

Student Conservation Association New Hampshire Conservation Corps 2024 Field Season Report



APRIL 1ST – OCTOBER 31ST, 2024

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Davis Brush
Sr. Program Manager

Zach Colatch
Trail & Program
Operations Specialist

Ashley Chastain
Project Leader

Dakota Exum
Program Assistant

Kaitlin Raven
Project Leader

Kate Banyas
Education Coordinator

About SCA

The mission of SCA is to build the next generation of conservation leaders and inspire lifelong stewardship of our environment and communities by engaging young people in hands-on service to the land.

SCA was founded in 1957 by Elizabeth Titus Putnam, a college student with a big dream. “Visionary” accurately describes Liz. Launching an American conservation movement powered exclusively by young people would be ambitious today but considering that she conceived of the idea in 1957—at age 20—makes her even more remarkable. While still attending Vassar College, Liz modeled SCA after the 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps and enlisted student volunteers to assist with the upkeep of U.S. national parks and public spaces. Sixty years and 100,000 participants later, SCA is not only a stalwart presence in national parks but also a potent partner of other federal, state and local resource management agencies around the country, helping to protect endangered species, conserve urban green spaces, and restore landscapes ravaged by wildfires and floods.

SCA programs serve the communities and land throughout the nation by accomplishing significant conservation service projects that enhance and protect natural areas. SCA programs also provide educational opportunities to promote the understanding, protection and stewardship of these natural areas. The four outcomes from the mission are service, leadership, conservation, and stewardship.

Program Summary

The SCA New Hampshire Conservation Corps (NHCC) is a partnership between the Student Conservation Association, The New Hampshire Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, and AmeriCorps. Since 1994, NHCC has provided over 1.4 million hours of service to the lands and people of New Hampshire. Each year, volunteers contribute tens of thousands of service hours, providing environmental education programming to the state’s residents and visitors, and completing conservation service projects that improve and protect the state’s recreational, environmental, and cultural resources.

The mission of NHCC is to serve the communities and lands of New Hampshire while building the members’ leadership and technical skills in the conservation field. In the tradition of the Civilian Conservation Corps, NHCC members perform direct hands-on service while developing their ethic of service and citizenship. These highly motivated young adults enhance and protect natural areas through environmental education programs, interpretive ranger programs, and conservation stewardship activities that include trail and recreational management projects as well other land and historic preservation projects.

Each year the NHCC AmeriCorps program welcomes members to Bear Brook State Park to serve and learn in its residential program. For 2024, the program welcomed eight Interpretive Rangers and seventeen Field Crew Members. The Field Crew Members arrived to form three rotating field crews and overlapped with the Interpretive Rangers for several week of training in the spring.

After training, the Field Crews head out to serve with partner organizations including N.H. State Parks, White Mountain National Forest, town conservation commissions, land trusts, and state-wide nonprofits to provide conservation stewardship throughout the NH. The priority conservation projects that the NHCC crews complete include trail construction and maintenance, carpentry projects constructing visitor use structures such as camp shelters, and habitat restoration, invasive species removal, and historic preservation.

Partnerships

This year NH Conservation Corps partnered with five agencies and organizations to carry out 27 projects. The program's main partner was the NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, with crews serving at 17 parks, waysides, historic sites, and forests completing 15 hitches. A *"hitch"* is an 11-day project trip during which a crew serves and camps at or near the project site. NHCC also served with the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) for five hitches, all on the White Mountain National Forest, and directly with the USFS on the Androscoggin District. Additionally, NHCC partnered with three non-profit land managers, and two counties. These land management partners are critical to the success of NH Corps through the opportunities and skill development afforded to members.

2024 Partner Agencies & Organizations:

- NH State Parks (DNCR)
- NH Bureau of Historic Sites (DNCR)
- NH Forests & Lands (DNCR)
- White Mountain National Forest (USDA)
- Appalachian Mountain Club
- Forest Society
- NH Audubon
- Harris Center for Conservation Education
- Belknap County Conservation District
- Sullivan County Department of Natural Resources

These partners and projects allowed members to experience the beauty of public lands throughout NH. From the Wentworth Coolidge Mansion Historic Site on the seacoast to Mt. Monadnock and from Francona Notch to the Canadian border, members served all over New Hampshire. This diversity of locations and project partners helps members learn about different conservation agencies, positions, and career opportunities as part of the programs workforce development.

