



2011 Year in Review: Program Recap

The NFA has six major programs. They bring in eager volunteers, students, interns and other partners to collaborate and work to achieve their mission. In FY 2011 the NFA volunteer and conservation corps network of 750 dedicated and highly-trained individuals contributed 89,776 service hours, delivering a value of \$1,917,615. And this incredible contribution occurs year after year after year.

At the **Urban Conservation Corps (UCC)**, restoration through youth development continues to be the NFA flagship initiative. In December they launched their fifth Urban Conservation Corps (UCC), a team of at-risk youth who serve six-month terms. The workforce development program offers young men and women the chance to serve on the Forest and become employable citizens through hard work in environmental conservation while earning stipends and scholarships that can later be applied to tuition and books. The Urban Youth Conservation Corps component (ages 13-17) is in part sponsored by California Gang Reduction, Intervention and Prevention through the City and County of San Bernardino and offers an after-school prevention program. This model is currently being replicated in the City of Riverside, providing greater outreach of at-risk urban youth to serve on our Forest. The UCC launched a charter school for Corps members to earn their high school GED certification as one more step towards becoming the 14th certificated Corps in California. The UCC also launched a recycling program garnering a large contract with Bechtel Corp. at their Ivanpah site, destined to become one of the world's largest solar plants. The UCC changes lives and has impacted over 300 young people. They have successfully placed six Corps members with forestry positions at the U.S. Forest Service.

At the **National Children's Forest**, youth ages 11-17 are recruited from local communities to work side-by-side with the Forest Service to manage the National Children's Forest and beyond. Their commitment includes trail maintenance, operating the Children's Forest Visitor Center, leading interpretive programs, assisting in ecological restoration, managing the Children's Forest greenhouse, participating in native plant workshops, seed collecting and propagation, project monitoring, and care and evaluation; all while learning the benefits of restoration work from start to finish. In FY 2011 over 1,000 sixth grade students participated in "Pathways to Stewardship" curriculum; a two component conservation education program with a winter ecology lesson on snowshoe and school visit by the new Forest Explorer exhibit.

Big Bear Discovery Center has welcomed over two million visitors since opening in 1998. As one of the busiest NFS visitor centers in the nation, the Discovery Center is co-managed by the Forest Service and SBNFA and serves as a "Gateway to Adventure". They offered 25 different interpretive programs reaching over 3,000 participants. Programs included day and evening nature walks, summer campfire

series, and canoe and kayak tours. Volunteers and staff taught over 1,000 students through programs such as Investigating Ecosystems and Junior Forest Ranger. And the Music in the Mountains summer concert series in their Amphitheater continues to break attendance records adding a different dimension in outreach and fund raising for forest health initiatives.

Off-Highway Vehicle Education and Safety Program is recognized as the largest and most active OHV support group in the nation. In FY 2011 that was through 27,000 volunteer hours contributed by 204 volunteers. Volunteers patrol over 900 miles of roads and trails and act as safety and education ambassadors. Over 5,000 visitor contacts were made, 400 illegal campfire rings dispersed, 4,000 pounds of trash removed, roads cleared and staging areas maintained. They also taught "On the Right Trail" through a school-based land ethics program to 2,000 students. The OHV Volunteers produced the first Forest Off-Highway Vehicle Guide in partnership with Yamaha Motor Corp. Maps are being distributed at no charge through ranger stations, dealers and trade shows; however, a donation is encouraged.

Forest Care is a partnership program implemented by the SBNFA and CALFIRE and funded by the Forest Service in an effort to create community forests that are ecologically healthy and adapted to fire. To date, Forest Care has arranged for a professional forester to meet with 5,221 private landowners; 3,090 have received reimbursement to remove small diameter tree and brush ladder fuels. Forest Care has evolved into a community forest management resource promoting the vision and science behind a healthy and fire safe forest thereby helping to facilitate the change necessary for a sustainably healthy Forest. The **Forest Explorer** has gained momentum as a mobile classroom traveling to elementary schools and events to deliver ecologically-based, forestry-related curriculum and activities to create the next generation of forest stewards and educate adult forest visitors. Thank you all for making 2011 Forest Care's biggest year to date! Check out our Community Updates web page to see the impact in your community. We're looking forward to 2012 and the continuing efforts to create fire adapted communities within the San Bernardino National Forest. Happy Holidays from Forest Care!

Fire Lookout Host Program provides invaluable fire prevention support and interpretive services at the seven fire lookouts across the Forest. Volunteers communicate directly with the Interagency Communications Center and during the 2011 season Fire Lookout Hosts reported 54 lightning strikes, 19 smoke checks and made 10 smoke reports during their 19,800 volunteer hours logged. The Fire Lookouts act as visitor information centers, hosting over 19,000 visitors last year. Additionally, the Hosts keep the Fire Lookouts in good repair through annual maintenance.