The Western Colorado Conservation Corps of Partners (WCCC) offers extensive training for Crew Leaders and Corpsmembers, understanding that potential participants come from a variety of backgrounds and have different skill sets. Project work, although physically demanding, is basic in nature, and can be learned in a short period of time. Because of this, the WCCC focuses its four-week orientation and initial training on both hard skills and soft skills. Below is a description of the WCCC’s orientation and training curriculum.

**Week One:**

**Crew Leader Training**

1. Orientation

Crew Leaders will initially go through all required paperwork, and receive detailed

instruction and familiarity with the WCCC handbook

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1. Management

Crew Leaders will participate in a detailed and thorough lesson on best-management-

practices. The classroom setting will contain current, relevant and practical exercises in the management styles necessary to successfully lead a small group. Crew Leaders will receive tools to confidently manage and lead in adverse settings.

1. Crew Leader: the position

An introduction to the WCCC’s chain of command and expectations for specific roles.

1. Reporting

Crew Leaders are responsible for keeping detailed logs, including daily reports, herbicide reports, timesheets, incident reports, vehicle inspections, equipment logs, and others. Detailed training consists of instruction by senior WCCC management and involves step-by-step guidance in form production.

1. Crew Leader Folders

Crew Leaders are to carry documents, project specs, camping and safety presite forms, instruction manuals, MSDSs, JSAs, AARs, and other WCCC information.

1. Leave No Trace

Working in western Colorado, Crew Leaders need to be well-aware of the environment

and their crew’s effect on it. Corpsmembers also learn the tenants of LNT in their orientation, but Crew Leaders need to have a larger grasp of the topic.

1. Project Descriptions

During Crew Leader training, Crew Leaders will get descriptions of upcoming projects.

This includes allows assistance in planning and coordination and creates a deeper understanding of project goals and specs.

1. Measuring Accomplishments

Crew Leaders need to be able to accurately collect project accomplishments on a daily,

weekly and upon completion. This involves handheld GPS training to measure distance and area. The WCCC needs to accurately record project accomplishments for grants, project sponsor updates, and monitoring.

1. Camping

Crew Leaders will be trained in the proper way to establish a group-camp setting.

Unlike traditional camp experiences, WCCC crews take up more space and are more elaborate. WCCC Crew Leaders will learn to be in control of camps in a variety of locations.

1. Field Sanitation

Field sanitation is one of the most important functions that WCCC crews must prepare

for. Crew Leaders will learn how to set up field sanitation stations and proper disposal of waste.

1. Tents

Some Corpsmembers may not have substantial camping experience. Crew Leaders should know the basic mechanics of how different tent systems work. It is important for all Corpsmembers to have their own shelter on camping crews, and Crew Leaders need to be able to assist when necessary.

1. Kitchens

Most WCCC crews eat meals communally and in a field environment. Crew Leaders will

learn the proper contents of WCCC kitchens and how to accommodate for varying crew sizes and needs.

1. Driving

Getting to and from the worksite is one of the most dangerous activities at the WCCC.

Crew Leaders are responsible for ensuring compliance with all rules and laws. Many issues can be mitigated with good practices and techniques. The WCCC spends a full day of training with Crew Leaders because driving is such a large part of the job. Driving training will cover situations that a Crew Leader may face while driving at the WCCC.

1. Off-Road Driving

Included in the WCCCs Driver’s training is off-road driving. Crew Leaders will familiarize

themselves with 4x4 vehicles and their functions. Crew Leaders will maneuver a variety of field-based courses to ensure practical awareness of the WCCC’s vehicles abilities.

1. Trailers

Most WCCC crews carry trailers for tools and supplies. Trailer training for Crew Leaders

is a how-to guide for the operations and use of trailers at the WCCC. We will cover everything from initial setup and electrical systems to practical driving and backing up.

**Week 2:**

**Crew Integration**

1. Corpsmember Orientation

 Welcome to the WCCC! In this session, new employees will be introduced to Partners, Employment, and AmeriCorps enrolment and paperwork. The WCCC handbook will be reviewed and new WCCC Corpsmembers will have the opportunity to learn about what expectations will be for their session.

1. Team Building

Team building activities are a chance for new Corpsmembers to meet their Crew

Leaders and the rest of their crews. Crew Leaders will facilitate introductions and have the opportunity to choose from an assortment of ice-breakers.

1. Nutrition and Diet

How much water should I be drinking? Where’s the cafeteria? Nutrition and diet are

immensely important to WCCC crews. Demanding physical labor is a part of WCCC project work, and Corpsmembers need to be prepared. All meals are available during WCCC work and Corpsmembers have a significant role in choosing what kinds of food they want.