Training



Trails Skills Derby – an SCA classic! Last day of trails training when crews construct mini trail networks to put their new trail knowledge to the test. Notice the little stone staircase!



Timber Skills training in Brook State Park. A sawyer makes "kerf cuts" in a notch, which is then cleaned up with a chisel.

The program dives right into training season to prepare members for the field. Through a combination of formal training and certification courses and hands-on field instruction on real-time projects, members go through nearly two months of skill development. Most of this is training through service learning with the bulk of training is spent completing projects on public lands.

Wilderness First Responder (WFR): Spruce Pond Camp

- The course was put on by Solo Medicine based in Conway, NH. During this eight-day training, members learn important information to both treat, but also prevent, injuries and illness during the program. With this being the first training following SCA orientation, it serves as a great bonding opportunity for the member cohort.

Camp Skills & Leave No Trace

- Following WFR, members headed to Moose Brook State Park to learn a wide range of skills for both frontcountry and backcountry wilderness camping. Skill stations covered everything from using propane cook stoves and GPS communication devices to filtering drinking water and lightning position (photo). Members also earned Leave No Trace Trainer certificates while going through training on reducing their impact and being mindful while recreating, working, and camping outdoors.



Game of Logging: Bear Brook State Park

- Two instructors from Northeast Woodland Training led nine members through Levels 1 & 2 chainsaw safety and operation. The training took place at Spruce Pond Camp in Bear Brook and covered felling, bucking, and limbing. SCA staff then worked with members to continue their skill development.

Conservation Work Skills: Bear Brook State Park

- Four instructors led a week of trail training projects on four trails in Bear Brook where members rotated through all projects. Skill stations included trail design and construction, native timber, stonework, and trail tread and drainage. The projects were priority maintenance needs in the park and improved the trails for visitors. The program built in a work skills follow-up week that allowed members to complete these "training" projects and tackle a dimensional lumber bridge in the park.

Carpentry: Pillsbury State Park

- In continuing what has become a training standard for NHCC, program staff taught carpentry skill proficiency through the construction of two Adirondack-style camping shelters. The training focused on reading plans, inventorying materials, developing a project strategy, assessing risks, and learning tool safety and use. This is a training project with the end goal being the construction of two shelter frames. Crews completed the shelters during a hitch period.



Other trainings:

- Rigging & Griphoist Systems
- Large Van & Truck Operation
- Trailer Towing
- Exterior Painting
- Menu Planning & Field Cooking
- Leadership Skills
- Conflict Resolution
- Identity and Inclusion
- Project Reporting & Documentation
- Tool Maintenance

Spring Hitch with NH State Parks

Every year NHCC partners with State Parks midway through our training season to field a crew in the Southern, Central, and Great North Woods regions. This is a fantastic opportunity for members to hit the field following weeks of training and content, as they can put their new skills to use and get to see more of NH. It is also perfect timing to assist with campground and park preparation for the season. Crews rove parks within each region to complete campsite and beach cleanup focusing on clearing down trees and debris from the winter, opening trail corridors around day use and campground areas, and painting and repairing visitor use structures. Following Spring Hitch, members return to structured service learning for nearly another month to continue preparing for the regular hitch season.

Hitches & Peer Leadership

During the 2024 season, the New Hampshire Conservation Corps crews completed 27 hitches throughout the state. There are three crews per hitch period with each member completing nine hitches while having the chance to be a peer leader for several project periods.

Through the peer-leadership model each member serves as a leader two or three times during the season. The Trail & Program Operations Specialist takes each member's project and career interests into account while assigning leaders, so members can both challenge themselves and walk away from the program with the relevant experience they hoped for. Equally important as the leadership role is that of active participant. NHCC promotes the concept of active participation by encouraging all members to further develop skills through taking initiative, sharing of ideas, and being a team player – ensuring no one is a passive participant only doing what is asked of them.

