



# Summer Programs Summary

## 2010

The OSM/VISTA Teams







## OSM/VISTA Summer Program Members get things done Across the Country



Early in the spring of 2010 the OSM/VISTA Teams had a few OSM Intern dollars left from the previous year and was waiting anxiously to hear about the possibility of VISTA Summer Associates. Three months later we had 65 summer positions in the field and a total of 75 members serving in 2010 – all thanks to VISTA Summer Associate positions awarded to the team, the OSM money, AmeriCorps Education Awards that came through the Southwest Conservation Corps and a very busy Summer Programs Coordinator. As a result, the 2010 Summer Programs were able to supplement the capacity-building work of the two OSM/VISTA Teams (Appalachian Coal County Team and Western Hard Rock Watershed Team) with 65 Summer Program Members and five Washington Center Interns working for me in Washington D.C., serving in 14 States (PA, WV, OH, MD, DC, KY, VA, AL, TN, IA, IL, IN, CO and NM). Thanks to the 8-10 week dedication and determination of all the Summer Program Members and their sponsoring organizations, the 2010 Summer Program was a great success. This report briefly summarizes the accomplishments of each individual OSM/VISTA Team Summer Program Member.

The OSM/VISTA Teams are supported by an innovative partnership among the Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), concerned with environmental reclamation; AmeriCorps VISTA, committed to fighting poverty; and local community improvement/watershed groups. The mission of the Teams is to assist rural communities impoverished by environmental degradation and its consequences in making their home-place-watersheds healthier places to live and work. Full contact information for the Teams Coordinator and Summer Programs Coordinator can be found on the back cover of this report.

OSM/VISTA Summer Associates, OSM Interns and Washington Center Interns **logged a total of 23,694 service hours – more than 11 years of full-time work** -- as they worked on projects that included water monitoring, coordinating the creation of outdoor classrooms, conducting outreach, organizing festivals and countless others.

- Of the 63 sites served, 16 were new to the OSM/VISTA Teams, having never sponsored an OSM/VISTA, and about half of those new sites hope to apply for a full-year OSM/VISTA.
- Two Summer Associates are now employed by their host sites
- One Summer Associate stayed on with his site, becoming a full-year OSM/VISTA.

In the following pages, prepared without VISTA support, we are proud to present the individual accomplishments of our Summer Program Members.

-T. Allan Comp, Ph.D., Coordinator: OSM/VISTA Teams

## Outreach

### Schuylkill Headwaters Association, Pottsville, PA

**Summer Associate: Alexandra Raring**

**Project Supervisor: Bill Reichert**

"I have always enjoyed the local river and want other people to enjoy and appreciate it just as much as I do," said Summer Associate Alexandra Raring who spent her summer building the capacity of the Schuylkill Headwaters Association by reaching out to the community and coordinating the group's efforts to bring area residents outdoors and together. During her term, Alexandra designed a new sign for the Newkirk Mine Tunnel, redesigned posters that Schuylkill Headwaters uses at various events, helped organize a fundraising race called the Wabash Dash, and helped coordinate an environmental film festival. The race will serve as a source of income for Schuylkill Headwaters, and both the race and film festival will encourage people to get outdoors and be active while learning about the organization and environmental stewardship.



## Healthy Stream Projects

### Schuylkill County Conservation District, Pottsville, PA

**Summer Associate: Kirby Steck**

**Project Supervisor: Wayne Lehman**

Kirby Steck, Summer Associate with Schuylkill County Conservation District, worked this summer to construct a number of fish habitat structures and stream bank restoration projects. His efforts will increase the fish populations and help guard against erosion. According to Kirby, his greatest accomplishment was teaching youth about the environment and getting them involved with their water monitoring program. "It really felt good to get these kids interested in the environment and show them they can have fun while also learning," Kirby said.



## Cornucopia of Community Development

### Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, Ashley, PA

**Summer Associate: Shawn Jones**

**Project Supervisor: Robert Hughes**

Summer Associate Shawn Jones wore many different hats while working with Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation. He coordinated the creation of a community garden and helped write grants, create maps, lead tours through abandoned mine lands, and clean up illegal dump sites. Influenced by his experience, he realized that he wanted to continue this course of work in Pennsylvania. "I decided I wanted to transfer from [college in] Montana to finish school in Pennsylvania and get a job here to start making my own impacts," Shawn said.



## Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Northumberland County Conservation District, Sunbury, PA

**Summer Associate: Dana James**  
**Project Supervisor: Jaci Harner**

Working in the field, Summer Associate Dana James not only collected data on water quality for Northumberland County Conservation District, she also worked to remediate local abandoned mine lands. Dana located and documented 120 acid mine drainage discharge sites and worked on five stream bank stabilization projects to stop erosion and sedimentation. Dana enjoyed her summer of working behind the scenes. “Being able to go out with my supervisor, Jaci, into the field and directly work on water issues has enhanced my desire to find a profession down the road where I get to work out in the field, and hopefully on water issues,” she said.



## Community Outreach and Revitalization Brownsville Area Revitalization Project, Brownsville, PA

**Summer Associate: Colleen Schmidt**  
**Project Supervisor: Dennis Cremonese**

For Colleen Schmidt, Summer Associate with Brownsville Area Revitalization Corporation, community outreach was not just about getting the word out — the Brownsville Area Community Festival, which she organized, was all about fun. “Everywhere you looked, you saw crowds of happy, energetic, entertained, smiling people,” Colleen said. In addition to planning and organizing the festival, she was involved in creating a book cover, writing press releases and a magazine ad, and organizing a computer class. While working on many projects at once, she said, “I have gained great qualities and have also perfected my organization and multi-tasking abilities.”



