

THINK OUTSIDE



STATE PARKS YOUTH CORPS

State Parks Youth Corps 2013 REPORT

SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAM: The State Parks Youth Corps was established by Gov. Jay Nixon in 2010. The program empowers youth through meaningful projects in Missouri's state parks and historic sites while fostering an understanding of the outdoors and building new skills for the workforce. **Since its creation, 2,386 workers have served a total of 651,914 hours in the State Parks Youth Corps.**

In 2013, SPYC offered positions from June to December throughout Missouri State Parks to workers ages 17-23. Completed projects include resource management, trail maintenance and interpretative programs.

2013 SPYC By the Numbers

300+
WORKERS
HIRED

7

Stewardship
Crews

1,176 Interpretive programs presented

97,376

—Hours of Service—

341 miles of **TRAIL** maintained or created

2,744
Acres of
Habitat
Restored

72

STATE PARKS & HISTORIC SITES

benefited

34

Interpretive Aids

233 Structures RESTORED, MAINTAINED AND/OR CONSTRUCTED

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The impact of State Parks Youth Corps is made possible through a partnership between Missouri State Parks and the Missouri Department of Economic Development, in cooperation with the Missouri Conservation Federation, local Workforce Investment Boards and their service providers.



Impact on the OUTDOORS

State Parks Youth Corps projects:

- Improved trails and access to state park lands
- Preserved natural and wild areas
- Renovated and restored state park and state historic site structures

"It helps me gain respect for the environment."
— Lake of the Ozarks State Park SPYC

"It was an exciting learning experience that helped me better appreciate our state parks and the people who take care of them."
—Wallace State Park SPYC

Project Snap Shot: In Long Branch State Park, 365 acres were spot treated to control sericea lespedeza, a problem invasive that has a deep tap root that allows it to out-compete native plants.

Project Snap Shot: In St. Joe State Park, 15 picnic tables, 12 benches, and 60 grills were repaired and/or painted. The improvements better visitors' experiences as they explore and experience nature.

Impact on VISITORS

Each year, the State Parks Youth Corps includes interpretative aids who foster visitors' appreciation for Missouri's natural and cultural resources by providing hikes, tours and evening programs. Throughout the season, they have the opportunity to:

- Improve presentation and communication skills
- Connect with an array of diverse audiences

"My favorite experience would be seeing the differences people can make in others' lives."
—Table Rock State Park SPYC

"I gained valuable experience interacting with visitors of all ages and nationalities."
—Route 66 State Park SPYC



Impact on WORKERS

The State Parks Youth Corps trains workers to be effective, service-oriented leaders. In addition to technical skills, they learn:

1) Interpersonal and Leadership Skills

- Cooperation, teamwork and group dynamics
- Listening skills and accepting different opinions
- Giving and receiving feedback

2) "Think Outside" Knowledge

- Importance of Missouri's natural and cultural resources
- Understanding of the different Missouri ecosystems

"I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do in my future pertaining to my career. This program helped solidify my decisions of my education."
—Nathan Boone Homestead State Historic Site SPYC

"SPYC was an opportunity to gain more experience and insight into becoming a better leader and improving my problem solving skills."
— Table Rock State Park SPYC

Project Snap Shot: Workers built an Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant pathway at the Battle of Lexington State Historic Site. Where they learned how to prepare and level a pathway and the meaning of teamwork. The result was pride in a job well done.



Project Snap Shot: At Rock Bridge Memorial State Park over the course of the season, nearly 1,700 visitors enjoyed a tour of Connor's Cave and learned about cave geology and biology.

Stewardship Crew

Project Snap Shot: Seven stewardship crews set out in Missouri State Parks to complete a variety of projects including invasive species removal, woodland and glade restoration and trail clearing. These crews were led by crew leaders who proved to be invaluable assets in mentoring and educating their crew.

