



the GreenWay

SCA's Conservation Quarterly

Winter 2011



SCA Community Affairs Intern Evan Escamilla coordinated outreach at the Elwha River dam removal project at Olympic National Park.

Letting Nature Take its Course, Again

by Evan Escamilla, SCA Intern

I wish to thank SCA for giving me the opportunity to step outside of my comfort zone and expand my personal and professional abilities as co-chair of the Celebrate Elwha! planning committee. My role was to coordinate a six-day, multi-venue celebration of Washington's Elwha River and its cultural, spiritual and economic impact on the community. To appreciate the impact on the region's future, however, one must understand the past.

It was called "progress" when, in the early 1900s, Thomas Aldwell built two dams on Washington's Elwha River. The dams, while creating many businesses in Port Angeles, came

at great cost as well. Aldwell neglected to provide proper fish passage at either of the dams, and 70 miles of spawning habitat were cut off to native anadromous salmon and trout. The impact extended to the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, who had relied on the watershed's resources for thousands of years.

Now, nearly a century later, the largest dam removal in U.S. history is underway to reverse this intervention.

Progress of another kind began in 1986, when the license to produce hydroelectric power on the Elwha River was up for re-application. A united group of environmental and governmental

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**CONSERVATION
BEGINS HERE**
Student Conservation Association
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Looking Back, Moving Forward

The holiday season is upon us and with it the opportunity to reflect on the past and look ahead to the coming new year.

SCA's roots, of course, go back more than 50 years and our founder, Liz Putnam, was recognized by President Obama for helping to launch the modern conservation service movement.

Today's conservation needs, however, are increasingly complex and will only grow more so. That's why SCA is committed to expanding its engagement of young Americans and providing advanced conservation solutions.

I've detailed our ambitious plans to increase the number of diverse young people in conservation in past issues of *The Green Way*. As we deal with ever more intricate land, water, air and climate challenges, SCA is committed to providing our members with stepped-up experiential education opportunities in the field, and building new alliances with those beyond the conservation community.

In these pages, we focus on an SCA intern helping to correct a century of misguided land use, other members assisting a national park as it enters a new era of renewable energy, and an intern who writes of her dreams following a transformative summer of service.

Conservation today is about more than protecting land and fighting invasive species—it's about creating a healthy planet and society. This makes SCA more relevant than ever, and I appreciate your continued support this year and beyond.

I wish you the warmest of holidays and a Happy New Year.

Dave M. Penny

Letting Nature Take its Course *continued from page 1*

organizations stood against pro-dam currents in the American west, arguing that the Glines Canyon Dam, now located within the boundaries of Olympic National Park, was subject to higher levels of natural and cultural protection. Eventually, an Environmental Impact Statement recommended the dam's removal. President George H.W. Bush signed the Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act in 1992.

Fast forward through another 20 years of litigation, studies, and appropriations to mid-September. Nearly 5,000 people, including the Secretary of the Interior, members of Congress, the governor and other state officials, tribal leaders, and others gathered in Port Angeles for the Celebrate Elwha! Festival, the official kick-off to the dam removal project.



Evan, 25, is a two-time SCA intern from Kalamazoo, MI. In addition to this summer at Olympic National Park, he served in 2010 at Mount Rainier National Park.

Through this extraordinary initiative, I experienced tremendous learning opportunities while collaborating on behalf of Olympic NP with the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, local businesses and organizations, and multiple-level government offices. Together we organized more than 35 events including a street fair, a live recording of the syndicated radio program **eTown**, a two-day science symposium and educational activities throughout the watershed.

Once the river is opened, salmon populations are predicted to swell from 3,000 to nearly 400,000 as all five species of Pacific salmon return to protected streams within Olympic National Park's largest watershed. The return of marine-derived nutrients will provide a catalyst for population growth throughout the ecosystem.

For the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe the deconstruction of the dams marks the beginning of the healing process.

My contributions to Celebrate Elwha! honored those forward-thinking, community-minded leaders who overcame so many obstacles over the years. Their dedication led to my personal "progress" in understanding what is truly important while developing the skills and confidence to tear down the barriers in my way.

Learn more about the Elwha River Restoration at nps.gov/olym and listen to the **eTown** shows at etown.org

Give the Gift of Conservation this Season.

Donate in Honor or Memory of Family or Friends.

Honor someone special and help make a difference by supporting the work SCA members do all year to protect and preserve America's parks and green spaces.