## Working with Youth and Farmers to Improve Water Quality Armstrong Conservation District, Kittanning, PA

**Summer Associate: Evan Goldstrohm**  
**Project Supervisor: Dave Rupert**

Evan Goldstrohm, Summer Associate with Armstrong Conservation District, believes, “the only way we can truly protect the environment is to teach future generations about why it is important to protect our natural resources.” With that in mind, he spent a good part of his summer teaching children about the ways to tell if a stream is healthy and what can be done to improve water quality. In addition to his work with youth, he also worked with local farmers to help improve water quality in the watershed where they live and work and helped construct fish habitat structures in a local lake. Eager to help Armstrong Conservation District, Evan decided to spend a year there serving as an OSM/VISTA.



## Mapping the History of Coal

### Eastern Coal Regional Roundtable, Mullens, WV

**Summer Associate: Jason Fink**  
**Project Supervisor: Dvon Duncan**

History of coal in Appalachia is rich and deep, but it's only compiled at a state level. Jason Fink, Summer Associate with Eastern Coal Regional Roundtable sought to fix that. Jason compiled a database, bringing together the 100 year coal history of all the Appalachian states. By creating maps and compiling data, Jason painted a tapestry of Appalachia's history of coal mining.



## Environmental Education

### Northern Panhandle RC&D, McMechen, WV

**Summer Associate: Brittany Velazquez**  
**Project Supervisor: Howard Coffield**

Between leading stream cleanups and creating environmental education programs with Northern Panhandle RC&D, Summer Associate Brittany Velazquez accomplished a lot. Volunteers came out to assist Brittany in her two monitoring events this summer, which were a huge success. Her activities developing an environmental education program had an even greater impact. For the children, she created lesson plans to be implemented in schools, but she got something out of it as well. "This may be a calling for me to teach, to be on my feet, to engage students in the subject matter," Brittany said.



## Volunteer Management

### North Fork Watershed Project, Davis, WV

**Summer Associate: Evan Supak**  
**Project Supervisor: Athey Lutz**

Evan Supak, Summer Associate with North Fork Watershed Project, spent his summer surveying local streams. His work mapping out the North Fork Watershed provides crucial data for stream monitoring in the future and it will be useful for outreach to the community. Through his outreach efforts, Evan was able to recruit volunteers with whom he worked to further the efforts of the North Fork Watershed Project. Evan looks forward to continuing his environmental work. "I had a wonderful time with AmeriCorps, and I would be interested in future environmental oriented opportunities they may have," he said.



## Stream Education

### Friends of Decker's Creek, Dellslow, WV

**Summer Associate: Josh Hetu**

**Project Supervisor: Sarah Veselka**

Josh Hetu was surprised by the local youth who volunteered to help monitor water quality. While collecting macroinvertebrates around Deckers Creek, some children knew more about the creek than he expected. “[Their interest] made me realize how important my job with Friends of Decker’s Creek is—to educate the youth and surrounding community about the importance, beauty, and recreational opportunities the creek holds.” With this in mind, Josh led volunteer water monitoring of the creek for 10 weeks and created four videos to explain the importance of water quality. Regarding the program, Josh said, “the work you do is amazing and the opportunities to go places to make a difference are endless.”



## Exceptional Volunteer Management

### Morris Creek Watershed Association, Montgomery, WV

**Summer Associate: Stephen White**

**Project Supervisor: Mike King**

Volunteer participation for some communities is sometimes hard to come by. Stephen White, Summer Associate with Morris Creek Watershed Association knows this and made the most out of every opportunity he had. On one occasion, 19 volunteers from out of town were doing construction at a playground. They were so inspired by Stephen’s leadership that they not only completed the scheduled project, they moved on to a different project and worked on reinforcing a dam.



## Photographic Outreach

### Appalachian Coal Country Team, Beckley, WV

**Summer Associate: Joel Hager**

**Project Supervisor: April Trent**

OSM/VISTAs often organize events like tree plantings, stream clean ups, or public forums discussing important community issues. Usually, these events go unnoticed by the greater public, despite their local impact. Joel Hager sought to fix that. Throughout the summer, Joel attended 21 events hosted by OSM/VISTAs and took high quality photographs. These photos were then compiled onto five large posters, which are now on display at the Office of Surface Mining’s South Interior Building in Washington, D.C. His effort to display the work of others is clearly a boon for national service as a whole, and especially the Appalachian Coal Country Team.



## Video Publicity

### Appalachian Coal Country Team, Beckley, WV

**Summer Associate: Jesse Mursky-Fuller**

**Project Supervisor: April Trent**

What exactly do OSM/VISTAs do? Many may ask this question, and Jesse Mursky-Fuller sought to answer it. Jesse personally created six videos showing exactly what work was being done by OSM/VISTAs in different communities. From organizing community development projects such as the creation of running paths, to recruiting volunteers for water monitoring, or overseeing a crucial health-improvement project, Jesse displayed what the ACCT is all about. These videos will be used to educate many on the work of the ACCT and are already accessible on YouTube. Jesse was happy with his work. "I believe this position has reinforced my plans for both the near and long-term future," he said.



## Large Scale Partnership Building

### Appalachian Coal Country Team, Beckley, WV

**Summer Associate: Monica Freeland**

**Project Supervisor: April Trent**

Monica Freeland knows all about partnerships. Her work engaging community organizations around Appalachia was seen at the Appalachian Regional Network Summit, where she represented the Team in a poster session, discussing the challenges that plague the communities in the region. "It was through my initial experience as an intern for ACCT Coordinator Dr. Comp that I realized my own capabilities and power to make a concrete difference in the communities impacted by environmental and economic degradation," Monica said. "What I have learned as a Summer Associate will provide me with the tools to continue to be a valuable contributor to the progress of the entire OSM/VISTA Initiative."



