



# 2021 Maryland Conservation Jobs Corps Annual Report



Program Dates: June 28, 2021 – August 6, 2021

SCA Program Manager: Anthony Peters

SCA Program Assistant: Tiffany Hergett

Maryland Park Service Program Director: Fred Banks

Agreement Number: 00026513

# Executive Summary

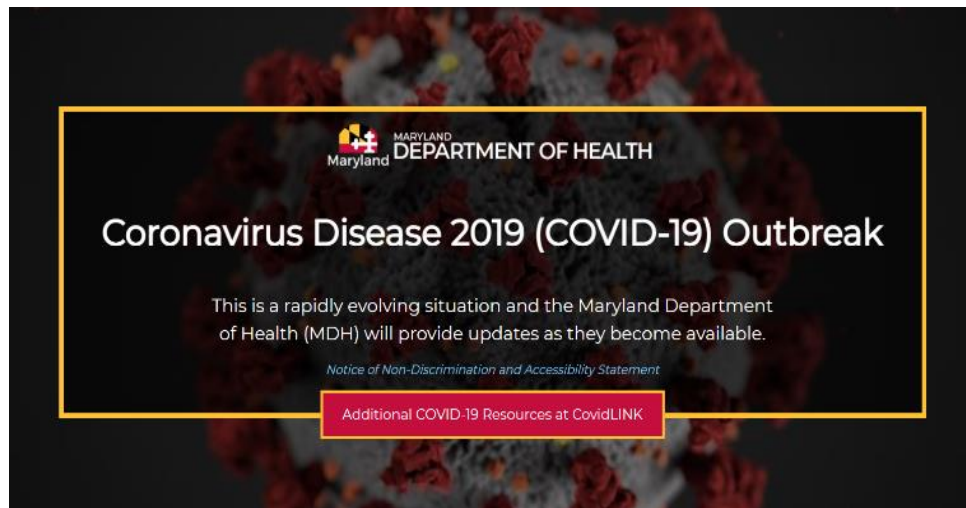
The mission of SCA is to build the next generation of conservation leaders and inspire lifelong stewardship of our environment and communities by engaging young people in hands-on service to the land. SCA was founded in 1957 by Liz Putnam, a college student who believed that the passion, talent, and hard work of young people could be a force for tackling the challenges facing America's public lands. Today SCA provides opportunities for thousands of young people to develop conservation values and explore pathways to green careers, strengthen their leadership skills, and deepen their sense of responsibility to others and to the world. Young people emerge from SCA with fuel for their continuous growth and with a sense of empowerment to take action for the issues that they care about, in conservation and beyond. SCA nurtures thriving youth and thriving landscapes.

The Conservation Jobs Corps (CJC) was established in 2008 on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and has been operated by the Maryland Park Service. Following in the spirit of the CCC, the CJC actively engages local youth and young adults to provide hands-on conservation service opportunities in Maryland State Parks and public lands. The mission of the CJC is to provide disadvantaged youth with opportunities for skills training, empowerment, and employment and to restore natural and recreational resources in Maryland State Parks, public lands in general, and the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.



# Executive Summary

Over the years, youth and young adult crews have had a huge impact in the parks, working to restore, conserve, and enhance public lands and waterways. In its first decade, the CJC **quadrupled** in size – initially engaging 100 youth in 2008 to over 400 youth in 2018! This jump in size represents a tremendous amount of interest from the youth, and a tremendous amount of coordination from dedicated staff and partners supporting the program’s growth. The 2021 season marked the first year that the Student Conservation Association managed the Maryland Conservation Jobs Corps in partnership with the Maryland Park Service. Additionally, 2021 also marked the first CJC activities to occur since the global COVID-19 pandemic began. Although the program operated in a limited capacity this year, the crews were industrious, and much was accomplished!



# Program Overview

The CJC program is a six-week employment opportunity through which youth receive marketable conservation work experience and the opportunity to network with professionals who are actively working in the field. In the past, youth, also called Corps Members, were grouped into crews of 4-7 by age and park assignment. Crews worked in the parks Monday to Thursday, then participated in Enrichment Days on Fridays that incorporated elements of environmental education and recreational activities. Members were transported to and from the parks by bus, and to and from project sites by their Crew Chiefs. Crew Chiefs were responsible for supporting individual member development and project implementation. Crew Chiefs were supervised at each location by Park Coaches, who were responsible for carrying out the missions and goals of the program and upholding performance standards. The summer culminated in a final graduation ceremony for Members. This year, titles changed slightly, but position descriptions largely remained the same.

Former Titles	New Titles
Corps Member	Crew Member
Crew Chief	Crew Leader
Park Coach	Program Manager

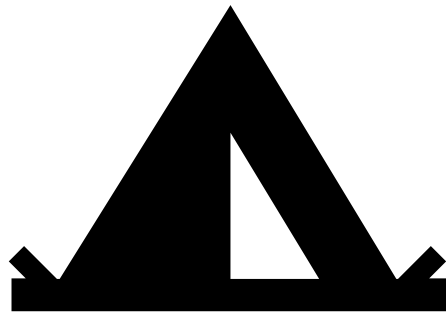




# Program Overview

In previous years, crews would also attend a 3-day camping trip, led by a team of enthusiastic Camp Specialists to ensure a positive, safe experience in the outdoors. Unfortunately, COVID-19 restrictions kept the camping trip off the calendar for 2021 and it was missed by the Members and Staff alike.

Recreating in the outdoors is an essential part of the CJC experience that allows Members to develop personal connections with nature. The camping trip will continue in the future when it is safe to do so.



# Enrichment Days

Although the camping trip was paused for this year, crews were still able to enjoy the Enrichment Days in their home parks, and at other parks within the Maryland system with outdoor and environmental activities such as:

- Canoeing
- Kayaking
- Nature programming
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Museums
- Sports



*CJC Crew Members and Leaders enjoy a game of volleyball at Sandy Point State Park.*