Donating during the holidays is a great way to celebrate a joyous season in a creative way. For a minimum of \$10 for each person being honored, you can check off everyone on your holiday list—plus, they'll receive notification of the good done in their name.

Make your gift today using the enclosed envelope, or visit thesca.org/holidaytribute

SCA Members Give Thanks

In this day and age of emails and text messages, it's rare when a handwritten letter arrives in your mailbox. But thousands of SCA supporters receive poignant letters every year from SCA members whose service was made possible by our donors' generosity.

"Through your donation, you haven't just aided the conservation of Denali National Park, you've allowed kids like me to learn why places like this are worth protecting," wrote 17-year old Ryan Foster. *"You've also made me a volunteer for life."*

The letters come in many varieties: some on pristine white paper, some on sheets torn from a notebook. In print or in cursive, with photos or drawings. Occasionally, the envelope also includes a dried leaf or a squashed mosquito, articles that transport the reader to the very riverbank, overlook or tent site where the message was penned.

"My internship introduced me to professionals, friends, places, and wildlife that have formed my identity as a true conservationist," said Julia Sittig of her summer working for the Bureau of Land Management in Yuma, AZ. *"Thank you for providing me with one of the most rewarding experiences of my life."*

And even as SCA members affect the land, the land has an enduring effect on them. Nature enriches those who give back to it, and many SCA members successfully advance into outdoor careers. Just ask Matt Heath of Snellville, GA.

"My SCA experience this summer was life changing," he stated in his letter. *"I served in the Klamath National Forest as a river ranger, assisting in river clean-ups, weed removal, and swift water rescues. I will be moving here and working with the Forest Service this fall. My passion is turning into a career."*

Read more and find out how you can receive a personal letter from an SCA volunteer at thesca.org/donate/sponsorships

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

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



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

Scene + Heard



The 2-Minute Interview with Ariel Allen

A high school senior and two-time SCA alumnus, Ari was recently named one of Atlanta's top Teen Volunteers. We spoke with him about the award and how he's making a difference in his community.

Congratulations on the award! Can you tell us how you earned it?

After serving on two SCA "Kosher Crews" (trail crews that conform with the Jewish faith) in 2009 and 2010, I was looking for a year-round Kosher crew and, after not finding one, decided to start my own here in Atlanta.

What kind of work do you do?

We work every other month or so with a local green organization. We've helped CSA farmers plant crops. We started a community garden, planted trees in the city, and more. We work on Sundays to avoid the holy day. Projects run about three hours.

Did I hear you've gained other recognition?

I won a commendation from the Environmental Protection Agency and the President's Environmental Youth Award, and got a third place Eco Hero Award from Action for Nature.

What drives you?

The values I gained through SCA. I saw how close you can get to a group of other people by working together on physical projects, and how to foster a love of nature, or "tikkun olam," which is Hebrew for "repairing the world."

What's the most important thing you've learned so far?

How nature can fill you spiritually. The strong relationships, and a collective passion for working toward same goal. It is powerful and very therapeutic.

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



Shelby Lin hones her presentation skills and knowledge of the refuge on a local school group. Over 400 species of songbirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, and raptors inhabit the refuge, including the endangered Atlantic piping plover.



Going Far, Close to Home

by Shelby Lin, SCA '11, Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex

I had the mistaken notion that this summer wouldn't feel much different from the ones before, simply because the place I'd be spending it isn't that far from home. I'm from the north shore of Long Island and I go to school in Boston, so the south shore of Rhode Island is somewhere in between, only a couple of hours north or south of tried-and-true familiarity.

But I found you don't have to go far to bring yourself somewhere new.

On my first day of work, I walked into the Visitors' Center with only my job title (Visitor Services Intern) and a vague description of helping out in the center and managing visitor education programs. I was told "we have a school trip coming today. Fifty kindergarteners and first graders will be here in an hour!"

I really had to hit the ground running, using what experience I thought I had in coastal ecology and education. I had to pretend I knew what I was doing. With each field trip and program I ran I got more comfortable with managing groups of excited children. That was almost as rewarding as seeing the kids get excited about tadpoles and osprey nests and knowing I played a role in that.

One of the best parts of working Visitor Services was getting my hands into everything on the refuge complex. I had the freedom to see and work at the different sites and take part in all sorts of projects. Some of the things I got to do this summer—like hold a swallow, work with an archaeologist, spend a week on an uninhabited island—they were experiences I hadn't been expecting at all. I feel like I've opened my eyes to field issues and ongoing solutions that I simply hadn't known existed.