## Landscape Architecture

### Appalachian Coal Country Team, Beckley, WV

**Summer Associate: Mary Roley**

**Project Supervisor: April Trent**

Grundy, VA was in need of a major overhaul. Its economy was declining, the community was deteriorating and the environment was in poor shape. Mary Roley, Summer Associate with the Appalachian Coal Country Team, stepped in to come up with a plan. Working closely with the city of Grundy, she formed and presented a design that will spur local business development, create a river walk trail, and provide scenic opportunities that will revitalize Grundy. Her work pushed Grundy in the right direction towards being a more sustainable community. Mary also designed and built an outdoor environmental center for the ACCT Support Office, installing a wetland, a vegetable garden, a peace garden and a native wildflower bed.



## Youth Engagement

### Sunday Creek Watershed Group, Glouster, OH

**Summer Associate: Alden Gilliom**

**Project Supervisor: Amber Earnhardt**

Summer Associate Alden Gilliom had a busy summer with the Sunday Creek Watershed Group, organizing volunteer clean-ups, community meetings and library programs concerning water quality. Her proudest achievement, however, was planning and running environmental Day Camps. "One child in particular was memorable... he came up to me after a field trip and said he wanted to make streams healthier when he grew up," Alden said. The child's enthusiasm demonstrated, "concrete proof to me that what this group is doing with my help is really making a difference," she said.



## Volunteer Water Monitor Team Management

### Savage River Watershed Association, Frostburg, MD

**Summer Associate: Matthew Sandee**

**Project Supervisor: Laura Haynes**

Organizing water monitoring events this summer, Matthew Sandee, Summer Associate with Savage River Watershed Association, was amazed by the amount of interest in stream health. "It was very inspiring to see the many people that took time out of their regular schedules to come out and volunteer for this kind of thing," Matthew said. He was also involved in construction of an education center/field station for the community. The project will help the community by serving as a hub of knowledge for the watershed and how it is affected by human impacts.



## Community Festival Organization

### Youghiogheny River Watershed Association, Okland, MD

**Summer Associate: Annika Lantz**

**Project Supervisor: James Stanton**

Annika Lantz was meant to assist the Yough River Festival's Coordinator with preparations for the River Festival. But, the coordinator resigned—pushing Annika into the driver's seat. Though initially beset with difficulties, Annika nonetheless organized a successful festival. Everything ran as planned, from vendors to rubber duck races to raffles, the festival went off without a hitch. The Youghiogheny River Watershed Association got great publicity and attracted local interest due to Annika's efforts.

**YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER FESTIVAL**  
friendville community park  
saturday july 24, 2010 3:00-10:00 pm

**events**

- 3:00 pm Electrofishing and Stream Ecology Demonstration  
Alan Klotz, MD DNR - Fisheries Service
- 4:00 pm Scales & Tales  
MD DNR - Maryland Park Service
- 5:00 pm Nature hike with Kevin Dodge  
Director of Garrett College Natural Resources and Wildlife Technology Program
- 5:00 pm Dances of Universal Peace

Raffle and 50/50  
Great FOOD  
Art & Craft Vendors  
Boater Swap  
FREE Raft Rides  
courtesy of Wilderness Voyagers  
Children's Art Activities  
courtesy of Sacred Meadow Montessori  
Art & Photo Contest

## OSM/VISTA Project History

Department of the Interior/Office of Surface Mining, Washington, DC

**Summer Intern: Aviva Berezin**

**Project Supervisor: T Allan Comp, PhD**

Since 2002, the Appalachian Coal Country Team, a partnership of the Office of Surface Mining and AmeriCorps VISTA has been working in 8 states throughout Appalachia. 182 VISTAs have been hired to help communities in these states, and each has made an impact. To measure this impact, Summer Intern Aviva Berezin with the Office of Surface Mining completed a survey detailing the results. This survey included information on the growth of the program, what has been accomplished, and its impact. This survey was presented to the Office of Surface Mining and will be used to assess the impact of the program at large.



## Office Sustainability

Department of the Interior/Office of Surface Mining, Washington, DC

**Summer Intern: Erika Baldwin**

**Project Supervisor: T Allan Comp, PhD**

Office sustainability and environmental health go hand in hand. Erika Baldwin, OSM Summer Intern with the Office of Surface Mining set out to create a guide for organizations to increase their sustainability through implementing environmental health programs. She researched different programs that organizations can adopt and wrote the guide. This 106 page guidebook (of which there is a condensed version) has been sent to federal offices and other partners of the Office of Surface Mining. The hope is that these organizations will be more environmentally friendly and will increase their own sustainability.



## VISTA Interviews

Department of the Interior/Office of Surface Mining, Washington, DC

**Summer Intern: Trevor Warzecha**

**Project Supervisor: T Allan Comp, PhD**

Many OSM/VISTAs decide one year of service with the Appalachian Coal Country Team is not enough. Trevor Warzecha, OSM Summer Intern with the Office of Surface Mining, spent his summer investigating what inspired these VISTAs to serve on the Team for a second year. "The most helpful and memorable experience that I had this summer was the chance to see and learn about the communities that the ACCT OSM/VISTAs worked with," Trevor said. Completing a summary of all these interviews, Trevor reported his data to the Office of Surface Mining, so that they could see what motivates some team members to serve and continue serving with the OSM/VISTA Teams.