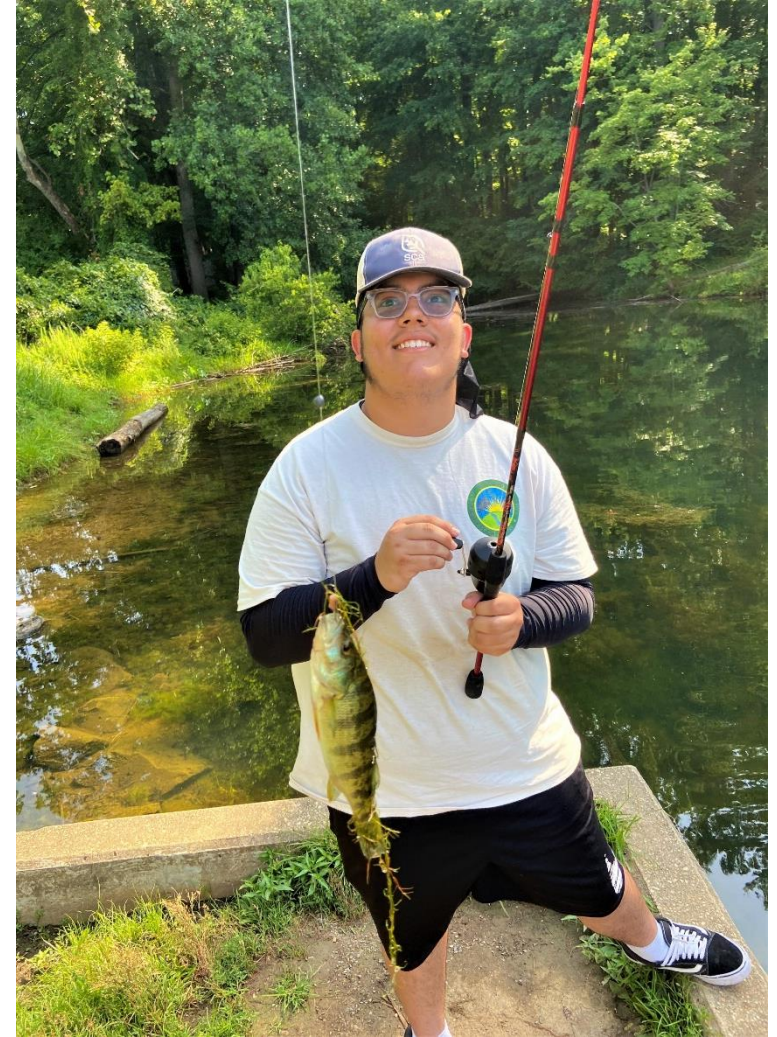


*Patapsco Valley State Park Crew  
Members canoeing on the Patapsco  
River above Daniels Dam.*





*Tawes Garden CJC crew and Maryland Veterans Conservation Corps fishing together on an enrichment day!*



*Luis, a Member of the Seneca Creek State Park crew, landing a fish!*



*SMRC Crew Member, Tim, gently holds one of the resident snakes at Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary that is used for interpretive programming.*







# Leader Training

Crew Leaders received a combination of virtual and in-person work skills training from SCA staff.

## Virtual Training (Microsoft Teams)

- Driver Training
- Team Building
- Discrimination & Harassment Prevention
- Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI)
- Mental Health Awareness, Knowledge, & Skills
- Land Acknowledgements
- Risk Management
- Communication & Professionalism
- Building Inclusive Community
- Reflective Leadership
- Conflict & Behavior Management
- Field-Based Teaching Techniques
- Program Administration

## Work Skills Training (Patapsco Valley State Park)

- Plant Identification
- Trail Building & Maintenance
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Tool Safety
- Body Mechanics

*Pictured (left): Leaders on a plant identification hike during training.*



# New in 2021

In 2021, the SCA worked in partnership with the Maryland Park Service to implement the following programmatic changes to ensure a well-prepared and agile crew for the field:

- Crew Leaders drove rental minivans for the summer.
- Crew Leaders had an SCA credit card that they could use to purchase gas and field supplies as needed for their crew and were responsible for uploading receipts into their expense reports.
- Crew Members were mostly young adults instead of youth.
- Crews were smaller and consisted of up to three members to remain compliant with SCA COVID-19 safety protocols.



*One of the rental minivans, ready to hit the road.*

# New in 2021

For some Members, CJC offers a lot of “firsts” – first job, first time visiting a state park, first time working in the outdoors. As the program facilitating these experiences, CJC has an important role to play in developing the next generation of conservation leaders. In order to best develop the *next* generation, SCA ensures that *this* generation of Crew Leaders is knowledgeable and well-equipped. The extensive training Leaders receive in field-based teaching techniques and how to build inclusive communities within their crews prepares them to step into the important role of introducing Crew Members to the conservation field and acting as a mentor in job and life skills. The smaller crew sizes in 2021 allowed the Leaders to connect with their Members quickly and work efficiently throughout the season. Some crews were so efficient they were working *ahead* of schedule on new projects by the end of the summer!

*Pictured: Oneek, a Member of the SMRC crew, working with the Maryland Veterans Conservation Corps to construct new bulletin boards at Smallwood State Park.*





# Structure and Scope

The 2021 Conservation Jobs Corps consisted of 12 Leaders and 21 Members serving in 16 Maryland Parks and Complexes:

- Seneca Creek State Park
- Patapsco Valley State Park
- Assateague State Park
- Pocomoke River State Park
- Sandy Point State Park
- Gunpowder Falls State Park
- Susquehanna State Park
- Southern Maryland Recreational Complex
  - Smallwood State Park
  - Cedarville State Forest
  - Chapman State Park
- Tawes Garden
- Rocks State Park
- Monocacy Natural Resource Management Area
- Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary
- Patuxent River State Park
- Cunningham Falls State Park



*Gunpowder Falls Crew Member and Leader work together to prepare a bench for installation.*

# MARYLAND STATE PARKS



- |                                      |                                   |                                         |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1. Big Run                           | 16. South Mountain State Park     | 37. Soldiers Delight                    |
| 2. Genselman River Bridge            | 17. Seawall Falls                 | 38. Susquehanna                         |
| 3. Cunningham Falls                  | 18. Washington Monument           | 39. Torrey C. Bryson Rail Trail         |
| 4. Darn Mountain                     | 19. Thurgood Marshall Wild River  | 40. Calvert Cliffs                      |
| 5. Deep Creek Lake NMA               | 20. Western Maryland Rail Trail   | 41. Cedarville                          |
| 6. Deep Creek Lake State Park        | 21. Woodmont                      | 42. Chapel Point                        |
| 7. Fort Frederick                    | 22. Wolf Den Run                  | 43. Chapman                             |
| 8. Gambrill                          | 23. Bohemia River                 | 44. Franklin Park                       |
| 9. Galharrd                          | 24. Elk Neck                      | 45. Greenwell                           |
| 10. Greenbrier                       | 25. Fair Hill                     | 46. Helen Aulynne Tawes Garden          |
| 11. Herrington Manor                 | 26. Gunpowder Falls               | 47. Merkle                              |
| 12. New Germany                      | 27. Harb Miller Island            | 48. Ninetwelve Neck                     |
| 13. Rocky Gap                        | 28. Monocacy                      | 49. Point Lookout                       |
| 14. Sang Run                         | 29. Morgan Run                    | 50. Rosaryville                         |
| 15. South Mountain State Battlefield | 30. North Point State Battlefield | 51. Sandy Point                         |
|                                      | 31. North Point State Park        | 52. Smallerwood                         |
|                                      | 32. Patuxent Valley               | 53. St. Clements Island                 |
|                                      | 33. Palmer                        | 54. St. Mary's River                    |
|                                      | 34. Patuxent River                | 55. Assateague                          |
|                                      | 35. Rocks                         | 56. Bill Burton Fishing Pier            |
|                                      | 36. Seneca Creek                  | 57. Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad |

- PETS MUST BE LEASHED
- TRASH-FREE PARKS  
Please take your trash with you.  
Pack it in, pack it out.
- ALCOHOL PROHIBITED

To report violations of park rules:  
410-260-8888 or 1-800-825-PARK

**MARYLAND PARK SERVICE**  
580 Taylor Ave.  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
1-800-830-3974  
Reservations: [parkreservations.maryland.gov](http://parkreservations.maryland.gov)  
[dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands](http://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands)

@MDStateParks @AccessDNR

AccessDNR FREE Mobile App





# Conservation Impact

Through SCA, young people have the opportunity to complete meaningful work that makes a positive impact on the world around them. SCA projects make tangible and positive impacts to the land, protecting and restoring parks and public lands, educating visitors about conservation, and increasing access to urban green spaces.

