance to both my left and right. The view was amazing, hill after hill each slowly disappearing out of sight in the distance until the final one was just a silhouette.

Jason N

...the French toast at Saint Alphonsus Hospital.

Vik H

...listening to everyone in the shower at the end of 6 weeks, yelling about the amazing amount of dirt flowing from their bodies.

Emily S

...the people I stayed with the past 5 weeks who I grew to love and cared for and the moments we shared. The good and bad times we shared.

Sajji C

...the first day when the crew ran out of water and Gabe and I hiked a mile to find water for the crew. It was nice to hike with all my pack.

Nolan P

... the numerous nights we girls would stay up laughing and talking....until Kat would tell us to go to bed.

Laura L

...the feelings of relief, joy and accomplishment I experienced when I headed down the mountain on our final hike out of backcountry Idaho.

Dagmara M

From Now On I Will Always...

...respect and enjoy my surroundings. Keep in mind that there is always time to stop and gaze at the beauty of the earth.

Jason N

...try to make the world smile and remember that everything has an end and to enjoy the pleasure of the moment.

Emily S

...savor even the tough moments because without the bitter, the sweet ain't so sweet.

Vik H

...look at the world with open eyes and not through a looking glass.

Sajji C

...work as hard as I can to push my body to its limits.

Nolan P

... face a challenge head on, knowing that anything is possible.

Laura L

...always try to see people for what they truly are and not judge them by any small thing including their actions at times. Because in most cases there are good intentions at heart.

Mike S

...never take anything for granted. When I'm grabbing a glass of water I will think about what it felt like carrying two full 5 gallon containers back to camp.

Willoughby C

.....feel my connection to the earth in everything I do instead of simply acknowledging its existence.

Dagmara M

At NYC I Learned...

...that the people around you and their attitudes will make or break the day. When you look up at the stars, there is magic and the guitar can make the world turn.

Emily S

...how to work as a group. How to build new trail and keep trying even if it's too hard.

Sajji C

...how to work with my peers a lot better and how to build a rock turn pike and also learned how far I could push myself.

Nolan P

...work is what you make it. We had an opportunity to do really hard work but whether it actually was hard or not depended completely on how much you put into it.

Mike S

...to more greatly appreciate a routine that forces physical and mental growth.

Vic H

...to value the company of others, while valuing time alone as well.

Laura L

...that surpassing your physical limitations simply requires a disciplined and focused mind.

Dagmara M

...how to use the rock bar really well and make strong solid rock retaining walls.

Willoughby C

...how to work in rock, which I had very little experience in. But thanks to this BLP experience I feel that I now know far too much about it.

Jason N