## Outreach to Public Officials

### Friends of the OSM/VISTA Teams, Washington, DC

**Summer Associate: Peter Mattson**

**Project Supervisor: April Trent**

Community organizations throughout Appalachia are sometimes ignored by public officials, especially those at the state and national level. Peter Mattson, Summer Associate with Friends of the OSM/VISTA Teams sought to fix that. His main goal was to find ways for community organizations to better contact their representatives. He did this by developing an email/letter campaign, as well as a guide to describe the best way for an organization to reach out to a public official. He strived consistently to increase the dialogue between community organizations and public officials, and achieved this by making it easier for community organizations to initiate this dialogue.



## Alternate Break Programs

### Department of the Interior/Office of Surface Mining, Washington, DC

**Summer Intern: Jason Pietroski**

**Project Supervisor: T Allan Comp, PhD**

There are many different methods for small watershed organizations to improve their communities—an effective one that is not often used is the Alternate Break Program. Jason Pietroski, OSM Summer Intern with the Office of Surface Mining, remedied this by researching the program and creating a guide so that organizations can use his work in the future. Along the way, Jason’s eyes were opened to the needs of some communities. “It provided me, in a way, a sense of what I am fighting for. I am fighting to improve the welfare of the citizens affected by abandoned mine land in their community through cultural and environmental redevelopment,” he said.



## Volunteer Water Monitor Training

### Appalachia-Science for Public Interest, Mt. Vernon, KY

**Summer Associate: Dustin Lee**

**Project Supervisor: Deb Bledsoe**

Growing up near a creek plagued with acid mine drainage, Dustin Lee knows all too well the importance of water quality. He joined Appalachia-Science for Public Interest as a Summer Associate to make a difference in Laurel County, KY. Not only did he test the water and assess the area, he trained local volunteers to perform those duties. Although he is confident that his work will be sustained long into the future, he was surprised by the lack of education about water quality issues. As he worked with volunteers in the field, he “began to realize that people care very much about water quality issues, but many don’t know where to turn for help or resources.”



## Youth Outreach

### Lonesome Pine Soil and Water Conservation District, Clintwood, VA

**Summer Associate: Bryan McCowan**

**Project Supervisor: Bobbi Rasnick & Landon Johnson**

Engaging youth does not only happen in schools. Summer Associate Bryan McCowan realized this while serving with Lonesome Pine Soil and Water Conservation District, where he spent his time organizing and running activities that specifically targeted youth. During his summer in Clintwood, VA, he interacted with hundreds of children at local fairs and festivals, teaching them about watershed issues, how to conserve resources and how to help make a difference in the community. Clearly seeing that youth can make a difference, Bryan was happy with the work he did with Lonesome Pine Soil and Water Conservation District and plans to regularly volunteer with the organization in the future.



## Water Monitoring Program Expansion

### Friends of the Russell Fork, Haysi, VA

**Summer Associate: Rodney "Lance" Compton**

**Project Supervisor: Gene Counts**

Friends of the Russell Fork needed to expand their water monitoring program, but did not have the manpower to perform such a task. Enter Lance Compton, Summer Associate. Due to Lance's work, six new sites, each carefully selected as appropriate water monitoring locations, were found and successfully monitored. Lance provided a much needed asset for Friends of the Russell Fork, and helped them plan for the future of their organization.



## Building Capacity

### Choctawhatchee River Keepers, Inc., Banks, AL

**Summer Associate: Amanda Saad**

**Project Supervisor: Michael Mullen**

Summer Associate Amanda Saad spent the majority of her term looking up land parcels in the Choctawhatchee River basin and entering the landowners' information into a log book and database. Thanks to Amanda, that database now contains 1,150 landowners—information that will be used to help the Riverkeepers build capacity and recruit partners for future projects. "I feel my time spent as a Summer Associate was very productive and I can't wait to see what the future holds for Choctawhatchee River Keepers, Inc."



## Connecting with the Media Woodland Community Land Trust, Clairfield, TN

**Summer Associate: Amanda Lambdin**  
**Project Supervisor: Tonia Brookman**

Summer Associate Amanda Lambdin assisted the Woodland Community Land Trust by connecting the organization with area media outlets and building partnerships with local crafters and musicians. These partners will participate in community events and craft sales. Amanda exceeded Woodland's expectations by contacting more media sources and local crafters than the initial target—she reached out to 53 media outlets and 42 artisans. "I am hoping that my completed project will assist the organization by freeing up time for other significant tasks and by making the preparation of future events easier," Amanda said. "The success of these [markets, craft sales and community events] helps to stimulate the community by having local participation from vendors and buyers and will hopefully help to enhance the area and make it more appealing to outsiders."



## Creative Fundraising Boone Watershed Partnership, Elizabethton, TN

**Summer Associate: Katy Shuck**  
**Project Supervisor: Gary Barriger**

Katy Shuck, Summer Associate with Boone Watershed Partnership, realized that during these tough economic times, nonprofit organizations need to think creatively and raise funds in more diverse ways. Katy organized volunteers and coordinated a karaoke event that drew more than 60 people and raised more than \$650 for Boone Watershed Partnership. Not only was the event fun and successful, it was a great way for Boone Watershed Partnership to reach out to many different people who are not usually involved in environmental work. "My time with Boone Watershed Partnership has been educational, uplifting and overall a perfect way to spend my summer," Katy said.