*Pictured: A Member of the Seneca Creek State Park crew installing new deck boards on a ranger house.*





# Southern Maryland Recreational Complex

## Summary of Accomplishments

- Improved 100 feet of trail
- Built and installed 3 bulletin boards
- Planted 30 native trees
- Added stone dust to trails and lined with rocks for support and delineation
- Installed 4 grills
- Weeded 200 sq. feet of pollinator garden
- Split 500 logs for firewood
- Removed 6 large bags of wavy leaf basket grass

*Pictured: Members and Leaders of the SMRC crew standing with members of the Veterans Conservation Corps next to the bulletin boards in progress.*





# Patapsco Valley State Park

## Leader Introduction

While working in Patapsco Valley State Park, the crew learned about native and invasive plant species, how to build and maintain sustainable trails that reduce the impact of humans in the park, and how to safely use various tools for clearing and building trails.

Throughout the program, our crew held reflections on our days and work, helping the group to stay grounded and build skills in self-awareness and communication. These reflections included guided discussions about self-care, land acknowledgements, environmental justice, and team building. Crew members also developed skills such as how to safely use tools such as pocket-knives, pick-mattocks, McLeods, loppers, axes, sledgehammers, and a wedge. During enrichment days, members also learned skills around knot tying, fishing, building a fire to cook over, while also experiencing activities such as canoeing, fishing, visiting the Harriet Tubman Museum, and watching the process to care for and feed injured birds and turtles at the Soldiers Delight Natural Environment Area, and practicing basic wilderness survival skills.

*Pictured: Crew Member Will leads the team in putting together buoy markers for Maryland Department of Natural Resources oyster beds.*





# Patapsco Valley State Park

## Summary of Accomplishments

- Built 335 feet of new trail
- Improved 300 feet of trail
- Closed 1,550 feet of trail
- Cleaned 1,000 feet of river shoreline
- Built 8 buoy markers for Maryland Department of Natural Resources Oyster Beds
- Built 4 split rail fences
- Split and stacked 3 cords of wood from downed trees (1 cord = 128 cubic feet)

*Pictured: Patapsco Valley State Park 2021 Maryland CJC and Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC) crews at Cascade Falls in the Avalon Area of PVSP.*



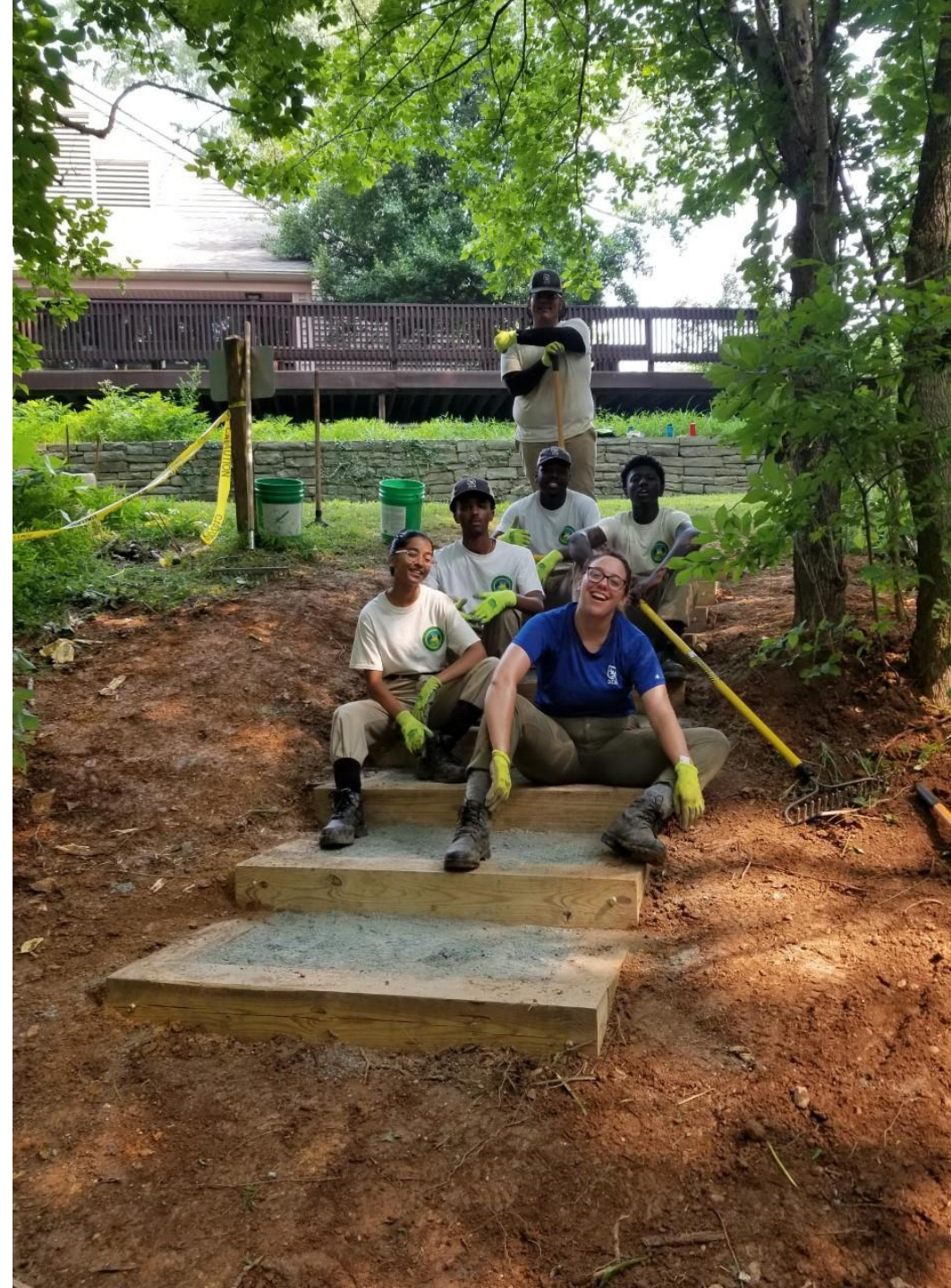


# Seneca Creek State Park

## Summary of Accomplishments

- Removed and replaced 6 grills
- Deconstructed and rebuilt deck and stairs for a park ranger house
- Replaced 13 posts and guardrails at Monocacy Natural Resource Management Area to prevent visitors from parking vehicles on the trailhead
- **Removed two existing staircases on the Old Pond Trail and replaced with new box frame staircases that were leveled and filled with stone dust**
- Removed 0.84 acres of invasive species and brush so that radar could be used to investigate the grounds around a historic house at Patuxent River State Park
- Removed trash from 27,254 feet of roadside and trails along the river

*Pictured: The Seneca Creek State Park Crew sitting on the steps they just built and replaced.*





# Replacing the staircase, from start to finish!



**Step 1:** Build the new steps.



**Step 2:** Remove the old wooden steps and haul away.



**Step 3:** Level, install, and fill new steps with a little help from your friends.





**Step 4:** Steps are installed, time to fill with stone dust and tamp.



**Step 5:** Group photo!



# Susquehanna State Park

## Summary of Accomplishments

- **Planted 483 native trees**
- Planted 5 pollinator gardens
- Built 4 bat boxes
- Replaced the wood and rebar border, pulled weeds, and replaced mulch of a playground
- Deconstructed three 10 x 10 feet viewing/fishing piers from the Deer Creek Picnic Area
- Removed trash at Rocks State Park and Susquehanna State Park

*Pictured: The Susquehanna State Park Crew Members and Leaders.*





One tree planted...

