

[From Fall 2003]

## **YCC Summer 2003 Accomplishments**

The 2003 Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) finished a very successful summer on August 22. The camp began June 30, with five enrollees: Sterling Valentine, Leslie Levin, Chris Shenton, Andrew Levin, and Joshua Merritt. These five enrollees were recruited from the local area to participate in this eight week camp. I served as coordinator for the program and Rachel Dayton served as their Group Leader while in the field.

The crew spent much time and effort maintaining refuge trails to enhance visitor experiences. Pedestrian crosswalks and parking spots were repainted, brush was cleared away from signs, and low-hanging limbs were removed from bike trails to increase visibility. Enrollees were also responsible for clearing brush from and mulching the Environmental Education Trail.

A major project of the YCC crew was removal, repairs, and replacement of pony fence on the North Wash Flats. This fence is essential, because it protects piping plover and other shorebird nesting in the North Wash Flats. The enrollees took down the old, misted and torn fence and replaced it with new, secure fencing.

Throughout this rainy summer, the enrollees worked extremely hard to help the entire refuge staff complete many tasks. The crew was able to lend a hand whenever necessary with smaller projects such as repairing and replacing Delmarva Peninsula Fox squirrel nest boxes and swallow nest boxes, hauling and dumping scrap lumber and assisting with mass mailings.

The primary accomplishment of the 2003 YCC crew was the construction of the bike boardwalk, connecting the bike path from Beach Road to the visitor center. With assistance from staff members Jeff Marshall and Jim Dayton, the enrollees were able to build the boardwalk from the ground up. The crew took on this monumental construction job, from placing the posts in the ground and setting the joists, to completing the decking and the handrails. The completed project was fabulous!

The hard work and determination of each participant helped to make this summer's camp a success.

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