## Partnership Building Middle Nolichucky Watershed Alliance, Greeneville, TN

**Summer Associate: Kirstie Gust**  
**Project Supervisor: Paul Hayden**

Kirstie Gust, Summer Associate with Middle Nolichucky Watershed Alliance, spent her summer building partnerships. Kirstie attended meetings with local and regional organizations and compiled information about them into a database for future use. This included business information, ways they could support Middle Nolichucky Watershed Alliance, and donation information. "[At one of these meetings] it was pointed out to me that I will make a difference because I actually want it; they said that the cause was right there in my eyes for anyone to see," Kirstie said. Kirstie made a difference for Middle Nolichucky Watershed Alliance because she was truly dedicated to the cause of capacity building.



## Surveying and Outreach

### Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District, Albia, IA

#### Summer Intern: Hilary Morris

#### Project Supervisor: Mervin McDanel

OSM Summer Intern Hilary Morris wanted to publicize the major environmental issues that plagued her region. First, though, she needed to get a better idea of the issues. “On the first day of my term with the summer program, I assisted employees with a pond survey. Following the survey, I helped staff draw up the plans for the pond,” Hilary said. From there, she surveyed five other environmentally damaged sites, which led to two published newspaper articles concerning the issues in the area.



## Abandoned Mine Land Documentation and Publicity

### Van Buren Soil and Water Conservation Board, Keosauqua, IA

#### Summer Intern: Phillip Wilson

#### Project Supervisor: Brad Klodt

“Some of these local land owners are great sources of knowledge and willing to help with just about anything,” said Phillip Wilson, OSM Summer Intern with Van Buren Soil and Water Conservation Board. Working with the local landowners who own abandoned mine sites, Phillip mapped all the past and present mining sites in the county. With this information, Phillip was able to get the word out about the environmental issues that go hand in hand with abandoned mine land. Phillip worked with the landowners and together they began the reclamation process.



## Raising Awareness of Acid Mine Drainage

### Wapello County Conservation Board, Bloomfield, IA

#### Summer Intern: Riley McDowell

#### Project Supervisor: Kurt Baker

Acid mine drainage was a major, yet overlooked issue in Wapello County, Iowa. OSM Summer Intern with the Wapello County Conservation Board Riley McDowell remedied that. Riley surveyed all 10 of the abandoned mine sites in Wapello County, taking water samples and collecting data at each site. Then, Riley used this data to write an article that was published in the local newspaper concerning his findings. He also contacted local organizations that could help with the reclamation of these areas and get projects for each site started depending on how dire the need was. Because of Riley’s efforts, acid mine drainage is no longer a little known issue and reclamation projects are underway.



## **Building Organizational Capacity Prairie Rivers Network, Champaign, IL**

**Summer Intern: Madeleine Mahan**  
**Project Supervisor: Traci Barkley**

Madeleine Mahan assembled watershed toolkits that will help organization members with volunteer management, public outreach, engaging the community, grant writing, and public speaking. These toolkits will be used by Prairie Rivers Network and distributed to partners throughout Illinois. In addition, Madeleine developed a stream monitoring program, which she personally tested to verify the usefulness. “The more I learn about coal mining and its effects, the more questions I have. It is a complex issue that seems to be from a different time, yet here we are- still dealing with it today,” Madeleine said.



## **Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation West Central Indiana Watershed Alliance, Farmersburg, IN**

**Summer Intern: Ginger Korinek**  
**Project Supervisor: Lisa Holscher**

Ginger Korinek, OSM Summer Intern, saw that there was a lack of information concerning abandoned mine lands and other sites that are environmentally damaged. So, she set out to map out all the places in her area that were in need of reclamation. Ginger succeeded and she believes that with the help of the state reclamation agency, these locations will soon be healthier. She also developed a water monitoring program and along the way went through some personal development. “The service I have done has enhanced my understanding of processes that occur within a watershed. This has increased my experience in this realm and enabled me to see different potential futures for myself,” she said.



## **Outdoor Education Blue River Watershed Group, Frisco, CO**

**Summer Associate: Nicolas Sears**  
**Project Supervisor: Steve Swanson**

What better way to teach community members about the environment than to have a classroom outside, surrounded by your subject? Nicolas Sears, Summer Associate with Blue River Watershed Group taught more than 30 participants, in multiple sessions in an outdoor classroom. Although the lectures were focused on children, one lecture turned into a question and answer session about the watershed and issues, which was a more mature subject, Nicolas said. Yet, following along with the discussion, Nicolas and the watershed group adjusted and provided answers to the many questions, getting more community members interested in the issues that Blue River Watershed Group was addressing.



## Volunteer Management

### Coal Creek Watershed Coalition, Crested Butte, CO

**Summer Associate: Kelly Haun**

**Project Supervisor: Anthony Poponi**

Kelly Haun, Summer Associate with Coal Creek Watershed Coalition recruited and organized volunteers to complete three projects over the summer. First, they installed an erosion control mat and reseeded 3,500 square feet along a hillside in the watershed. Second, they assessed sediment capture in 4 rock check dams, to see how much erosion was taking place. And third, they installed erosion control devices in 3 different locations around the watershed. "I feel my work has contributed to a greater cause and that is what being part of a community is all about," Kelly said.