...482 to go!



*Susquehanna CJC and Maryland Conservation Corps members work together to plant the first tree in the field.*



*A field full of young native trees planted by the CJC and MCC!*



# Assateague and Pocomoke River State Parks

## Summary of Accomplishments

- Built 10 picnic tables
- Built 5 new cooler boxes for campgrounds
- Removed old siding and installed new vinyl siding on the Marina Bath House
- Installed 6 new signs on the nature trail at the Marina
- Replaced 15 barriers to limit campers from driving in restricted areas
- Laid weed barrier and mulched the Amphitheater and Playground at Pocomoke River State Park
- Built platform bridge over muddy trail section at Pocomoke River State Park

*Pictured: The Assateague State Park crew in front of the Marina Bath House.*





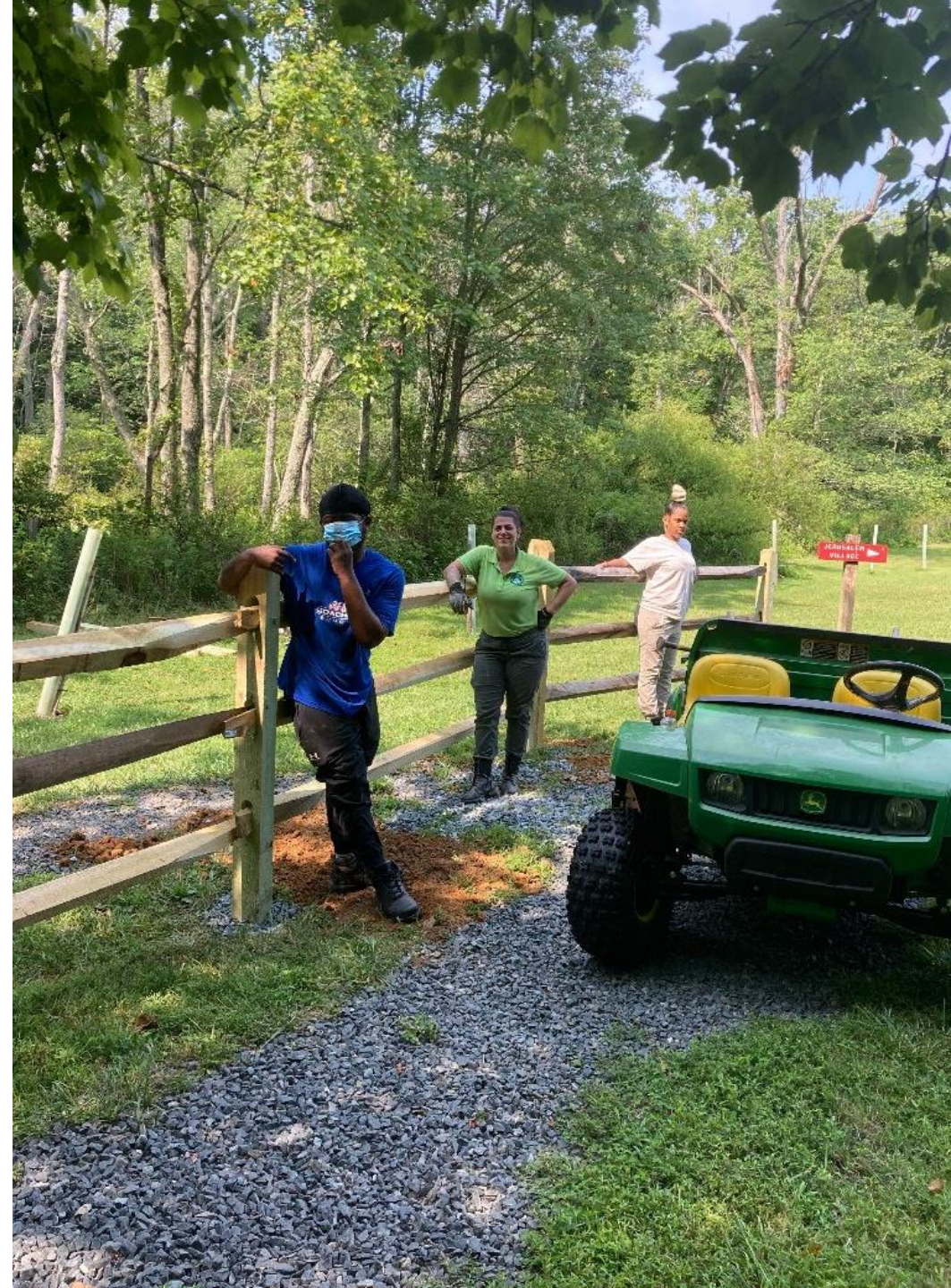
# Gunpowder Falls State Park

## Leader Introduction

The story of Jerusalem Mill began in 1772, when Lee's Merchant Mill opened for business on the north bank of the Little Gunpowder Falls. Through time, the mill became the centerpiece of a small Quaker village, and the business evolved from grinding the area's grain to serving more of the local farming community's needs. In 1961, the State of Maryland purchased property that included the mill, the blacksmith shop, and the stone building behind the mill for the Gunpowder Falls State Park. After the mill sat vacant for nearly 25 years, a handful of concerned local residents formed the non-profit, all-volunteer Friends of Jerusalem Mill (FOJM) and embarked on a long journey to recapture the past. They ended up saving the whole village—the state rebuilt the mill as headquarters of the park and used Program Open Space funding to purchase the rest of the original buildings. Jerusalem is now one of the most intact historic mill villages in Maryland.

The purpose of the team that was assigned to this beautiful historic area, was to restore, preserve and protect the history of the small Jerusalem Mill village.

