



## HIGH SEASON FOR STEWARDSHIP



*Elhan Whitecotton*

*Eight members of the AmeriCorps team and their crew leader pose alongside Spirit Lake minutes after arriving in late May.*

### HURRICANE RELIEF TO HAZEL HOES: AMERICORPS ARRIVES

When Kansas-born Angie Morales signed up for service with AmeriCorps, she had no idea she would end up repairing her own grandmother’s storm-ravaged roof in Puerto Rico. Nor did she imagine she would wind up her year of service living in a remote lakeside house on the northern Oregon Coast with a

bald eagle nest in her backyard.

A team of 11 young adults—

**“THIS IS A GOOD WAY TO BOOST OUR CAPACITY.”**

eight women and three men—with AmeriCorps’ National Civilian Community Corps spent the final

two months of their nearly year-long commitment helping rid Oregon’s North Coast of invasive species such as Scotch broom, knotweed, and policeman’s helmet. They stayed in a house on NCLC’s Spirit Lake Habitat Reserve in Warrenton. Such teams are assembled to complete multiple projects (*cont’d. on page 3*)



### HOMETOWN GIRL EMBRACES NATURE

Where did Stephanie Mendez-Garcia of Cannon Beach develop her love of the wild world? From growing up with a forest for a backyard, she says. From taking hikes with her family. And from a great blue heron in Ecola Creek, the one she used to watch from the edge of the playground at Cannon Beach Elementary School.

The 2018 Seaside High School graduate is one of NCLC’s four summer stewardship interns (not to be confused with the visiting AmeriCorps crew). For an 18-year-old, she’s unusually well qualified for a summer among the weeds; her coursework has included plant ecology, biology, chemistry, and ethnobotany. And she (*cont’d. on page 3*)



**YOGA AT CIRCLE CREEK** Among 2018 On the Land events still to come this summer: the inaugural Yoga at Circle Creek on Aug. 30, led by long-time certified yoga instructor and NCLC Development Director Lorraine Ortiz. (That’s NCLC Outreach Manager Lynette Villagomez above, practicing yoga in the spruce grove.) Register for On The Land events at [NCLCtrust.org](http://NCLCtrust.org).

## NEW POSTS SIMPLIFY WAYFINDING AT CIRCLE CREEK

If you’ve tried to find your way to the Wetlands Walk at Circle Creek Conservation Center, you know it hasn’t been easy (except on a guided walk). The route to the boardwalk follows a combination of old road and mown path, and the way wasn’t always clear. But not anymore! New trail posts have been installed, making wayfinding much easier.

How that happened is a story stretching over two years and achieved with the help of more than a dozen volunteers, including several students (and their teacher) at Seaside High School.



*Pat Mulvhill and Gary Brownlee stroll the Wetlands Walk.*

Read the whole story at [NCLCtrust.org/trail-posts-circle-creek](http://NCLCtrust.org/trail-posts-circle-creek). For directions and

a downloadable map of the trail system, visit [NCLCtrust.org/circle-creek-conservation-center](http://NCLCtrust.org/circle-creek-conservation-center).

## THIS LITTLE SEABIRD NEEDS BIG, OLD TREES TO THRIVE

Studies indicate the number of marbled murrelets nesting along the Oregon Coast are continuing to decline. Loss of habitat is the problem: robin-sized murrelets nest not on sea cliffs or offshore rocks, like most seabirds, but on stout, mossy limbs of old growth conifer trees growing as much as 50 miles inland. As old growth forests have been logged, the murrelet’s numbers



*Martin Raphael/USFS*

have shrunk. In June the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife reversed an earlier decision to uplist the bird’s status from “threatened” to

“endangered.”

NCLC’s proposed Rainforest Reserve contains groves of old growth spruce and hemlock of the kind murrelets might like. As the trees in the Rainforest Reserve grow over the next several centuries, NCLC will be creating more habitat for this and other animals whose lives depend on the presence of healthy, mature coastal forests.

# SAVE THE MARSH: YANK OUT THE LOOSESTRIFE

It's become an annual ritual: volunteers gather on the edge of NCLC's Wolf Bay Habitat Reserve along the Columbia River in August and spend the day pulling invasive purple loosestrife out of the moist riverbank soil. But this year that stewardship day is part of something bigger: the start of a two-year collaboration with North Coast Watershed Association to restore Wolf Bay and nearby John Day Marsh Habitat Reserve.