This summer has made me into a lifelong conservationist. I'm studying environmental economics at Harvard, and I think I know New England better through this experience and that I better connect with the area in which I live and go to school. And that's exactly how I want other people to feel when they visit this refuge.

See Shelby's video at thesca.org/shelby

Taking a Shine to Solar Power

by Melissa Murphy, SCA '11, Canyonlands NP

The Hans Flat Ranger Station of Canyonlands National Park in Utah is the most remote ranger station in the lower 48 states. To reach the entrance, visitors drive a 47-mile, unpaved road that can be impassable in windy or rainy weather. At the end of the road sits a two-room ranger station, a small residential structure, and a couple of maintenance buildings. One day last July, the whole place got eerily quiet, thanks to me and my fellow SCA intern, Zack Ahrens.

Our off-the-grid location had been powered by a single, smelly, noisy diesel generator that required thousands of gallons of fuel trucked in over a 280-mile round trip. The environmental impact was significant. A conversion to solar power could fix all that.

As SCA backcountry interns, Zack and I did everything from monitor toad populations to redesigning flood gates and interpreting rock art in Horseshoe Canyon. As the solar project got underway, I learned that Zack had previous experience installing solar panels and he discovered that I was about to start grad school to study solar technology. It was perfect situation for us to step in and step up.

District Ranger Cynthia Beyer handed over schematics and installation plans and Zack and I analyzed all the information. As the new batteries arrived, we were in charge of testing each one. Eventually we conducted a safety walk-around at the photovoltaic building housing 72 batteries and the solar panels. Then we flipped the switch and the diesel generator went silent.



Melissa Murphy has a degree in physics from the University of Hawaii and is attending graduate school at Dartmouth College Thayer School of engineering.

The 52 solar panels create a maximum of 11.2 kilowatts of power, which has been plenty to power the station and the residence. The backup generator will most likely become obsolete.

In 1995, 120 solar panels were installed and ran the entire workings of the ranger station and residence area during the summers, but created only 7.2 kilowatts of power. The station was sufficiently sunny in the summer but in the winter, with the sun lower in the sky, the backup diesel generators would run a lot.

Now, the stark contrast of solar to diesel is evident to the ear, the environment, and the bottom line. Solar is a sustainable energy source that speaks for itself, even if you can't hear it.



My mother and father were amazed when a friend at school took me to a meeting featuring free pizza—and a few words about something called the *Student Conservation Association*.

No one would have guessed—least of all me!—how that afternoon would change my life.

In just a few years I would become the first in my family to finish college, earn a master's degree and proudly wear the uniform of a National Park Ranger. I felt responsible for the planet we share and the country which has given you and me so much.

— Mauricio Escobar, SCA Volunteer '92–'97, National Park Ranger '98–'10

Please make a year-end gift before December 31st and help change the life of another student.

Visit thesca.org/holiday or use the enclosed envelope. Thanks!



Ila Galanti (top, left) at the University of Chicago gives a thumbs up to supporting local dairy farmers and reducing our environmental impact. Paul Loesch (bottom, left) at Baylor University in Texas optimizes energy use for emissions reductions and cost savings. Michael Seaman (right) at Asilomar Conference Center in Monterey hopes to advance environmental stewardship on a much larger scale.



Corporate Environmental Internships Yield Jobs

In an effort to provide young professionals with real-world corporate experience and an understanding of the role environmental stewardship can play in *all* jobs, SCA and ARAMARK recently launched the Environmental Internship Program—a pilot program designed to provide a career pathway into traditional operational roles where environmental expertise is of increasing importance.

The program, which offers internships in energy and water conservation, sustainable procurement, and waste management, resulted in 10 interns being placed at ARAMARK locations around the country, ranging from remote national park sites on the Olympic Peninsula to leading-edge businesses in New York City, Texas and California. Despite the differences in geography and business sectors, each intern had the opportunity to immerse themselves in an incredible learning experience. Ultimately, three interns were offered permanent positions within ARAMARK:

Michael Seaman (*above, right*), an environmental intern at Asilomar Conference Center in Monterey, California, assisted with Environmental Management System certification, improving Asilomar's sustainable food and beverage program, and strengthening waste diversion efforts. Michael is now an Environmental and Purchasing Manager with ARAMARK at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. "When I learned about the internship, I jumped at the opportunity," states Michael. "It offered me a chance with an international company, provided me with a glimpse of what an enormous food and facility service operation actually entails, and gave me a hefty dose of reality along with it.

