



# Watershed

# Stewards

# Project



**California Water Quality Monitoring Council**  
*December 12, 2013*

*A program of the California Conservation Corps*



# Presentation Overview

- Purpose of Presentation
- Program Overview
- WSP Video
- Founding/Key Partners
- Performance Measures/Accomplishments
- Program Design
- WSP Alumni
- Benefits of Partnering with WSP





# Purpose of Presentation

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WSP Seeking Additional Major Sponsors





# Program Overview

## Mission:

To conserve, restore, and enhance anadromous watersheds for future generations by linking education with high quality scientific practices.





**The Watershed Stewards Project's (WSP) mission is to conserve, restore, and enhance anadromous watersheds for future generations by linking education with high quality scientific practices.**

A special project of the California Conservation Corps, WSP is administered by CaliforniaVolunteers and sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service.



# Testimonials

*“In my 37 years of state service, one of the things I am most proud of is my involvement in the Watershed Stewards Project. This project has provided almost 1,000 WSP members hands-on experience with some of the finest resource professionals in coastal California. As a result of WSP many former members are now working as resource professionals.”*

– **Gary Flosi**, Senior Environmental Scientist, Regional Program Coordinator, DFW Fortuna



# Testimonials

*“For the past 20 years, the Watershed Stewards Project has played a key role in monitoring and restoring north coast watersheds...The Watershed Stewards Project is an outstanding example of the success community-based programs can achieve through partnership, and I hope to see their contributions continue well into the future.”*

**- Jared Huffman, Member of Congress, 2nd District of California**

# The Founding of WSP

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A collaboration between Department of Fish and Wildlife and the California Conservation Corps



Envisioned a community-based watershed restoration, education, and outreach program

Funding first received in 1994, the first year of AmeriCorps



# California Conservation Corps

**WSP is a program of the CCC**

- Original founder
- Major funder
- Fiscal agent





# CA Department of Fish and Wildlife

## CDFW is a key partner of WSP

- Original founder
- Major funder
- Multiple WSP placement sites



# WSP = Future Employees

*“...Outside of being instrumental in advancing careers and expanding opportunities for members, it has been an incredibly successful program for getting feet on the ground to do the work that needs doing to improve our watersheds and fisheries resources. This program is invaluable in the services it provides to its members and the communities and watersheds they serve.”*

**- Trevor Tollefson**

CDFW Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor (Fortuna)

WSP Alum, Service Year 3 and WSP Mentor for 10 years





# Annual Performance Measures

<b>Watershed Recovery:</b>	1,850 stream, riparian and upslope miles will be assessed, monitored and/or restored
<b>Education:</b>	1,000 K-12 students will receive a series of Real Science watershed and salmonid education presentations. 70% will increase their knowledge of watershed processes by at least 20%
<b>Community Outreach:</b>	7,400 community members, natural resources professionals, and students will be reached through outreach and educational opportunities
<b>Volunteer Recruitment:</b>	630 community volunteers will participate in watershed restoration projects throughout California
<b>Professional Development:</b>	44 members will participate in WSP's Core Training to prepare them for professional careers in related fields with 80% improving their skills by 20%

# WSP Accomplishments 1994-2013

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- ❑ Inventoried over **34,504** miles through stream, riparian and upslope surveys
- ❑ Generated over **2,620** scientific reports and databases
- ❑ Developed over **1,600** watershed restoration projects
- ❑ Instructed over **40,573** students on salmon lifecycles and watershed processes
- ❑ Provided outreach to over **237,174** students and community members
- ❑ Engaged more than **16,995** community volunteers in hands-on restoration projects



# USFS Rise to the Future Award



*“[WSP members] have played an integral role in maintaining viable restoration and monitoring programs that benefit salmon and steelhead.”*

**-Tyrone Kelley, Forest Supervisor, Six Rivers National Forest**

# Service Year 20



# Current Placement Site Locations



44 members

24 placement sites



# Program Design

WSP members improve watersheds through the implementation of a four-part strategy:

- Watershed Protection & Recovery
- Watershed Education
- Community Outreach
- Professional Development



# Watershed Protection and Recovery

WSP members assess, monitor, and enhance watersheds

- Assessment/Monitoring
- Data Collection (Sampling)
- Data Analysis and Compilation
- Watershed Restoration



# Watershed Education

WSP members present *Real Science* watershed/salmonid focused curriculum in local K-12 classrooms.