The work begins in August, when volunteers and stewardship interns pull loosestrife and yellow flag iris out of the marshes. The next step: land stewards will head to John Day Marsh to plant wapato, Henderson's checkermallow, Douglas aster, red osier dogwood, and other native marsh plants—from canoes (there's no other way to access the property). The seedlings will be small, Stewardship Director Melissa Reich acknowledges. "But small is good



*Invasive purple loosestrife colors the marsh at NCLC's Wolf Bay Habitat Reserve.*

when you need to fit them all in a canoe."

In the fall, volunteers will be back to help collect the seeds of native plants from the marsh along the river's edge. Over the winter those seeds will be grown into seedlings at a nursery in Longview, and next summer they'll be planted at Wolf Bay Habitat Reserve. NCLC land stewards typically do their planting in winter. But with twice-daily tidal

inundation, seedlings planted in summer along the Columbia River are likely to thrive. The project is funded in part with a \$15,000 grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

## HELP SAVE THE MARSH

Join us to pull loosestrife at Wolf Bay Aug. 25.  
Details at [NCLCtrust.org](http://NCLCtrust.org).

## HOMETOWN GIRL

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understands teamwork; she was captain of her soccer team.

Stephanie spent much of the spring on NCLC properties in the Clatsop Plains, weeding out invasive species and planting native species as part of her senior-year Pacifica

Project. Now she's spending her summer pulling policeman's helmet and purple loosestrife, making room for native plants to flourish. "It's fun, and it's peaceful," Stephanie says of her stewardship work. "I like helping my community and helping conserve the land for future generations."

In September Stephanie plans

to enroll at Clatsop Community College, her next step toward a possible career in biology or forestry—anything that taps her interest in life sciences and lets her work outside, she says. But she's not quite ready to leave the North Coast. "I've made a lot of memories in the forest behind my house."

## AMERICORPS

*(continued from page 1)*

addressing essential community needs throughout the United States. In an unusual collaboration, the team worked not only on NCLC properties but on state park and national park lands on the North Coast. "This is a good way to boost our stewardship capacity," said

NCLC Stewardship Director Melissa Reich.

The team's Oregon assignment followed stints in Texas and Puerto Rico, mucking and gutting hurricane-damaged houses and repairing roofs. They also had a three-month assignment at a camp for blind children in California's Napa Valley that had been half-destroyed by

wildfire. "We knew we could be assigned to disaster relief," said team member Drew Johnson, "but we didn't expect the disasters would be that bad."

In that sense, their Oregon assignment was a welcome change. Though it was hard to compete with snorkeling in the warm waters off Puerto Rico on their days off.



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**COAST LEGACY CIRCLE LAUNCHED**



*Founding members of the Coast Legacy Circle include (from left) Bob Widdop, Neal Maine, Betsy Ayres, Stephanie Dudley, Dianne Widdop, and John Dudley. In the background is part of their legacy: conservation on the Necanicum Estuary and Tillamook Head.*

The inaugural gathering of North Coast Land Conservancy's Coast Legacy Circle took place in May at a delicious catered breakfast overlooking Haystack Rock in Cannon Beach. The Coast Legacy Circle is a group of donors who have decided to make conservation of the Oregon Coast their legacy. By including North Coast Land Conservancy in their estate plans, they are helping to ensure that people, plants, and wildlife will continue to thrive in this landscape in perpetuity.

To inquire about NCLC's bequest program and how to become part of the Coast Legacy Circle, please contact Katie Voelke at 503-738-9126.

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Thank you to these new CoastWalk Oregon sponsors: Berkshire Hathaway/Garibaldi, Garibaldi Museum, Historic U.S. Coast Guard Boathouse, Horning Geosciences, Oregon Coast Visitors Association, The Little Crow, Pacific Byway Development Company, Tillamook County Library, Garibaldi Marina, and

Dancing Spoons Macaroons. We're also grateful to returning sponsors Visit Tillamook Coast, Unfurl, Boxing for Fitness, and Grizzlies Brand. See you in September!



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