Below are brief summaries of the season's hitch projects:

White Cross Trail Improvements (3 Hitches)

Monadnock State Park – NH State Parks

Location: Jaffrey, NH

Partners: Will Kirkpatrick – Park Manager



Leaders worked with park staff to address a portion of trail through a scree field on the White Cross Trail, spanning over 30' wide! The goal was to organize rocks between two existing staircases to create an obvious trail in the center of the scree field. Hikers have been opting for the sides of the trail to avoid the confusing and uninviting rock field, which resembles a stream bed more than a trail. This caused trail widening and erosion of the trail. Crews used hand tools and rigging to move large rocks and reset former stairs what shifted to create an intentional path. Most steps were "wedge set" between other rocks. In the end, the crew connected the two staircases, setting 21 steps covering 63.5' with 27 rock gargoyles installed. Additionally, members of the first crew assisted in the rescue of a hiker that was injured and needed getting down the mountain. Assisting mountain patrol in evacuating the injured hiker, the members put their WFR skills to good use.

Group Site Camping Shelters

Pillsbury State Park – NH State Parks

Location: Washington, NH

Partner: Tracy Kimball—Park Manager and Erik Nelson – Central Region Supervisor



These were the first shelters at the group campsite in Pillsbury near the playground. This is the perfect pairing of meeting a public desire for additional visitor use structures and member skill development through service. The shelters require group decision making and teamwork as they consult blueprints, make precise cuts, and use a wide variety of power tools. State Park staff were very helpful as we navigated rainy weather that delayed roofing and staining.

Trail Clearing & Basic Maintenance

White Mountain National Forest – Appalachian Mountain Club

Location: Androscoggin District, WMNF

Partner: Nora Sackett— Trails Volunteer Programs Manager, AMC



This crew was eager to hit the field following the training season and drew an exciting hand, getting to serve in the Caribou-Speckled Wilderness to complete trail clearing on Caribou Mountain - Mudbrook and Haystack Notch Trails. The goals were to lop and clear vegetation encroaching on the trails and clearing blowdown trees. Ultimately, this crew used axes to clear 49 blowdowns and cruised 8.9 miles of trail. Additionally, they established a couple rock cairns to better blaze unclear trails. This was a fantastic introductory project and the crew had a blast while seeing some of the White Mountains most beautiful areas.

Greenfield Painting (2 Hitches)

Greenfield State Park – NH State Parks

Location: Greenfield, NH

Partner: Alec Woolley – Park Manager



Greenfield State Park underwent a full-scale renovation during 2024 season. SCA contributed to the effort by tackling painting projects on several of the bathhouses throughout the campground. The crews worked to prep the exteriors by sanding and scraping nine buildings and painting five building exteriors. This work is critical to the maintenance of the park facilities and has a positive impact on park visitors' experience. The second Greenfield hitch found the crew doing their best to stay cool during the summer's hottest heat wave, as most of the work was in the direct sunlight. They did their best to use the mornings to their advantage and to be intentional with which buildings and which sides of a building they would tackle as the sun moved throughout the day.

North Mountain Trail Stairs

Pawtuckaway State Park – NH State Parks

Location: Nottingham, NH

Partner: Dave Richardson – Park Manager



Picking up where a NHCC crew had installed rock steps in 2023, a crew installed more steps on an adjacent steep, eroded, and slippery section of trail. The area surrounding the trail provided beautiful rock options with many rocks naturally being the ideal size and shape. The crew also used a rock drill with feathers and wedges to shape additional stairs. In addition to the 8-step staircase, the crew installed a total of 28 gargoyle rocks. Additionally, the crew addressed some water issues on the trail by maintaining an existing water bar and reshaping tread.

Rumney Rocks Stairs and Retaining Walls (2 Hitches)

White Mountain National Forest – Appalachian Mountain Club

Location: Rumney, NH

Partners: Alex DeLucia – AMC Director of Trails & Recreation Management



The NH Corps was excited to be a part of the effort at Rumney Rocks climbing area on the WMNF, which was managed by the AMC in conjunction with the Access Fund, to improve visitor access and safety while reducing erosion. This was the second year of the effort to install stairs, retaining walls, and platforms at the base of popular rock-climbing sites. For the SCA crews, this involved moving a great deal of materials, including 100 robust 8'x8'x8' pressure treat timbers (see photo) – the crew utilized rigging equipment and group muscle to move and stage the 8x8's. They also made 160 cubic yards of crush to fill box steps, quarried and assisted in setting 30 rock steps, built 13 lumber box steps, and quarried an additional 48 gargoyle rocks. This was an example of the benefits of partnering with other crews and learning from one another. The AMC staff were supportive and a pleasure to work with.

Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion Vegetation Removal

Bureau of Historic Sites – NH DNCR

Location: Portsmouth, NH

Partner: Matt Flanders – Director of Bureau of Historic Sites



The beautiful historic Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion, right on the banks of Little Harbor, was an incredible place for the crew to serve. As the DNCR website states, "The rambling 40-room mansion which overlooks Little Harbor, is one of the most outstanding homes remaining of the colonial era. Its stateliness and impressive interior and furnishings reflect aristocratic life in Portsmouth in the 1700s." The grounds of the mansion were overgrown with a mixture of invasive species and native vegetation that was tangled with vines. The hitch was scheduled for a time when it was most ideal to cut the invasives, avoiding their seeding season. The crews tackled the vegetation with a mix of hand and power tools. These tools and a lot of elbow grease got the job done! The crew also worked to restore the natural boundaries of the tree line and cleared around the buildings to protect their foundations.

NH Audubon Trail and Resource Improvements

Deering Sanctuary, John Brockway Nature Preserve, Alice Bemis Thompson Wildlife Sanctuary – NH Audubon

Location: Deering, Hopkinton, and Sandwich, NH

Partner: Marc Nutter – Conservation Program Director



This crew had the awesome opportunity to visit several NH Audubon properties throughout the hitch period. First, they headed to the Deering Sanctuary to complete several projects that included adding railings to a native timber bridge (in photo). While in Deering they also installed a kiosk, cruised trails clearing blowdowns and corridor, and put on waders to clean out a “beaver deceiver”. The heavy mud and woody material must be removed periodically to allow for appropriate water flow to prevent the weight from crushing the pipes underneath. The crew then headed to the John Brockway Nature Preserve to open trail corridor, clear blowdowns, and remove hazard trees. Once this was complete, they packed up camp and headed north to the Whites where they camped at Meade Base while using a GPS to map trail routes at the Thompson Wildlife Sanctuary.

Arethusa Falls Trail Improvements

Crawford Notch State Park – NH State Parks

Location: Harts Location, NH

Partner: Erik Nelson – Central Region Supervisor



Returning to one of NHCC’s longest standing project sites, two crews worked on a series of native timber and stone trail improvements on the Arethusa Falls Trail. The popular 1.4-mile trail to the waterfall sees lots of hiker traffic. The narrow trail corridor is negatively impacted by the concentrated foot traffic, which also makes it a challenging location for trail work – crews had to share the narrow trail with the constant flow of hikers. The two crews felled spruce trees to construct 17 native timber check steps, and two retaining walls, and closed five user created social trails.

Tioga River Invasives Species Removal

Tioga River & Wildlife Conservation Area – Belknap Conservation Commission

Location: Belmont, NH

Partners: Lisa Morin – Program Coordinator & Donna Hepp – Belknap County Conservation District



The SCA returned to the Tioga River & Wildlife Conservation Area, a site that NHCC had severed at in the 2000s, to remove invasive Glossy Buckthorn via mechanical removal methods. The aim was to remove the buckthorn from vulnerable areas along the edges of an old growth hemlock stand. Old-growth forests are especially vulnerable to this type of invader because of their slow growth. The crew’s efforts to push buckthorn back from the edge of the forest is vital to the continued health and survival of the forest.

Old Bridal Path Improvements (2 Hitches)

Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC)

Location: Franconia, NH – White Mountain National Forest, USFS

Partner: Deva Steketee – Project Manager



It was an honor to return for a second year to contribute to the extensive multi-year effort to restore the Old Bridal Path Trail alongside the AMC, USFS, professional contractors, volunteers, and other conservation corps. This crew was able to see the beautiful stairs that had been constructed last season and earlier this year, which was awe inspiring. Our crews set steps, gargoyles, opened the existing trail corridor, cut 300' of new tread and corridor, built 57' of 18" rock wall in the alpine zone to guide hikers, closed a social trail, and worked to renaturalize off-trail areas near former worksites. Both crews were excited to have the opportunity to work on the forested mountain and in the alpine zone. The AMC staff were supportive and set clear expectations that allowed the crews to be productive throughout the hitches.