Creek Days Environmental Education Fair (Humboldt County)



Year 18 RCD Santa Cruz County members present *Real Science*



Student outfitted in egg sac costume

# Community Outreach



CCC Volunteer Day (San Luis Obispo)

Coastal Discovery Fair (San Simeon)



# Volunteer Recruitment

## Individual Service Projects



Native Grass Planting, BLM King  
Range National Conservation  
Area (Petrolia)



Riparian Planting, Humboldt Bay  
National Wildlife Refuge (Loleta)

# Professional Development

## WSP, Site, and Professional Trainings



Swift Water Safety Training



WSP Regional Training



# WSP Alumni

WSP develops the next generation of natural resource professionals by providing experience, and training opportunities for individuals to enter the natural resources field.

**60% of current  
placement sites  
employ WSP  
alumni!**



# Alumni Testimonial

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**Amber Villalobos**

**Environmental Scientist  
State Water Resources Control Board**

**WSP Service Year 15 - DFW Hopland  
WSP Service Year 16 - DFW Fort Bragg**





# Notable WSP Alumni

- **Devin Best**, National Resource Management Specialist, *National Marine Fisheries Service* (Years 6, 7)
- **John Wooster**, Geomorphologist/Hydrologist, Habitat Conservation Division, *NOAA Fisheries* – (Years 4, 5)
- **Jennifer Peters**, National Water Campaigns Coordinator, *Clean Water Action* (Years 9, 11)
- **Lesley Merrick**, Water Quality Specialist, *Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality* (Year 9)
- **Cyndi Dawson**, Environmental Scientist, *CA State Parks* (Year 4)
- **Lisa Bolton**, North Coho Project (NCP) Project Manager, *Trout Unlimited* (Years 11, 12)
- **Lindsay Righter**, Field Representative, *U.S. Congress Jared Huffman* (Years 9, 11)





# Benefits of Partnering with WSP



# Exclusive Recruitment and Screening Process

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Selection process is **HIGHLY** competitive

- over **400** applications for **44** positions

Screening process is **VERY** extensive

- DOJ/FBI background check
- NSOPW (National Sex Offender)
- Pre-Employment Physical
- Pre-Employment Drug Test



# WSP Covers Employer and Member Benefit Costs

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## Employer Costs:

- Monthly paychecks
- Workers compensation
- Healthcare benefits and liability insurance
- Reimbursement for WSP related travel

## Member Benefits:

- \$5,550 scholarship upon completion of the year's commitments
- No-cost medical insurance
- Dental insurance
- Full uniform, safety, and field gear



# Thorough Member Training/Certifications

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- State/Federal policies
- Wilderness first aid/CPR
- Swift water safety
- State certified driver safety training



# WSP Staff Provide Ongoing Support

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- Annual site visits
- Member management
- WSP Team Leaders
- Monthly conference calls
- Email updates



# When you partner with WSP...

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You get a:

- ✓ low cost
- ✓ great value
- ✓ exclusively selected
- ✓ extensively screened
- ✓ thoroughly trained
- ✓ highly enthusiastic and
- ✓ extremely hard working



...potential recruitment pool for future hiring!

# WSP/ Water Boards Partnership

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State Water Resources Control Board (Sacramento)

Regional Water Quality Control Boards:

North Coast (Santa Rosa)

San Francisco Bay (Oakland)



Nick Ryu, Year 20 North Coast  
RWQCB member

# SF Bay Regional Water Board

*“Members have expanded the capabilities of our agency in important ways that we could not achieve before they came...”*

- Ann Riley, PhD  
Watershed and River Restoration Advisor,  
SF Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board



Will Logsdon, Year 20 SF Bay  
RWQCB member

# New Monitoring Capabilities

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- Assistance with State Water Board (SWAMP) monitoring
- Expansion of GIS mapping, watershed inventory and assessments
- Wetland environments data collection
- Assessing restoration project performance
- Anadromous fish population surveys
- Hydrology data collection

