

## Specialty Crew Restores Oyster Habitat



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Prior to European settlement of North America, oysters thrived in habitats in and around the San Francisco Bay. However, increasing human impacts in the past two centuries have had a severe negative effect on oyster populations, driving them to near extinction.

This is having widespread negative effects due to the role that oysters have played in the bay ecosystem. Not only do oysters filter nitrogen and other pollutants from the water (a single oyster can filter up to 30 gallons per day!), but the reefs created by oysters provide habitat for numerous fish species and other marine animals.

To combat this issue, Conservation Corps North Bay partnered with the State Coastal Conservancy, US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and Civicorps on an innovative “nature-based adaptation” restoration project. A crew from San Rafael, overseen by Julio Arauz, spent nine weeks fabricating oyster habitat structures that will be placed in the Giant Marsh area near Richmond. The “reef balls” and “oyster blocks” that the crew constructed were made from a material known as “baycrete” — a 3:2:1 combination of marine grade Portland cement, native sand, and fossilized Olympia oyster shells from San Francisco Bay. Working alongside experts from Reef Innovations, a Florida-based group that has worked on similar projects in the past, our crews constructed 180 reef balls, 2,380 oyster blocks, and 170 oyster block bases.

Our crew's efforts were part of a larger project that adopts a “living shorelines” approach and includes several habitat types found within San Francisco Bay. The project is testing the benefits of restoring multiple habitat types within the same location, with a focus on increasing habitat connectivity and shoreline protection. While similar projects have been conducted in other parts of the US, the baycrete approach is new to the San Francisco Bay Area. Very few contractors are familiar with the fabrication methods necessary, but it's expected that additional local projects of this type will expand in both size and scale. The experience gained by CCNB's corpsmembers will make them extremely competitive candidates for jobs within this emerging market.

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This summer's wildfires are yet another reminder of the importance of taking care of planet Earth. More than ever, it is important to engage the younger members of our community in efforts to mitigate the impacts of a warming planet. This work is important not only for the health of this place we call home but also to keep hope in the minds and hearts of younger generations about what their future lives will be like.

Hope and engagement. That is exactly what we do at Conservation Corps North Bay. Every day, corpsmembers complete incredible environmental projects that improve and protect our communities, for both the present and the future.

Our crews have taken on some great new projects (including the oyster habitat work featured on the front page of this newsletter), providing more opportunities for learning, service, and hope for a better future.

- CCNB crews will soon begin working on the Dunphy Park Nature-Based Wave Attenuator project in Sausalito. The goal of this project is to produce two new, habitat-friendly designs for retaining walls to protect the shoreline from sea-level rise. Under the guidance of San Francisco State's Estuary & Ocean Science Center, corpsmembers will study eelgrass at Dunphy Park to help guide the design. Additionally, working with the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, corpsmembers will monitor oysters in the waters bordering the Park. Using what they learned, corpsmembers will then create educational panels that will be placed in Dunphy Park.

- CCNB will also be working with Marin Clean Energy to improve water and energy conservation in multi-unit residential complexes. Crews will directly install energy and water efficiency measures.

Through these projects, the young adults at CCNB have opportunities to take direct action that helps the planet, while learning valuable job skills. With meaningful engagement and learning, they can look ahead and see a positive way to support themselves and their families into the future.

*Mailee Eckert*

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## It's spike season!

CCNB crews have been busy this summer applying their skills in different parts of the state. Corpsmembers have had the unique experience of working alongside the California Conservation Corps and the Forest Service in the Eldorado National Forest as well as just outside Yosemite National Park.

Working and camping outside of their regular communities — for some, this is their first time away from home — not only gives our crews the opportunity to appreciate California's wilderness, it also exposes them to new mentors and invaluable paid work experience.



## Summer Recycling Events

This is the busiest time of year for our recycling crews! From large-scale events like the Marin County Fair to neighborhood e-waste collection events like the one pictured above in Petaluma, our corpsmembers are working hard to divert a variety of materials from the landfill.

The numbers are in for 2017/18, and they are impressive!

- 846,351 lbs. of e-waste collected
- 551,688 lbs. of beverage containers collected
- 7,873 tires recycled
- Reviewed signage of:
- 69 Certified (used oil) Collection Centers
- 1,716 medallions placed on storm drains





June 16th was a day of celebration for 28 high school graduates. On that Saturday, they proudly took the stage before family, friends and staff to receive their diplomas during an inspirational graduation ceremony held at the Petaluma campus of the Santa Rosa Junior College.

CCNB recently added Youth Connections, a second Sonoma County location of the John Muir Charter School to its programming, and to celebrate, invited graduates of both locations to this year's event.

During the powerful ceremony, many graduates shared the challenges they overcame to reach this pivotal moment and thanked their teachers, supervisors, and family members for their support along the way.



Corpsmembers in the Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps visited Sonoma Water's Water Transmission Facility and learned about its distribution system and career opportunities within the water agency.

Partnerships like this provide so many benefits for our corpsmembers and to the greater community. Crews get paid work experience while learning about new types of jobs, and vital environmental projects are completed that create a sustainable place for all to enjoy. As a result, many CCNB corpsmembers have secured jobs with our partners after completing our program.



**Have You Bought Your Ticket Yet?**

**Saturday, October 6, 2018, 5:30–9:30 PM**

**Join Us at the White Barn Project**

**5580 Red Hill Road, Petaluma**

**Put Yourself in a Corpsmember's Boots**

Learn about our programs and how our corpsmembers develop skills while stewarding our environment

**Inspiration & Auction**

Hear personal accounts from our youth and bid on amazing experiences so that more dreams can come true

*For tickets and info visit: [ccnorthbay.org](http://ccnorthbay.org)*

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ABOUT CCNB

Since our inception in 1982, CCNB has helped more than 12,000 young men and women break the cycle of poverty while serving our environment and communities.

We provide year-round job training and education services to 250 corpsmembers every year. Our programs prepare young people from all corners of the North Bay to become environmental leaders, to develop an ethic of service and to enter the workforce with useful skills.

CCNB volunteers and corpsmembers have performed nearly three million hours of work on 150,000 acres of public lands. If you haven't seen them throughout the region doing their work, you've seen the results of their labors in pristine trails, clear rivers and streams, reduced flooding, fewer wildfires, and a reduced carbon footprint.

In short, at CCNB we teach young adults with uncertain futures to create a better future for all of us.

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