 This session will introduce new Corpsmembers to a major perk of service with the Western Colorado Conservation Corps. Corpsmembers will learn their involvement in menu planning and food choice options.

1. Camping

Camping with the WCCC is different than many other outdoor experiences. WCCC crews

will learn how to camp as part of a large group, while respecting other prospective visitors and future campers. Corpsmembers will also learn duties and responsibilities associated with crew camping.

1. Field Sanitation

Good sanitation is not just important for individuals. Field sanitation ensures the health

of the entire crew. Corpsmembers will learn a variety of skills and practices to make sure that one person’s germs do not affect others.

1. Tents

Crews will take time to set up personal tents to make sure that all pieces are accounted

for and that everyone knows how to assemble their own tent. Each participant at the WCCC is required to have his/her own tent.

1. Kitchens

In addition to camping and nutrition training, Corpsmembers will be oriented to the

crew’s camp kitchen. A thorough review of the contents and functions of the camp kitchen will ensure that Corpsmembers know the quantities and utilities of what makes a WCCC kitchen.

1. Trail Training

WCCC Corpsmembers will receive trail construction and maintenance training based on

the Outdoor Stewardship Institute’s(OSI) guidelines. All crews, even extensively saw crews, need to be well-versed and prepared for trail projects. WCCC training provides a basic, informative introduction to trails in western Colorado.

1. Leave no Trace

In accordance with many of the other principles of WCCC training, Leave no Trace (LNT)

provides participants of the WCCC with the tenants necessary to have minimal detrimental impacts on properties that we work on.

 Leave no Trace includes an in depth look at what individuals and groups can do to properly camp, travel, work and live outdoors.

1. Fence Training

WCCC crews will learn how to construct and deconstruct wildlife and barbed-wire

fences. Many properties need established boundaries for wildlife and domestic animals. The WCCC is capable of serving a number of different functions. Additional fences such as split-rail and chain link may also be instructed, depending on the project work and need.

1. CPR/First Aid

All participants will have access to a Red Cross or equivalent sponsored CPR/First aid

class. Class will be taught by a trained professional and certification will be provided to WCCC participants.

1. WCCC/Partners Legacy

It is important to know the Western Colorado Conservation Corps’ role in regard to

Partners of Mesa County. The WCCC is a program of Partners, and serves youth and young adults with an opportunity to work and learn in an outdoor, western Colorado setting. This session will highlight Partners’ legacy in Mesa County and how the WCCC program fits in it.

1. Equal Opportunity

Corpsmember will attend a detailed session on equal opportunity, receiving in-depth

information on what constitutes a safe workplace and how to define harassment. The WCCC takes E.O. extremely seriously and will not tolerate inappropriate behavior.

1. Chipper Training

The WCCC utilizes a wood chipper to reduce quantities of biomass. WCCC crews will

receive classroom and field training in proper safety, use and maintenance of the wood chipper.

1. Herbicide Training

The WCCC uses general use pesticides to remove invasive plant species. Because of this,

and in compliance with our Commercial Pesticide Applicator’s license, WCCC Corpsmembers will have the opportunity to become applicator technicians. Initial training will consist of five hours of classroom work and orientation. In addition, Applicator Techs will be trained in 31 more hours of field work and on the job training.

**Week 3:**

**Saw Training (S-212 wildland fire chainsaw equivalent)**

Conservation Corps are notorious for having some of the best sawyers available come out of their programs. This is because Corpsmembers gain so much experience over the course of a session of saw work. It is also because the initial training is so detailed and rigorous. WCCC participants will spend their last week of in-house training in an intensive, 40-hour chainsaw class. The first two days are exclusively in the classroom, in which participants will familiarize themselves with the functions and use of chainsaws at a safe distance. Corpsmembers learn the saw from the inside out, learn safety as the primary priority, and will feel confident and capable after the first two days of saw training.

The second (and last) two days of saw training are field based, in which participants will demonstrate their safety, use and maintenance of chainsaws to the satisfaction of WCCC standards. Groups of 3-4 participants will work together under the supervision of an instructor to ensure safety of the group and the quality of the work being done. Upon testing, it will be at the discretion of the instructor, in accordance with a grading rubric, to pass the WCCC Crew Leader or Corpsmember.

**Week 4:**

**Practical Exercises:**

The final week of WCCC training is a practical exercise under the supervision of WCCC staff. This week is designed to make sure that WCCC Crew Leaders and Corpsmembers are in accordance with WCCC standards. WCCC staff with monitor all aspects of the project and provide guidance and instruction for best practices.

Upon completion of the fourth week of WCCC training, each individual crew will be properly prepared for the season ahead of them.

Remember: Have fun! Be Safe!