

Earth Team Spotlight

Earth Team volunteers are invaluable members that help NRCS put sound conservation on the ground. Hanna Birkvold, a volunteer in the Eureka Field Office gives an insight on her experience as an Earth Team volunteer:

“I am currently a student at Humboldt State University. Growing up in Washington, my love for nature blossomed, being surrounded by the Puget Sound and the Cascade Mountains. I am studying Wildlife Biology at Humboldt State University. In my sophomore year I connected with NRCS by word of mouth. At first I volunteered randomly, but this past summer I dedicated 72.5 hours assisting the Eureka Field Office.

I have had the pleasure to do an array of activities with NRCS. On my first day I attended a frog survey training and since then, I have gone into the field with foresters and soil conservationists, participated in the EQIP and WRP programs, and helped out with administrative duties. The Eureka Service Center is a great place to volunteer because they have a high volume of applications and work directly with conservation easements. Consequently, there is always a lot of work to do. When I am in the field collecting data, I learn a great deal from the NRCS staff and community members alike. My wildlife classes do not teach me how to conserve and use the land simultaneously. Therefore, one of my favorite things about volunteering with NRCS is that they make my education well-rounded. In addition to working in the field, I help out in the office organizing office space, creating folders for the applicants and writing reports.

Volunteering with NRCS has been the most fulfilling volunteer work I have done. The NRCS motto, ‘Helping people help the land’ resonates with me. Learning about the public’s concerns and helping them use their land more efficiently while at the same time conserving our natural resources is very rewarding. My work with NRCS has influenced my decision to pursue a minor in Environmental Policy. I will continue volunteering and graduate in spring 2017. My goal is to continue working with NRCS as a Wildlife Biologist in Washington State after graduation.”

The Earth Team Program is not only helping NRCS conserve and improve natural resources, but providing an opportunity for volunteers such as Hanna to gain experience and knowledge to expand the mission of NRCS– Helping People Help the Land.



Hanna and Jon Shultz (Eureka District Conservationist) touring a diverse vegetable farm in southern Humboldt County.

Photo provided by: Erin Taylor (Eureka FO Soil Conservationist)



Hanna sharing her carrots with a curious cow during a hot summer day on a small beef cattle operation in Pecwan, CA.

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