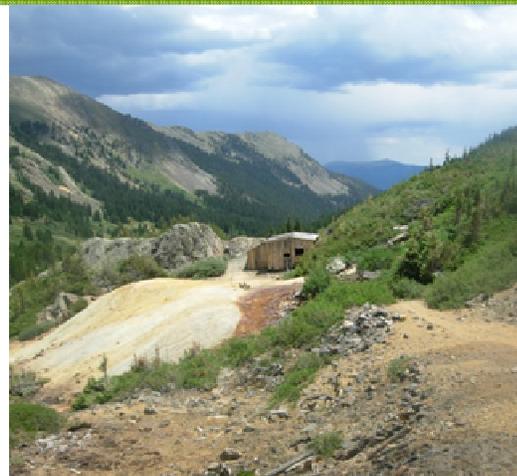
## Reclamation of Mine Land

### Coalition for the Upper South Platte, Lake George, CO

**Summer Associate: Lauren Barrows**

**Project Supervisor: Carol Ekarius**

The Upper South Platte Watershed has a long history of mining. Lauren Barrows, Summer Associate with the Coalition for the Upper South Platte, sparked future reclamation projects by collecting data. As a result of her work, the Coalition for the Upper South Platte now has the necessary data to begin projects that will beautify the area and increase environmental health. Reflecting on the history of mining in the area, Lauren said, "work that seemed harmless and was simply fueled by 'gold fever' and a supportive market now means serious remediation efforts and extensive clean up projects."



## Data Collection

### Colorado Watershed Association, Eagle, CO

**Summer Associate: Addie Van Zet**

**Project Supervisor: Jeff Crane & Curtis Hartenstine**

"It was really cool to see how much of a positive impact committed people can make in their community," said Addie Van Zet, Summer Associate with Colorado Watershed Association. To this end, Addie worked on collecting crucial data about the watershed from macro invertebrate in the streams, to geomorphologic surveys, to soil samples. Then, Addie carefully filed her findings into a database, so that future members of the Colorado Watershed Association will be able to easily review her work. "This opportunity provided me with great experience and concrete skills which I plan on putting to use in the future," she said.



## Teaching the Community Durango Adult Education Center, Durango, CO

**Summer Associate: Daniel Quinlan**  
**Project Supervisor: Sarah Macy & Kelly Quach**

Through the Durango Adult Education Center, Summer Associate Daniel Quinlan learned the importance of being a good teacher. “[One student] said that no one had ever believed in him before and that my support helped him discover that he owes it to himself and to his son to do the best in life,” Daniel said. As a teacher and a mentor, Daniel did not just help community members get their degrees, he also provided support and guidance. Though still working towards his teaching license, Daniel was an effective educator to many adult students.



## Watershed Health Assessment and Presentations Eagle River Watershed Council, Avon, CO

**Summer Associate: Ashley Fransen**  
**Project Supervisor: Melissa MacDonald**

Collecting data on watershed health is important, but to make a difference it needs to be shared with the public. Ashley Fransen, Summer Associate with Eagle River Watershed Council, led data collection in the community monitoring 40 abandoned mines. She compiled that data and led eight presentations for the public. As a follow up, Ashley took a group of concerned citizens to a site polluted with acid mine drainage to show them the effects of improper reclamation. Impressed by her activities, a local citizen said, “we are the watershed’s watchdogs. I hope that my ability to go into the field and assess possibly troubled areas will give the Eagle River Watershed Council water quality information.”



## Water Education Program Development Eagle River Watershed Council, Avon, CO

**Summer Associate: Kelsey Elwood**  
**Project Supervisor: Melissa MacDonald**

Developing a water educational curriculum, currently in use at local schools, was just the beginning for Kelsey Elwood, Summer Associate with Eagle River Watershed Council. She organized multiple events to reach out to many different demographics in her community. One event was the screening of the film “Tapped”, a documentary about bottled water. Kelsey advertised heavily for the film showing and presented at an event specifically designed to raise funds for her organization. “I am most proud of the community’s response to the film. It makes me feel like my efforts in community outreach can have a positive effect even after my term as a Summer Associate expires,” Kelsey said.



## Building Community Gardens

### The Garden Project of Southwest Colorado, Hesperus, CO

**Summer Associate: Annie Chensoff**

**Project Supervisor: Shari Fitzgerald and Darcy Craig**

“The community garden has livened up a once dead plot and brings awareness to local food issues,” said Annie Chensoff, a Summer Associate who began her summer by reestablishing a community garden. Annie took her work further by expanding the number of gardens in her community, finding and working on establishing four other sites. She also worked on partnering with other organizations so that more community members, such as local schools and the Girl Scouts could take part in gardening. “I feel like I have made my community a better place and would not have been able to accomplish that without being a Summer Associate,” Annie said.



## Financial Stability

### Gunnison Community Garden Group/Mountain Roots, Gunnison, CO

**Summer Associate: Colleen Smith**

**Project Supervisor: Anthony Poponi & Rose Tocke**

Colleen Smith submitted three grants and coordinated multiple fundraising events as the Summer Associate with Gunnison Community Garden Group and Mountain Roots. However, her greatest achievement was establishing Gunnison Community Garden Group as an official nonprofit with 501(c)(3) status, which will enable more grant support in the future. Through her efforts, Colleen was able to award two scholarships. “The scholarships allowed them to participate in Gunnison’s Parks and Recreation’s Youth Garden Camp. The money was raised by selling donated local produce at our weekly Farmers Markets,” Colleen said.



## Creating Sustainability

### Girl Scouts of Colorado, Durango, CO

**Summer Associate: Sahara Mendez**

**Project Supervisor: Karen Rose**

“Our younger generation is becoming more valuable as our Earth gets older. The more educational fun ways to get the children involved will help out with the sustainability of our community and Earth,” said Sahara Mendez, Summer Associate with Girl Scouts of Colorado. With this in mind, Sahara worked feverishly to build the capacity of the Girl Scouts of Colorado. Between writing six grants applications and organizing substantial volunteer activity, such as community gardening and educational programs, she made a difference.