Koasek of Turtle Island Trail Construction

Sullivan County & the Koasek Traditional Band of the Koas Abenaki Nation

Location: Claremont, NH

Partners: Lionel Chute – Sullivan County Director of Natural Resources; Chief & Elder Paul (Gwilawato) Bunnell



This project was on land that was recently acquired, through donation, by the Koasek Traditional Band of the Koas Abenaki Nation. There was a roughed-in trail at the site and the goal for our crew was to add two large structures and widen/harden the tread, for the first couple hundred feet of trail. The intent was to increase accessibility for those with mobility limitations. The crew focused on the construction of a 24'x6' lumber bridge spanning the outlet of a small wetland and a large retaining wall on a side-sloped section of trail. Additionally, they added a mixture of stone dust and gravel to harden the tread and make the trail smoother. The retaining wall was built eight courses high spanning 27' at its base. For the abutments and retaining wall, locally milled 6"x6" rough sawn hemlock was used. Finally, the project was finished by tamping 187.5' of trail with ledge pack. This was a laborious project to increase accessibility and sustainability of the trail around the wetland, which is an important cultural and spiritual site for the Koasek. On the final day, the crew was invited to join a ceremonial fire and blessing held by tribal members.

Harris Center Step Stones and Viewshed Clearing

Harris Center for Outdoor Education

Location: Hancock, NH

Partners: Phil Brown -- Bird Conservation Director/Land Specialist & Eric Masterson – Land Program Manager



The projects outlined for this crew were a mix that addressed a variety of trail and viewshed needs. Projects included placing stepping stones at three different muddy stream crossings on the Dandelion and Boulder Trails, removing blowdowns, leaf blowing trails, and clearing vegetation at outlooks for both Skatutakee and Thumb Mountains. Clearing the viewsheds allows hikers and bird watchers to see the Wapack Range including Pack-Monadnock Mountain.

Rattle River Trail Improvements

Androscoggin Ranger District, White Mountain National Forest – USFS

Location: Gorham, NH

Partners: James Vittetau— Trails Manager and Nick Sindorf – Trail Crew Lead



This was the second year that a crew worked on this section of the Rattle River Trail, which is a segment of the Appalachian Trail on the beautiful Androscoggin District. The crew, tackled an array of trail needs that included setting a pathway of stepping stones through muddy terrain, installing checksteps and a waterbar to mitigate erosion (photo), and closing a social trail. The social trail had been used by hikers to avoid the muddy, eroded trail. By getting the water off the trail, adding check steps to retain material, setting step stones, and building the tread up with crush and mineral soil, the crew provided hikers a better safer route while protecting the surrounding forest. The crew enjoyed the backcountry camping and spectacular views this hitch offered.

Connecticut River Access Trail Bog Bridging

Washburn Family Forest – Forest Society

Location: Clarksville, NH

Partners: Dylan Summers – Stewardship Project Manager



October is an incredible time to be working in the Great North Woods and the crew had a wonderful campsite on Lake Francis to take in the autumn colors. Washburn Family Forest is a property in the northern New Hampshire town of Clarksville, near the Pittsburg line. There is a river access trail around half mile in length that is popular with hikers and anglers accessing the Connecticut River. When the crew arrived roughly half of the trail was lined with dilapidated bog bridges that were rotten, broken, or sitting crooked, while additional sections were covered with a slippery film of moss. The crew worked to demolish and remove all the old bridge sections and replace them. This will allow for hikers and anglers safer recreational access to the property. In the end, the crew removed 59 dilapidated bridge sections and installed 61 bog bridges totaling 536'.

Ridge Trail Native Timber Bridges

Caroline A. Fox Research & Demonstration Forest, NH Forests & Lands

Location: Hillsborough, NH

Partner: Inge Seaboyer— Forester



The only thing cooler than building native timber bridges in the autumn, is the chainsaw and tool museum at Fox State Forest! Cushy amenities combined with an exciting project made this an excellent final hitch of the season for this crew. The project goals were to construct two native timber spanning bridges on two different sections of the Ridge Trail. One area has a low-lying wet area (photo) that required a bridge to protect the ground from disturbance while improving the hiking experience. The other bridge site was in a shaded Hemlock grove with steep banks. The crew decked the first bridge with PT lumber and added bull rails, while the second bridge was intentionally completed to the decking stage for Forest and Lands staff to complete. The rigging, chainsaw, trail skills, and native timber work needed made for a highly engaging experience throughout the final hitch period.