*Pictured: The Gunpowder Falls crew standing next to a fence they constructed.*



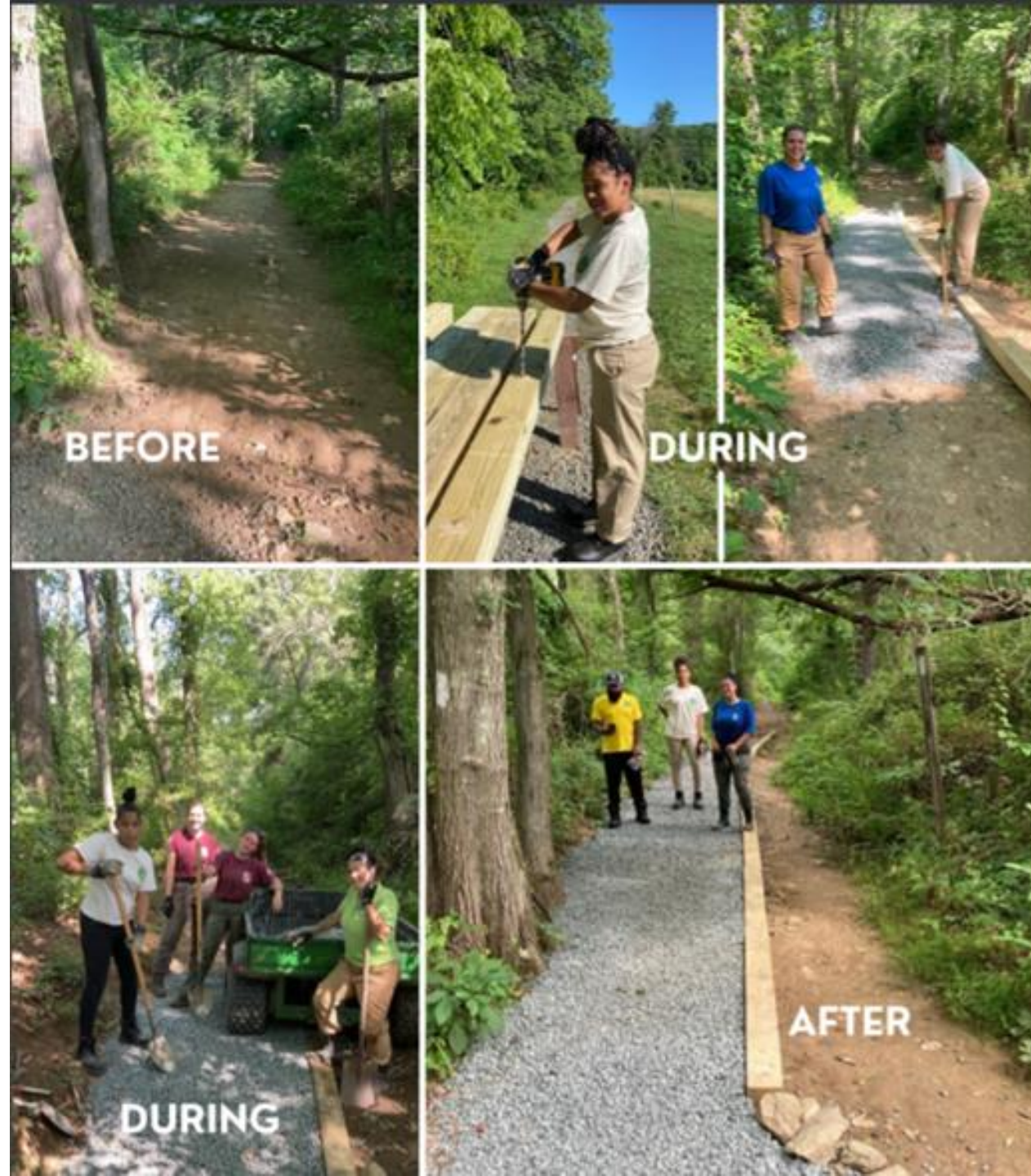


# Gunpowder Falls State Park

## Summary of Accomplishments

- Cleared overgrown vines from fence and area near the marina
- Repaired and raised 300 feet of gravel trail on Little Gunpowder Trail by installing pressure treated timbers to anchor and secure gravel and provide a path for water drainage (pictured)
- Installed 4 benches with landscaping and slate stone landings in Jerusalem Mill Village
- Closed old trail by installing split rail fencing
- Installed 60 feet of downspout for drainage at historic Jerusalem Mill Mansion

*Pictured: The Gunpowder Falls CJC and MCC members repairing and raising a trail from start to finish.*





# Tawes Garden

## Summary of Accomplishments

- Constructed and helped install 3 bulletin boards
- Cleaned and organized the Nature Center at Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary
- Split firewood for campgrounds at Patapsco Valley State Park
- Removed invasive phragmites from Sandy Point State Park beach area
- Organized, swept, and mopped warehouse
- Installed dune fencing to protect grasses at Sandy Point State Park beach area
- Planted native trees in Smallwood State Park
- Installed buoy markers at oyster reefs
- Filled potholes on Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary driving tour

*Pictured: The Tawes Garden CJC Crew and Leader posing with their CJC flag!*





# Cunningham Falls State Park (Leader Project)

## Summary of Accomplishments

- Installed 50+ deer exclusion fences around hemlock saplings
- Built one 20 x 40 feet deer exclusion fence
- Planted one pollinator garden
- Removed two species of invasive plants





# What a productive summer!

## Statewide Summary

- Removed trash from 28,254 feet of roadside and shoreline
- Improved 2,225 feet of trail
- Planted 513 native trees
- Improved 7 pollinator gardens
- Weeded and mulched 2 playgrounds and an amphitheater
- Built:
  - 3 bulletin boards
  - 10 picnic tables
  - 5 cooler boxes
  - 4 bat boxes
  - 5 split rail fences
  - 2 staircases on trail
  - 1 platform bridge
- Assembled and installed 8 buoy markers for Maryland DNR Oyster Beds
- Removed and replaced 10 grills
- Split and stacked 5 cords of wood for firewood
- Installed 4 benches with landscaping
- Installed dune fencing
- Installed 60 feet of downspout for drainage
- Installed 50+ exclusion fences around Hemlock saplings
- Removed 6 large bags and 0.84 acres of invasive species
- Deconstructed and rebuilt deck for a park ranger house
- Replaced 28 barriers to prevent parking in undesignated areas
- Deconstructed three 10 x 10 feet viewing/fishing piers
- Removed old siding and installed new vinyl siding on Bath House
- Installed 6 new signs on a nature trail





# Participant Impact

In every SCA experience, participants complete projects that solve real conservation challenges and see the tangible results of their labor. Through this work they learn how to conserve resources and protect the planet, learn why their conservation work projects are critical to that effort, and discuss with teammates and leaders what they could do to address environmental issues after SCA; including exploring possible careers in conservation or green jobs and discussing their academic and career goals. SCA experiences provide participants with opportunities to lead their peers, engage in problem-solving, conflict resolution, and group decision-making, and ultimately reflect on the ways the experience is impacting them.



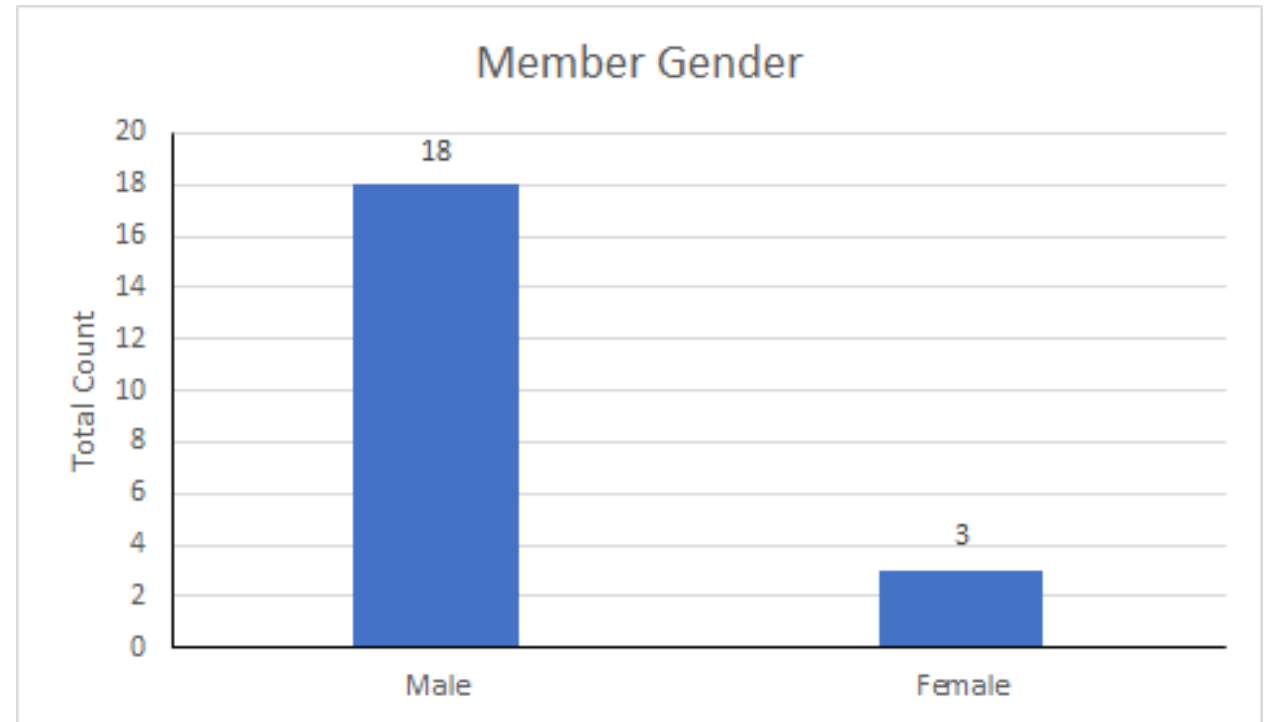
*PVSP Crew Leader prepares the crew before beginning to chop wood.*



# Member Demographics

Approximately 85% of crew members were male.