- Ann Riley, PhD

Watershed and River Restoration Advisor,  
SF Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board



# Community Relations

- Ambassadors to stakeholders who come under state permit programs
- Community education and outreach on water quality storm water problems



Community volunteers replace outdated storm drain markers in Santa Barbara

# Placement Site Satisfaction

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- *71% documented watershed improvements during the years WSP members served with their organization*
- *91% said having WSP members increased the productivity of their organization in ways staff could not*
- *Over half said WSP members increased capacity building in their local communities beyond the member's original placement term(s).*
- *96% have been either satisfied or very satisfied with the community benefits of WSP*

# Placement Site Testimonials

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*“The Watershed Stewards Project (WSP) attracts college educated individuals that are bright and eager to contribute to conservation efforts... The WSP is an important program and one that has greatly enhanced salmonid conservation efforts throughout California.”*

**-Joseph Kiernan, Research Ecologist, NOAA Fisheries**



# Placement Site Testimonials

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*“The Watershed Stewards Project (WSP) members placed with our agency have been essential for implementing the salmon conservation and monitoring work we do... It would be very difficult to find seasonal staff that have the training, experience, and enthusiasm that our WSP members have had. We are enormously grateful for the successful partnership we've built with WSP.”*

**-Eric Ettlinger**, Aquatic Ecologist, Marin Municipal Water District



MARIN MUNICIPAL  
WATER DISTRICT



# SPONSORSHIP OF WSP

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**WSP is currently seeking additional agency partners to expand the capabilities of agencies to protect and recover watersheds, reach the community through education and outreach, and develop the next generation of natural resource professionals.**





# Questions

For more information, please contact:  
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*“The Watershed Stewards Project is an excellent example of a public private partnership that leverages an initial public investment and multiplies it with private funding and community volunteer engagement.”*

**- Alex Von Feldt, Program Director, Acterra: Action For A Healthy Planet**

*“WSP members play a critical role in supporting the Mattole Salmon Group’s work to restore native salmon populations to self-sustaining levels in the Mattole Watershed. Their assistance in salmonid population monitoring, habitat assessment, and habitat restoration work allows the MSG to magnify the scope and magnitude of our projects and effectiveness. Additionally, the talents and energy WSP members bring to our small rural communities support many important endeavors...”*

**-Nathan Queener, Mattole Salmon Group**

*“The Watershed Stewards Program has been vital in providing much needed support in order to better monitor endangered coho salmon in the Russian River. Our volunteers are passionate, caring, and involved in the whole watershed community. Without the program our ability to monitor coho salmon would be greatly diminished.”*

**- Nicolas Bauer, Fisheries Biologist, Sea Grant Extension Program, UCCE**

*“WSP has affected all of us individually by helping us grow as mentors, along with leaving their own impression of the importance of community service on each of us. As a former member, all of this holds true on the opposite side of the spectrum, bringing me full circle to mentor future restorationists and community servants.”*

**-Mathew Hanington, Environmental Protection Specialist, Yurok Tribe Environment Program**

*“The unique partnership with the Watershed Stewards Program has brought talented young professionals from throughout the country to Point Reyes National Seashore upholding the mission of the National Park Service to preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.*

**- Michael Reichmuth, Fisheries Biologist, Inventory and Monitoring Program, Point Reyes National Seashore**

*“...we have had the pleasure of witnessing each WSP member gain valuable technical skills and knowledge related to watershed restoration that informed their decision to pursue environmental graduate studies and/or positions with local conservation organizations. The long-term benefit that this Program has on participating members, mentors and the communities in which the organizations are placed is tremendous.”*

**- Sooni Gillett, Conservation Program Specialist, RCD  
Santa Cruz County**

*“The WSP has graciously helped us complete education, outreach and research projects in the Santa Monica Mountains over the past three years... Through their Independent Service Projects (ISPs), they are helping connect the community with their surrounding natural resources, which is key to the long-term conservation of these resources and overall sustainability of the environment.”*

**- Jenna Krug, Conservation Biologist, RCD Santa Monica Mountains**