## Local Outreach

### Mountain Studies Institute, Durango, CO

**Summer Associate: Jay Weekly**

**Project Supervisor: Koren Nydick**

Jay Weekly has a passion for photography, as well as the outdoors. To this end, he joined the Mountain Studies Institute as a Summer Associate to increase their visibility. Jay took pictures to document the area in which Mountain Studies Institute serves and submitted his photos for publication in multiple media venues such as newspapers and social networking sites. He also created more than 50 handwritten postcards for fundraising activities, and he distributed countless letters of support to local organizations for partnership purposes.



## Event Planning

### Gunnison River Festival, Gunnison, CO

**Summer Associate: Angie Mauldin**

**Project Supervisor: Anthony Poponi**

Summer Associate Angie Mauldin saw an opportunity as the Event Coordinator of Gunnison River Festival. She researched other local festivals around the country, so that Gunnison River Festival could learn from the successes of others. Then, to make sure funds were secured, she contacted businesses to sponsor the Festival, finding 62 sponsors in all, as well as organizing and implementing a fundraising event. "What happened to me over this time deepens my passion for the rivers and streams I love so dearly. I shared these times with new people I met on the trail and encouraged them to explore and protect these fragile ecosystems," Angie said.



## Volunteer Training

### Colorado River Watch, Denver, CO

**Summer Associate: Shayna Miller**

**Project Supervisor: Michaela Taylor**

"I have really enjoyed being out in the field and getting out and exploring the different communities, as well as the volunteers that make up the program I volunteered for," said Shayna Miller, Summer Associate with River Watch. Miller helped plan, organize, and coordinate River Watch's volunteer training program. Many different volunteers were trained to perform crucial duties for River Watch, which will build capacity for the future of the organization. On a personal note, Shayna said, "I have had my eyes opened to the realities of the hardships faced by small non-profit groups and the communities that they serve."



## Mycelium Growth Science

Upper South Platte Watershed Association, Lakewood, CO

**Summer Associate: Danielle Loo**

**Project Supervisor: Karen Berry**

Working with mycelium growth experiments, Danielle Loo, Summer Associate with Upper South Platte Watershed Association in Jefferson County, made some amazing discoveries. Using an uncommon soil to grow mycelium, she helped discover new ways to grow and farm mushrooms. “As a result of all our hard work, our experiment flourished because of our initial efforts. It showed me that building a strong foundation leads to promising ends,” she said.



## Team Support

Western Hardrock Watershed Team, Durango, CO

**Summer Associate: Abbie Bremer**

**Project Supervisor: Cora McCold**

Abbie Bremer, Summer Associate with the Western Hardrock Watershed Team provided necessary support for her organization. Abbie updated the reporting process used by the entire team, prepared the budget and assisted with the planning of the WHWT Fall Training. She also took a more active role, working with Team members who had questions and concerns. “Some VISTAs reported later that they really appreciated my help and that I had given them valuable information,” she said.



## Grant Writing

Western Hardrock Watershed Team, Durango, CO

**Summer Associate: Jorie Emory**

**Project Supervisor: Cora McCold**

“It has been so inspiring to work with people who see the wonderful potential for growth and expansion of the Western Hardrock Watershed Team,” mused Jorie Emory, Summer Associate with the Western Hardrock Watershed Team. Jorie spent her summer submitting grants for her organization, so that they might spread their inspiration to others. Having submitted more than five grants to major foundations, Jorie truly has made a difference with her time.



## Providing Interpretive Services to Women in Need La Plata Unity Project, Durango, CO

**Summer Associate: Maria Elena Sholes**  
**Project Supervisor: Paulette Church**

There's a tremendous demand for interpreting services both in the medical field and on an everyday basis. Summer Associate Maria Elena Sholes helped to meet that need. Maria helped Spanish speakers by interpreting when they needed to do things like purchase a car, talk to their employers about better financial remuneration or visit doctors. "All of these experiences took the Summer Program to a whole new level," Maria said. "I found myself talking to lawyers, immigration service organizations and billing departments in order to help these people who were left out and could not be a productive part of the system." Maria accomplished great things like assisting a client in filing for a charity medical bill payment, which erased her \$6,500 emergency room bill; interpreting during the deliveries of two babies; and coordinating the medical visits for a new cancer patient.



## Creating a Marketing Plan Gila Conservation Coalition, Silver City, NM

**Summer Associate: Gabrielle Martinez**  
**Project Supervisor: Allyson Siwik**

Gabrielle Martinez, after her time working as a Summer Associate with the Gila Conservation Coalition, has a leg up for a future in graphic design and marketing. "My time spent as a Summer Associate has been very educational and the knowledge I have acquired will definitely help me in the future," she said. Creating advertisements for newspapers, making and distributing postcards, and creating brochures and posters were valuable experiences for Gabrielle and crucial marketing for the Gila Conservation Coalition.



## Acquiring a Volunteer Workforce Gila Conservation Coalition, Silver City, NM

**Summer Intern: April Lee**  
**Project Supervisor: Allyson Siwik**

April Lee, OSM Summer Intern with the Gila Conservation Coalition knew that the reclamation projects for her organization, such as tree plantings and illegal dump cleanups needed a larger workforce than they had. She spent the summer recruiting volunteers and going out into the field to work side by side with them. "It was so satisfying, working as a team, to successfully collect all of the old barbed-wire and fence posts," April said. In addition to working with these volunteers, April also created a brochure that is displayed at the Silver City Visitor's Center/Chamber of Commerce to educate visitors about environmentally friendly recreation activities in the area.