Through my internship, I found myself in the unexpected position of being part of the solution on a much larger scale than I had ever imagined: advancing environmental stewardship while working for a multi-billion dollar corporation."

Paul Loesch's (*bottom, left*) internship took him to Baylor University in Texas where he helped to ensure facilities systems were in top working order, optimizing energy use for emissions reductions and energy cost savings. "My internship afforded me the opportunity to create a comprehensive energy awareness handbook of best practices on energy management, efficiency standards and procedures that serves as a field resource and platform for communication across the university." Paul is now working in Environmental Compliance with ARAMARK at Baylor University.

At the University of Chicago in Illinois, **Ila Galanti** (*top, left*) immersed herself in a sustainable dining internship and worked on building strong relationships with local vendors to create effective sustainable purchasing programs. Galanti promoted sustainable foods, plus vegetarian and vegan meal options at the university. "My idea of featuring a locally sourced salad once a week was very well received." Ila is now a Registered Dietician with ARAMARK at the university.

Read more about the program and environmental interns at thesca.org/environmental-internships/Aramark



SCA, GCA Expand Partnership

SCA and the Garden Club of America have announced the creation of the **Sara Shallenberger Brown GCA National Parks Conservation Scholarship** to attract and support emerging conservation leaders through SCA's apprentice crew leader program. It was created to showcase Ms. Brown's dedication to the environment and ensure that her legacy will continue in perpetuity.

A member of the Glenview Garden Club of Louisville, Kentucky since 1939, Ms. Brown gave many years of service to environmental issues and conservation organizations on a local, national, and global level until she passed away last April. The scholarship commemorates her 100th birthday and honors the centennial of the National Park Service.

The first three recipients of the scholarship were also announced: **Adrien Green** of Philadelphia (Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area), **Brian Raftrey** of northern California (Blue Ridge Parkway), and **Rob Serafin** of Nashville (Sagamore Hill National Historic Site). SCA and GCA have collaborated on conservation initiatives for more than 50 years.

For more information, visit:
thesca.org/GCAscholarship



Photo by Denis Dessoliers. Silverton Mountain, CO. "On the way to Clear Lake."

View winning photos at thesca.org/PhotoContestWinners

Special thanks to:



Got Dirt?

Photo Contest Winners!

We asked you to show us how you get out, give back, and get your hands dirty—and you did with more than 6,000 entries! It wasn't easy, but our judges were unanimous in their choice of winners.

Grand Prize Winner

Denis Dessoliers – *Morning*

Second Place

Don Holland – *Eagle Aerobatics*

Third Place

Jill Klasen – *Sunset Sillies*

Honorable Mentions

Aleksa Petersons – *Puddle Jumping*

Kimberley Martin – *Confidential Commune*

Eden Hassett – *Three-Sixty*



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PHILANTHROPY
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The American Institute of Philanthropy and Charity Navigator rank SCA among America's top conservation charities for fundraising efficiency.

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

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



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3 Great Reasons to Act before the year is out!

- 1 Increase your income and save taxes with a charitable gift annuity
- 2 Donate appreciated stock or mutual fund shares and avoid capital gains
- 3 Are you over 70½? Make a tax-free gift from your IRA!

These are three great ways to help you meet your own needs while supporting hands-on service to the land and building future generations of conservation leaders.

For information about these or other types of gifts or a personal illustration, please see the enclosed **3 Great Reasons** flyer and contact Hugh Montgomery, Director of Gift Planning by e-mail at hmontgomery@thesca.org or by telephone at 603-504-3241 or toll-free at 888-722-9675 ext. 1151. thesca.org/3GreatReasons



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SCA's Conservation Quarterly Winter 2011



SCA Alumna Returns With New Perspective

SCA Community Programs are currently engaging diverse high school students in hands-on conservation projects in cities across the U.S. SCA Pittsburgh's Deja Sims says as she returns for her second year with SCA she is taking steps to curtail her personal environmental impact, including using less water and energy. "I'm a different person than when I started with SCA," Deja states. "I've learned about green spaces, sustainability and climate change. I'm more aware of things. Whatever I do now, I think about what's going to happen next."