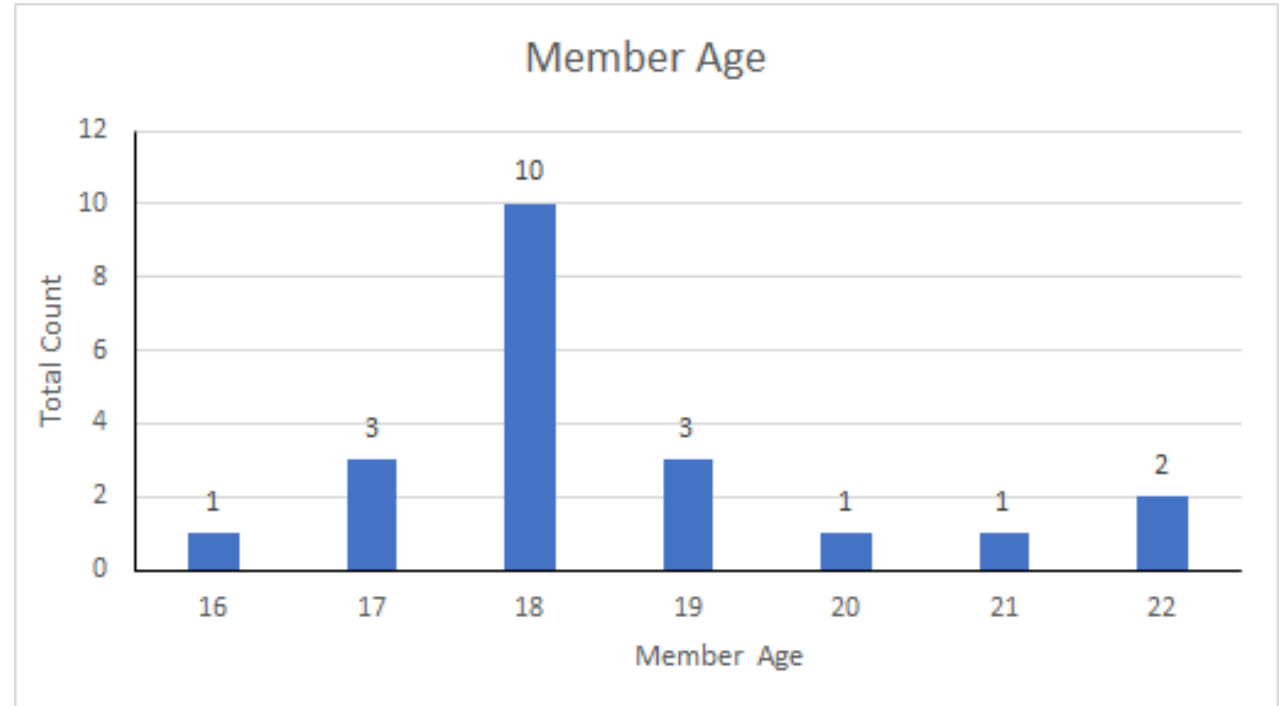
Approximately 15% of crew members were female.





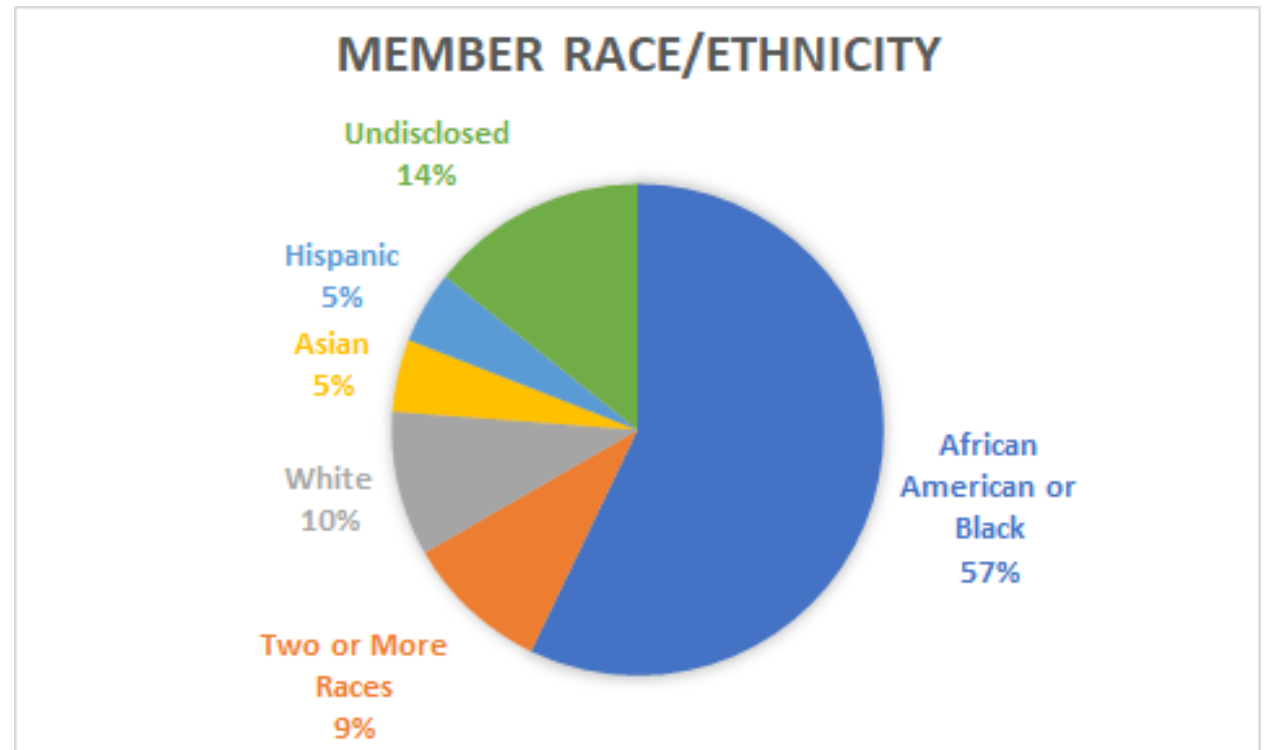
# Member Demographics

Approximately 76% of members were between the ages of 17-19 years old.





