PURPOSE
To build the next generation of conservation leaders by providing a suite of transformational learning experiences for youth who lack access to similar opportunities.

Youth Leadership Adventures
creates a gateway for youth to jumpstart their lifelong engagement with nature, stewardship and community and offers an opportunity for personal, academic, and professional growth

Empowerment
through civic action, stewardship, sustainable behaviors and workforce opportunities

Connection
to nature, wilderness and public lands

Knowledge
about ecology, field science and climate change through firsthand experiences

Leadership
through effective communication and public speaking skills and outdoor fundamentals

NORTH CASCADES INSTITUTE
YOUTH LEADERSHIP ADVENTURES

FORMAT
Youth Leadership Adventures backcountry courses take place in North Cascades National Park and Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Transportation to the program site, gear and food is provided. Key program components in 2014 included:

8-day OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP COURSES FOR 14-16 YR OLDS
16-day SCIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY COURSES FOR 16-18 YR OLDS
Year Round MENTORSHIP & STEWARDSHIP for all ALUMNI
3-day YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE for all ALUMNI
1-day REUNION IN SEATTLE for all ALUMNI
2014 AT A GLANCE

$985-$1,845 Tuition

137 applications received
96 students participated in courses
100 youth and families attended the reunion
60 students attended the Youth Leadership Conference
90% of students received financial assistance
76% of students qualified as underserved
14-19 age range of participants

PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES

Bainbridge Island
Bellingham
Burlington
Concrete
Deming
Edmonds
Everett
Everson
Forks
Gig Harbor
La Conner
Lake Forest Park
Leavenworth
Lynnwood
Maple Falls
Marysville
Mount Vernon
Mountlake Terrace
Mukilteo
Oak Harbor

Olympia
Puyallup
Seattle
Sedro-Woolley
Shoreline
Snohomish
Spokane
Tukwila
Tulalip
University Place
Yakima
Astoria, OR
Cannon Beach, OR
Forest Grove, OR
Warrenton, OR
**NEW & NOTABLE**

**Value Added**
Bellingham students can earn 0.25 elective credits after completing all requirements of the 16-day Science & Sustainability course.

**Ripple Effect**
Science & Sustainability students will lead their own service projects — reaching an additional 600 people with environmental education — before the summer of 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2,016 hours of hands-on stewardship completed in courses included:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>700 sedges planted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 miles of trails brushed and maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 toilet constructed and 1 decommissioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,500 feet of social trails decommissioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 sq feet of illegal camp space decommissioned</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 lbs of trash removed from the backcountry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 fire rings installed and 2 decommissioned</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 hours of citizen science data collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,500 feet of new trail constructed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 lbs of exotic species removed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 tent pads constructed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 drainage ditches built</td>
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**PATH FOR YOUTH**
We believe that hands-on learning about the environment should begin in childhood and continue throughout life. Young people engaged with the Institute are introduced to the beauty and wonder of the Northwest through our challenging educational activities, mentored throughout their experience and always have next-step opportunities available.

**30**
Alumni were offered next-step opportunities through the Institute or our partners, including: work for SCA Community Crews in Seattle, employment at Ross Lake Resort, an AmeriCorps VISTA position and more!

**Crystal** wanted to become the first person in her Puerto Rican-American family to attend college, but didn’t know where to start. Motivated by her involvement with our Kulshan Creek Neighborhood program in Skagit Valley, she took the 16-day YLA course where she met peers and mentors that inspired her to pursue her dreams and share the value of public lands with others. With continued support after her trip, Crystal led an amazing service project to benefit other kids from Kulshan Creek and told her story in front of 100+ people at an Institute event. Now she is finishing up high school and beginning to apply to colleges. Crystal’s time with us in the North Cascades will influence her for the rest of her life — no matter where her path leads. We can’t wait to see what opportunities open up next!

“ I haven’t had the easiest life growing up....After this summer I felt like I could do anything! The leadership skills and confidence I gained is something I will never forget.”

— Crystal Sierra
Student perceptions tell an important story about the Institute’s impact. Survey data is collected around YLA’s four program objectives: leadership, empowerment, connection, and knowledge. Please ask for more information.

“From YLA, I learned that I can actually speak publicly! I could not do that in school at all. For me to get up in front of the sponsors at North Cascades took all my courage, but with the help of all my group I managed to do it. After it was over, I felt stronger as a person and more confident in myself. Overall, the experience at the North Cascades was so amazing and it taught me more about who I am and what I am capable of accomplishing.”

— YLA student
**Objective 3**

**EMPOWERMENT**

Instill a sense of responsibility and ownership so that students feel empowered to make a difference through stewardship, civic action, sustainable behaviors and workforce opportunities.

**Increased Empowerment:**

- 94% reported seeing opportunities to be involved in creating a better future for their community and the environment.
- 94% reported feeling motivated to help create a better future for their community and the environment.
- 100% reported that they understand how their actions can positively or negatively affect their community and the environment.

**Objective 4**

**Knowledge**

About ecology, field science and climate change through firsthand experiences.

**Increased Knowledge:**

- 88% reported enjoying science after the program.
- 91% reported that they understand the impacts of climate change.
- 67% indicated interest in learning more about the impacts of climate change.

As a result of YLA, I definitely feel the need to better the environment around my community. The course has taught me just how powerful nature can be, and by preserving the wilderness, we are preserving earth’s most powerful force.”

— YLA student

More information: [www.ncascades.org/youth](http://www.ncascades.org/youth)

Contact: (360) 854-2599 or nci@ncascades.org
“Since YLA, coming home from the North Cascades Park has been an overall eye opening experience! When I had gotten home I couldn't help but to notice all the litter and polluted air around me. I was moved to post educational Leave No Trace flyers. I am planning to start a garbage pick-up soon!”

“Since YLA, I feel very motivated to improve the community and the environment because I feel there is a gap in the community and my school's population with their knowledge and caring about the environment. I would like to strengthen this connection.”

“You run an amazing program and it gets better every year and it shows in the kids. It was neat seeing them get off the bus the first day and then seeing how they change over the course of their trip. They get back on the bus a different person.”

– Seth Greenfield, Permit Administrator, Mt. Baker- Snoqualmie National Forest

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