White Lake Loop Trail Bridge (2 Hitches)

White Lake State Park – NH State Parks

Location: Tamworth, NH

Partner: Johanna Lyons –Planning and Land Use Administrator & Erik Nelson – Central Region Supervisor



Two consecutive crews worked at White Lake to remove an old, deteriorating native timber bridge and replaced it with a dimensional lumber spanning bridge with ramps and railings. NHCC worked on this lake loop trail during the 2023 season to construct several bog and spanning bridges that improved hiker access during wet periods. This channel crossing, pictured above, was the last large remaining barrier to accessing the trail. The first crew pre-cut lumber in the parking lot and, along with park staff, boated materials across the lake to the worksite. The stringers were laminated from laminated veneer lumber, abutments were built of 8x8 untreated rough hemlock, and even the gravel for the abutments had to be boated in and hauled to the worksite. Rigging was used to remove the old bridge and to fly in the 40' stringers. After the bridge was completed, a 10' and a 26' ramp were constructed on the ends to provide a smooth transition from trail to bridge.



Service Data



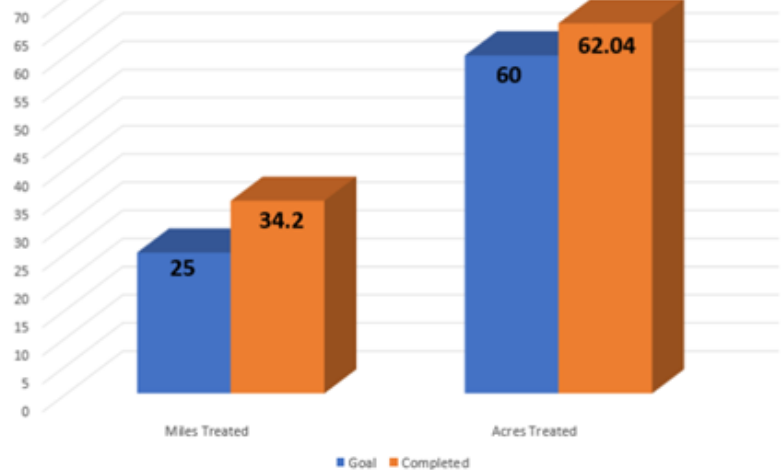
Approximate project locations

Spruce Pond Camp Improvements:

- 4 Buildings Painted
- 2 Firewood Sheds Built
- 4 Picnic Tables Rebuilt
- 14.65 Acres of Brush Cleared & Chipped
- 19 Hazard Trees Removed Along Road
- 19,000 ft² of Building Roof Maintenance/Sweeping



AmeriCorps Targets



Open Space Maintenance & Improvement

- 12.8 Acres of Natural Debris Removal from camp sites, view sheds, parks
- 4.9 Acres of Shoreline Improvements
- 162,147² of Invasive Species Removed
- 5 Bathhouses Painted

Carpentry

- 2 Camping Shelters Built
- 40' Lumber Bridge w/26' Ramps Built
- 21' Bridge Railings Built

Trail Maintenance

- 14.8 Miles of Trail Cleared
- 209 Blowdown Trees Cleared
- 191 Rock & Timber Stairs Built
- 112 Rock Gargoyles Installed
- 61 Bog Bridges Built covering 556'
- 4 Spanning Bridges Constructed
- 664' of Retaining Walls Built
- 17 Drainages Structures Improved

...and many more accomplishments totaling in

19,018 Total Field Crew Hours!

Crew Experience Highlights

After leaving Bear Brook and heading home to the Midwest, Field Crew member Kyrie Anderson shared this poignant reflection on her experience.

"Not until the mountains turned into hills, turned into rolling waves, turned into barren corn fields, did I truly realize I was leaving my home at Bear Brook for good. For now. I was leaving behind the hurried weekends, readying for the next hitch while trying to squeeze in an adventure or two in a nearby town... I was leaving the laughter and celebration at a puzzle being completed. I was leaving the quiet clack-thump and sly smiles at the chess board. I was leaving the, "hey guys, look at this bug we found!," only to be followed by the proper name, what it does for the environment, and it's entire life cycle story. I was leaving the nightly, cabin spider checks. I was leaving the home we'd made in our short time in New Hampshire.