# Member Demographics





# Member Survey Results

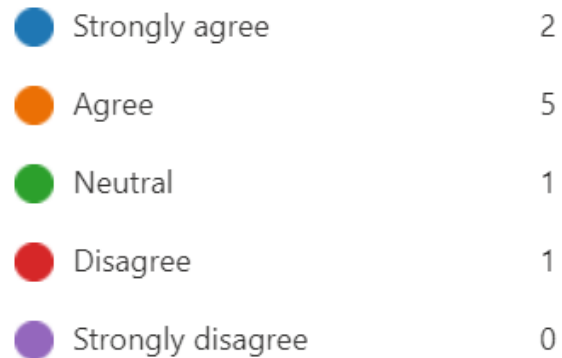
One of the ways the impact of CJC is measured is through member surveys. These surveys are completed retroactively by the members at the end of the summer and ask members to think back and reflect on their awareness and understanding of key topics such as stewardship, professionalism, initiative, and respect at the beginning of the summer. Members are then asked to complete the same survey with their perspectives now that they have completed the CJC program.

*Pictured: Seneca Creek State Park Crew Members and Leader posing on the deck they just replaced at a ranger house.*

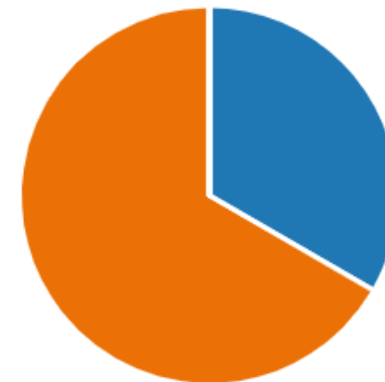
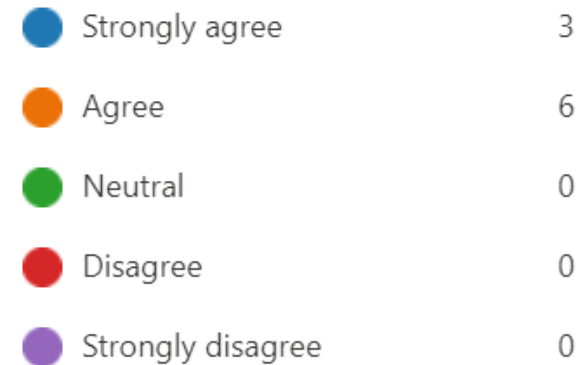


# I enjoy being outdoors and in nature.

## BEFORE

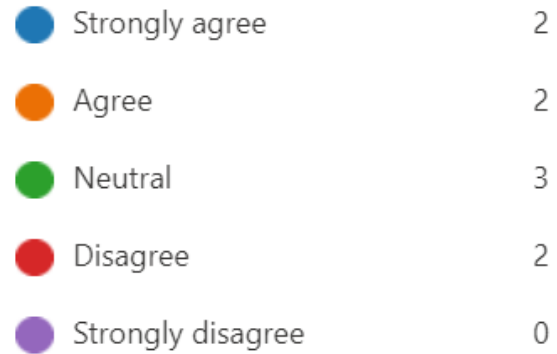


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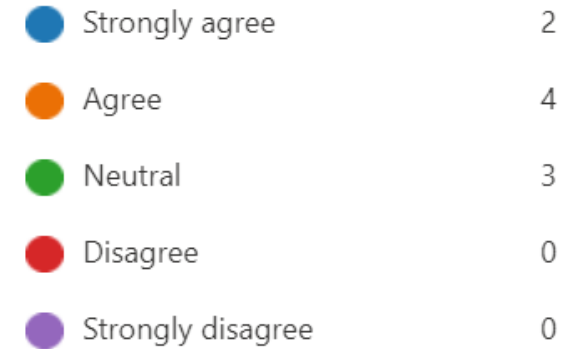


# I can see myself in a career and working outside.

## BEFORE



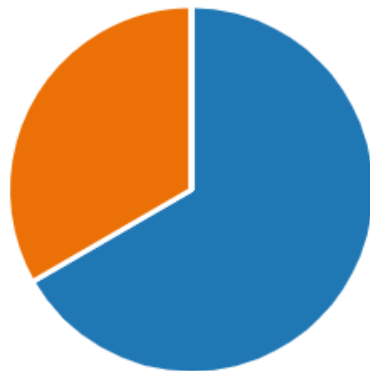
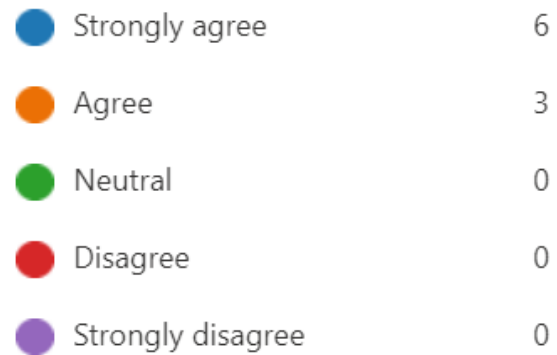
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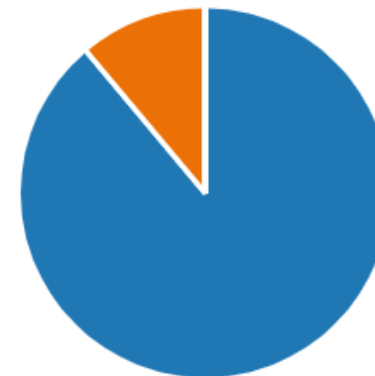
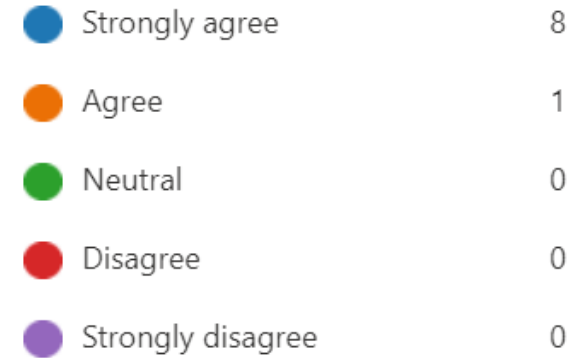


# I accept responsibility for my actions.

## BEFORE

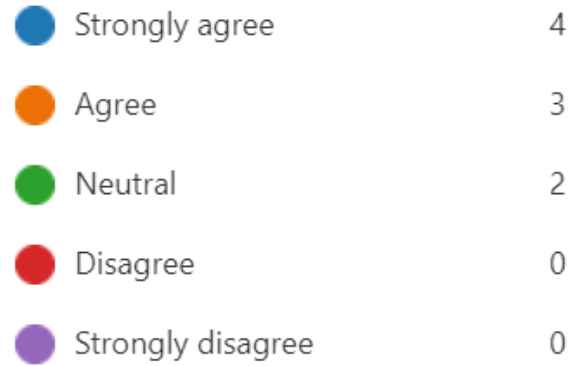


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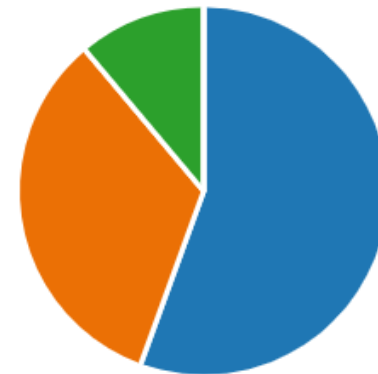
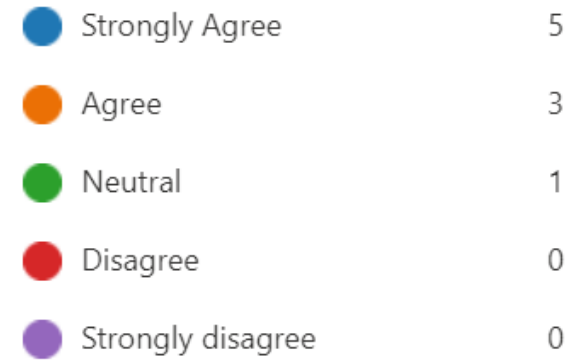


