



Sonoma County Summer Youth Ecology Corps Summer 2009

The Sonoma County Summer Youth Ecology Corps

The Sonoma County Summer Youth Ecology Corps (SYEC) is a new effort, supported by a partnership between the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA), the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and Youth Council, the Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE), and a number of governmental and private non-profit organizations with an educational or environmental mission. SCWA engaged New Ways to Work to support the project planning process and identify quality conservation-related work projects for youth to complete this summer. The WIB/YC is responsible for placing youth at the project sites, through the Sonoma County Workforce Investment Act Summer Jobs Youth Providers.

Program Components

County-wide Components

- Safety training for all youth, crew leaders, and crew coordinators
- Youth orientation to the program
- Youth agency staff orientation to the program
- Ongoing meetings with Regional Coordinators throughout the program (bi-weekly) to address program implementation issues and educational components
- Facilitated partnerships among the host agencies and youth providers in each region to conduct final project selection, crew assignment, and rotations
- Work-based learning plan and evaluation (*adds academic and job-specific learning objectives to the summer experience*)
- Tailored Work-Ready Assessment for all SYEC youth (*Supported by SCOE staff includes a worksite supervisor evaluation, conducted three times by the crew leaders with sign off from the regional coordinators*)
- Host agency staff visits to crews throughout the summer to share their work-related and career development experiences
- Summer Program Kick-off (*July 2nd, 1:30 to 3:30 at Oak Knolls Picnic Area Spring Lake Park*)
- Documentation and impacts evaluation of the program, with photos, interviews, impacts and outcomes
- Career Fair (*Career Fair will draw primarily on the project hosts, their partners, and the SRJC*)
- Celebration in each region of the county at the close of the program
- Common Curriculum that includes six modules for the six work weeks
- Work shirts and water bottles for participants
- Summer Youth Ecology Corps signage for vans
- Completion of the Work-Ready Certification for most Crew Members (*Interview panels, continued work in the school year post-program*)
- Kuder Career Assessment System membership for all summer youth

Potential Program Components:

Options that could be conducted across the program or piloted in one or more regions.

- Paper assessment for customer service skills (*a component of work ready certification*)
- Tours of the Water Agency Facilities
- Guest Speakers
- Informational interviews



FAQs

What is the program timeline?

This is a six week summer program beginning the week of June 29th and ending the week of August 7th. Youth participants will work 28 hours per week. Some crews will extend through September.

How are youth selected and placed?

Youth ages 14 to 24 years old, must complete an application process and meet program eligibility requirements. Youth providers are responsible for interviewing, selecting, and placing eligible youth on crews of 6-8 youth, or at individual worksites, depending on interest, skill, and availability.

What are the Project Host responsibilities?

- Participate in regional planning to determine final projects and crew assignment
- Work closely with the project partners to ensure valuable experiences for participating youth
- Provide an onsite contact and technical supervision on the jobsite that includes clear expectations about what needs to be done, and why it is important to the environment
- Provide a thorough orientation to the jobsite including safety issues and procedures, logistics, and any other necessary information
- Assist crew supervisor and/or regional coordinator in identifying appropriate and relevant skills development learning objectives and educational enhancements that could be incorporated on the worksite
- Share data regarding the positive environmental impacts resulting from participation in the Sonoma County Summer Youth Ecology Corps
- Interact with youth crews, crew supervisors, and regional coordinators to support learning on the worksite
- Participate in a career fair
- Assist with the development of a common ecology corps curriculum

Who are the Youth Providers?

- Petaluma People Services Center (PPSC) – South County
- West County Community Services (WCCS) – West County
- Sonoma County Adult and Youth Development (SCAYD) – Cotati/Rohnert Park
- Social Advocates for Youth (SAY) – Santa Rosa and Sonoma Valley
- Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship (CSES) – North County

What are the Youth Provider responsibilities?

- Employer of record for youth and young adults
- Training and orientation of staff and participating youth and young adults
- Day-to-day supervision and oversight of each project crew
- Assignment of a Regional Coordinator to coordinate activities in the region and with the county-wide effort
- Collaborate with project hosts to manage each crew's work and support the educational aspects of the program
- Transportation of work crews to and from project sites
- Ensure that crews have necessary safety gear, tools, and materials to complete tasks in a safe and efficient manner
- Support youth participation in educational components of the program, including work-ready assessment



What is the role of the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA)?

The SCWA is providing resources and leadership to the Summer Youth Ecology Corps effort, as well as creating work and learning opportunities for 6 to 8 crews for participation in the program. Agency staff are also assisting with logistics, providing meeting space, and supporting the educational enhancements to the summer project. The SCWA is also working with the partners to identify resources for continuation of the SYEC beyond the summer months. Resources provided by the SCWA are supporting overall project planning and implementation, transportation, crew coordinators in each region, tools, documentation, and educational enhancements to the SYEC.

What is the role of the Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board and Youth Council (SCWIB)?

The SCWIB and Youth Council are managing the Sonoma County Summer Jobs Program, of which the Summer Youth Ecology Corps is a component. Resources through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the economic stimulus package) are being provided through the Workforce Investment Act to support SJP activities, including youth provider contracts and youth wages. The SCWIB is providing leadership on all aspects of the SYEC and is working with the partners to identify resources for continuation of the program beyond the summer months.

What is the role of the Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE)?

SCOE is providing materials and staff support to the Work-Ready Assessment component of the SYEC (part of SCOE's Work-Ready Certification). SCOE staff are also working to help streamline the work-permit process, support educational enhancements to the SYEC, and implement the Kuder Career Assessment System.

What is the role of New Ways to Work?

New Ways is assisting the partners in the overall project design, and helping to broker relationships between selected youth providers and the identified projects, as well as being responsible for the purchase and distribution of tools for the program. New Ways will work closely with regional coordinators and project hosts to encourage and support program elements and educational enhancements that improve the quality of the summer program experience for Sonoma County's youth and young adults. New Ways will also serve as the facilitating partner for the SYEC effort, ensuring that all program components are successfully implemented. New Ways is also working with the partners to identify resources for continuation of the SYEC beyond the summer months.

If you have questions:

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