

NWSA members rehabilitate educational trail at Mt. Hood National Forest

Two NWSA members working with different districts of the Mt. Hood National Forest decided to work together on a service project to help their small rural communities. After careful consideration of the towns' needs and their individual strengths, they decided to revitalize the Emil Creek Loop trail in the Mt. Hood National Forest Hood River Ranger District Work Center.

The trail had once been used by local day cares and elementary schools for education purposes, but had fallen into serious disrepair over the past decade. A site visit revealed that the trail had been lost to tangles of weeds, woody debris, and piles of trash. The project's scope clearly went beyond trail rehabilitation, and would require a complete effort to recreate the interpretive trail to include a stream clean-up project. The members called the local Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) and enlisted their help. A new trail was cut, huge piles of debris were removed, a bridge was reset, the trail was lined with poles, invasive weeds were pulled, and a new welcome sign was designed. After ten years of sitting unused, the Hood River Ranger District Work Center has reopened the Emil Creek Loop Trail to local school groups and community members.