I was leaving the beautiful and beautifully strange host of spirits who all made the decision to stop whatever else they were doing in their matrix lives, to live a life less traveled for a while. To open their minds and hearts (and aching limbs) to a rustic sort of surroundings. To challenge themselves to climb higher heights with higher weights, to learn how to use tools we've seen around us in the garage...and to learn how to use tools we'd never heard of. Tools we were scared of.

We learned ways to take care of the lands. We learned to not take the trails, stairways, twists, and turns in the woods for granted. That magical pathway that your feet somehow follow, and your eyes somehow create, through a boulder field, isn't by accident. We learned we will never ever look at a trail the same, nor take a walk without some kind of thought like, but where does the water go? We learned to be kind to ourselves, to give ourselves grace in the face of much frustration and learning. Rocks simply want to be rocks. A 2" x 4" is actually 1.5" x 3.5". Mostly. Wood is a natural substance after all, dimensional or no. Mineral dirt may not always be found beneath a fallen tree. Things don't have to be perfect."

I left behind a place full of teachers and mentors. Ones with great knowledge, patience, and a belief in us. A knowing that they could teach us just enough, and lead us up to a point, to be able to then let us go and work through things ourselves. We were challenged to not only believe in our own capabilities (or fake it), but to then then lead others to complete projects we barely understood ourselves. Despite all the self-doubt, confusion, frustration, things outside our control, and plans lacking key items, the steps were set, the waterbars stood strong, the floorboards were placed, and the roof shingles were completed. Needless to say, I learned so much this past season.

The Conservation Corps allowed me to get to know myself in different ways. It challenged me like no other, and like hiking the AT, it challenged me in ways I didn't anticipate. I had to be vulnerable and open to learning...and failing. Learning a new skill in front of others is not something so common after we complete our schooling and get a job in our chosen fields. I found myself embarrassed and frustrated, time and time again, when something just didn't click. I got the chance to connect with others and learn from them. I don't think I knew how much of this world I was allowed to take in, until they showed me."



Scenes from Bear Corps! At the end of the season, once both Field Crews and Interpretive Rangers had returned to Spruce Camp, everyone came together for a spirited day of friendly competitions and games. This was to thank and celebrate the accomplishments of the members over the course of the programmatic season. Photo on left: 2nd place winners of the Silver Swizzle Stick.

Partner Comments of Project Value

“Thank you so much for the amazing project this year. The work you and the crew did has transformed the property for the Ko'asek band. Now the public can hike the trail and learn more about the Abenaki. What you have given them by opening their land with the bridge and retaining wall is bigger than words. Thanks again.”

-Lionel Chute (Sullivan County Director, Dept. of Natural Resources)

“The crew accomplished an important task to contain invasive species. Their work helps protect adjacent forest habitat. It helps the Town of Belmont better protect its conservation land and offered a demonstration of invasive species control to other towns and landowners. Their work generated an informative local newspaper article which further expanded the impact of this work.”

-Donna Hepp (Belknap County Conservation District)

“We appreciate greatly the service that the NH Corps does for NH State Parks. They have a positive impact on our operations by helping us with trail maintenance that we cannot always get to, maintaining Spruce Pond.”

-Christina Pacuk (Park Manager, Bear Brook State Park)

“SCA NH contributed to a multi-year and multi-partner project to restore the extremely popular loop hike in the White Mountain National Forest. It was a pleasure to have the SCA NH Crews in 2024 and we look forward to working with them again in 2025.”

-Alex DeLucia (Director of Trails & Recreation Management, AMC)

The SCA's service “provides longevity to the trail resource and encourages broader participation in and enjoyment of the outdoors and connection to nature.”

-Phil Brown (Bird Conservation Director/Land Specialist, Harris Center)

“The service brought a trail that was difficult to navigate and was seeing impact from recreation back to a functional state by updating infrastructure. This should make it much easier for visitors to enjoy the trail and protects the trail resource from damage.”