## Fire Prevention

### Upper Pecos Watershed Association, Pecos, NM

**Summer Associate: Reina Fernandez**

**Project Supervisor: Doug Jeffords**

Reina Fernandez, Summer Associate with Upper Pecos Watershed Association, spent her summer educating the citizens in her community. Hot, dry summers in New Mexico can lead to deadly wildland fires. Reina gathered the contact information for all land owners, took photos to better explain the threat, then personally met with each of them to explain wildland fire safety. "Taking photos and educating homeowners in the canyon was rewarding but also just very special," Reina said.



## Environmental Education Leading to Volunteerism

### Upper Pecos Watershed Association, Pecos, NM

**Summer Intern: Milton "Daniel" Lopez**

**Project Supervisor: Doug Jeffords**

Partnering with the Pecos Independent School Summer Program, OSM Summer Intern Daniel Lopez with the Upper Pecos Watershed Association was instrumental in teaching children the importance of water conservation. Through his activities with the school, he recruited a number of volunteers to perform water monitoring. "Working with the Upper Pecos Watershed Association shed new light on the importance of a healthy watershed and the positive affects it will have on the environment, agriculture output, the local economy and people downstream," Daniel said.



## Capacity Building and Education

### Santa Fe Watershed Association, Santa Fe, NM

**Summer Intern: Patricia Jenkins**

**Project Supervisor: Pamela Dupzyk**

Patricia Jenkins, OSM Summer Intern with Santa Fe Watershed Association, was tasked with capacity building for her organization. Patricia updated the website, assisted with grants and created a Board Member Manual to make the organization run more smoothly. However, according to Patricia, her greatest accomplishment was teaching students about the water issues in her area. "I was given the opportunity to help teach local students about non-point source pollution in our watershed. Over the course of two days, we taught 500 fourth graders about the impact industry, farming and development have on our watershed."



## Capacity Building for the Future

### The Trust for Public Land– Railyard Stewards, Santa Fe, NM

#### Summer Intern: Heidi Brandow

#### Project Supervisor: Eliza Kretzman

OSM Summer Intern Heidi Brandow devised a 3 year plan for volunteer water monitoring, which included the details of when and where, as well as partnerships to ensure such water monitoring was performed as scheduled. In addition, Heidi created a document for future members of Railyard Stewards, so they know how to perform tours, how to engage local youth, and on which issues to focus. She also took an active approach to reclamation by doing invasive species removal 22 times. As for Heidi's future? "Because of my research and the hands-on-experiences I had during this internship, it has only increased my interest in continuing work and research related to northern New Mexico's watershed systems," she said.



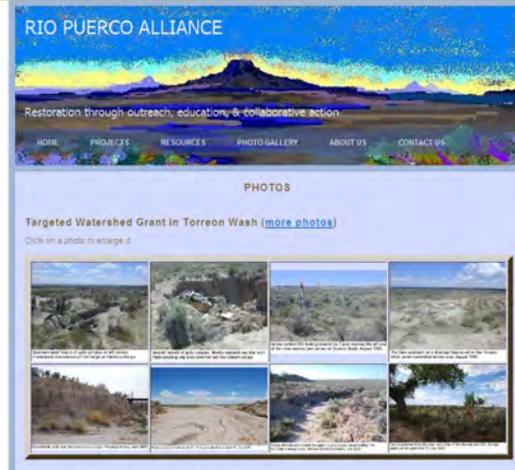
## Environmental Outreach

### Rio Puerco Alliance, Santa Fe, NM

#### Summer Intern: Stephen Hawley

#### Project Supervisor: Barbara Johnson

OSM Summer Intern Stephen Hawley sent out mailings and press releases and updated the website for the Rio Puerco Alliance in order to spread their message of environmental stewardship. He also went beyond simple advertisements this summer. Stephen created a presentation concerning the issues for his area and presented at three different events in different parts of New Mexico. Dedicated to his task, he learned more than he expected; "This internship introduced me to elements of rural planning that I had never thought about," Stephen said.



## Developing and Implementing a Reclamation Plan

#### Summer Intern: Taylor Sanchez

#### Project Supervisor: Cornell Torivio

Taylor Sanchez, OSM Summer Intern with the Southwest Conservation Corps-Ancestral Lands Office had her work cut out for her. Her organization needed a plan to improve its watershed. Taylor stepped up to the challenge and succeeded, first by mapping out exactly what needed to be done, and then leading by example. She started tree planting projects in a number of areas, and developed a water monitoring program. "There are so many bright possibilities for reclamation and work along the watershed and river systems and I hope to be able to help realize these reclamation and work options," she said.



## Researching Non Point Pollution

### Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District, Albuquerque, NM

**Summer Associate: Sean Menk**

**Project Supervisor: Steve Glass**

Non Point pollution is called such because it is often difficult to pinpoint where it is coming from. This, however, did not deter Sean Menk, Summer Associate with Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District. Conducting research in the area, Sean was able to map out potential pollution sources and compile a report. Using this report, Sean and Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District know where to focus their time and energy to prevent pollution of the watershed.



## Expanding a Farmers Market

### Mountain Food and Shelter, Ribera, NM

**Summer Associate: Jeremiah Aragon**

**Project Supervisor: Eric Biderman**

“This experience has shown me what can be achieved by people who care about nature and sustainable living,” said Summer Associate Jeremiah Aragon, who spent his summer expanding the El Valle Farmers market. During his time with Food and Shelter, he attracted more local farmers and spread community awareness of the market. He also worked with local volunteers to clear a section of invasive species along a nearby river. “It was like we did something to help revive a small part of the earth that was exploited by human needs,” Jeremiah said.



## The OSM/VISTA Teams Summer Programs Summary

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