-Dylan Summers (Stewardship Project Manager, Forest Society)



Acknowledgments

Special Thanks to our External Trainers

Kyle Brennan & Andy Wood – Game of Logging Chainsaw Training (*Northeast Woodland Training*)

Pete Englund– Trail Skills (*SCA NHCC alum, longtime SCA instructor and leader, owner of Legacy Trails LLC*)

Julia Graham – Trail Skills (*SCA Mass alum, SCA crew leader, former SCA MA Conservation Corps staff*)

Mike de Graff – Trail Skills (*SCA NHCC alum, Wyoming Conservation Corps leader, USFS*)

Doug & Liz – Wilderness First Responder (*SOLO*)

Matt Coughlan – Rigging Skills (*Recon Trail Design LLC owner & former SCA NHCC staff*)

Scott Rolfe– Tree Identification (*South Regional Forester, NH Division of Forests and Lands*)

Special Thanks to the NH Department of Natural & Cultural Resources & State Parks

Sarah Stewart – DNCR Commissioner

Brian Wilson – Director, NH State Parks

Michael Houseman – Operations Supervisor, NH State Parks

Johanna Lyons – State Park Planning and Land Use Administrator

Tom Mansfield—Architect, NH State Parks

Tara Blaney – South Regional Supervisor, NH State Parks

Brian Parise – Great North Woods Regional Supervisor, NH State Parks

Erik Nelson – Central Region Supervisor, NH State Parks

Christina Pacuk—Bear Brook State Park Manager

NH Corps will greatly miss and fondly remember John Dickerman. As the manager of Crawford Notch State Park, John hosted and supported field crews for decades. He went out of his way to welcome crews, make them comfortable, and allowing creative freedom and growth for crews to tackle projects with their own input.

Student Conservation Association

Jeremy Burns – National Program Manager, State AmeriCorps

Bryan Young – SCA Director of AmeriCorps

Theresa Ramirez— Senior Manager, Agreements

Jason LaValley – Senior Billing Coordinator

Thanks to all other SCA departments and colleagues that support and guide the NHCC.

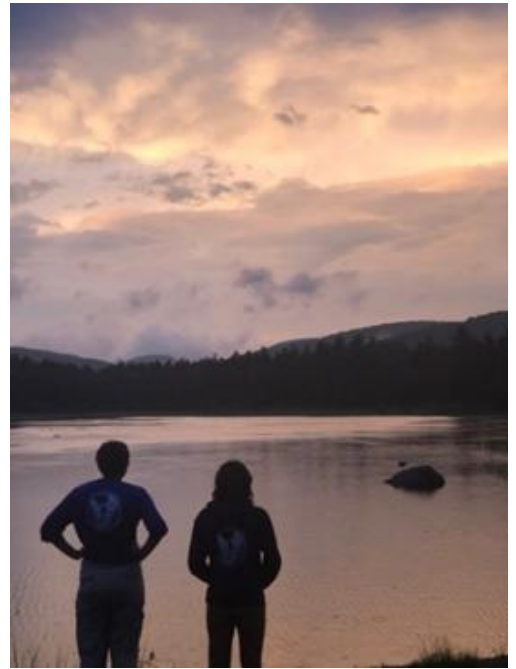


SCA's Executive Team and Board of Directors visited NHCC in October to see the program and meet members, celebrate the 30th year of the program, and to recognize the contributions of state park partners. Photo includes SCA staff, State Parks partners, NHCC members, and Board members.

2024 SCA New Hampshire AmeriCorps Conservation Crew Members

Aiden Gabbert	Schererville, IN
Dante Giampaolo	Sandown, NH
Kyrie Anderson	Crown Point, IN
David Beltrao	Palm Beach, FL
Rachel Hidding	Indianapolis, IN
Remingtin Parker	Port Lavaca, TX
Mitchell Guillette	Nashua, NH
Brenda Kirlin	San Antonio, TX
Kristen Hall	Wappingers Falls, NY
Sam Melcher	Frederick, MD
Avery Ryan	Atlanta, GA
James Rowland	Derry, NH
Katrina Bingham-Maas	Middleboro, MA
Bryant Sinka	South Bend, IN
Demelvae Brown	Oakland, CA
Tyler Wieneke	Kansas City, KS
Teddie Sprauge	Lake Worth, FL

Project Leader: Ashley Chastain	Mobile, AL
Project Leader: Kaitlin Raven	Bozeman, MT
Specialist: Zach Colatch	Northfield, VT









Report prepared by Zach Colatch. For any questions, please contact zcolatch@thesca.org.
SCA NH Conservation Corps 75 Main St. Unit 7 PMB 116 Concord, NH 03301. 603-485-2191 www.thesca.org/NHcorps