# I am a good employee.

## BEFORE



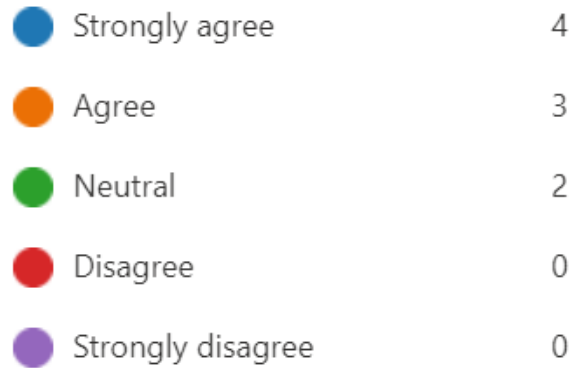
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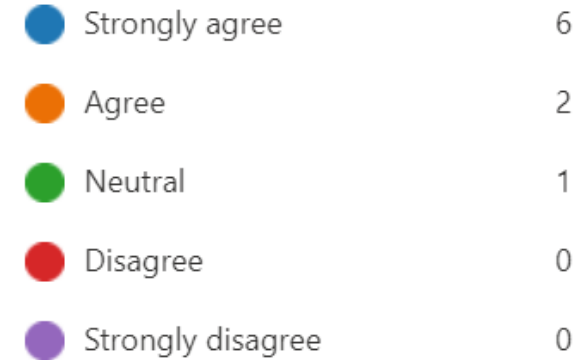


# I go out of my way to help others.

## BEFORE

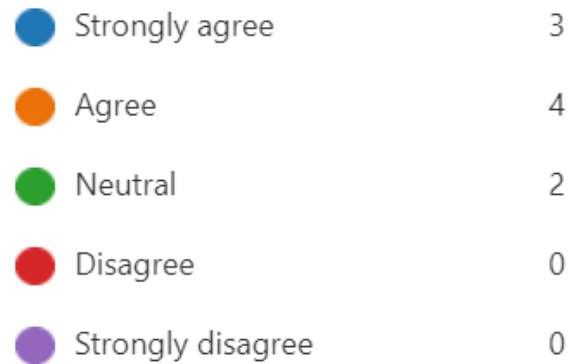


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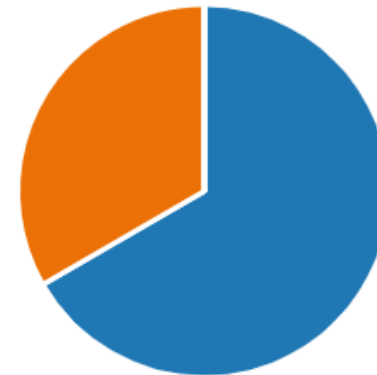
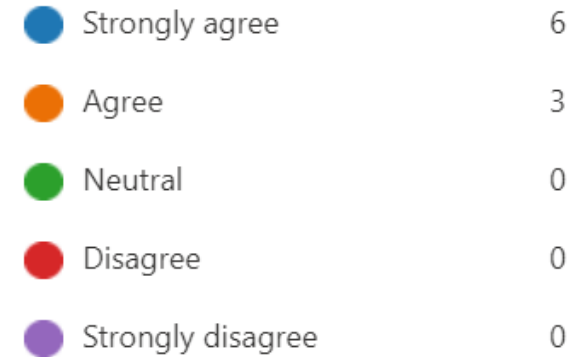


# I want to meet new people and get to know them.

## BEFORE



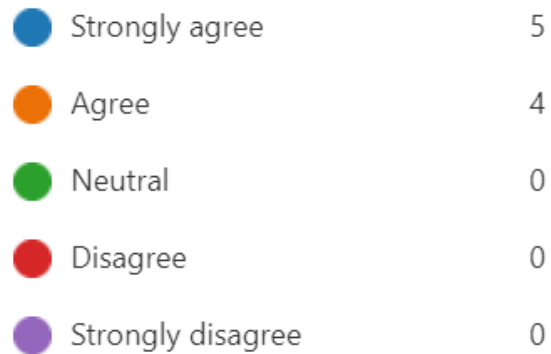
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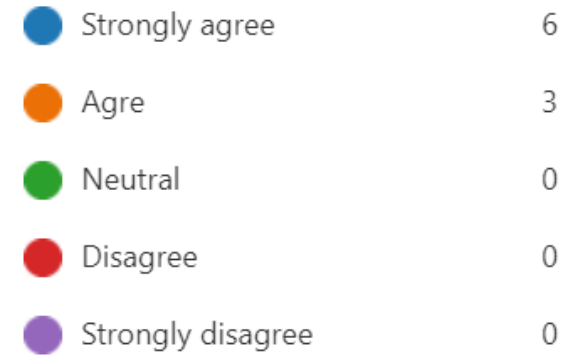


# I am respectful to my Crew Leader and fellow Crew Members.

## BEFORE

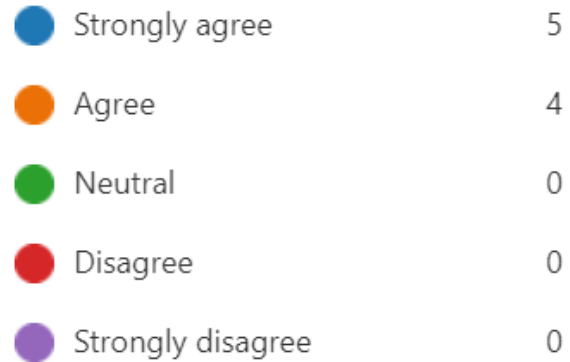


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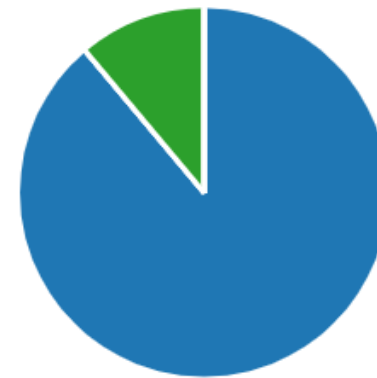
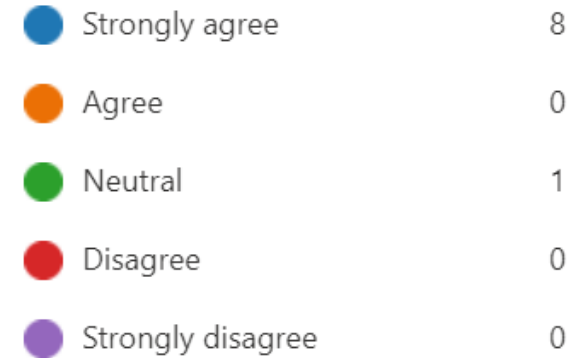


# I will be successful in life.

## BEFORE



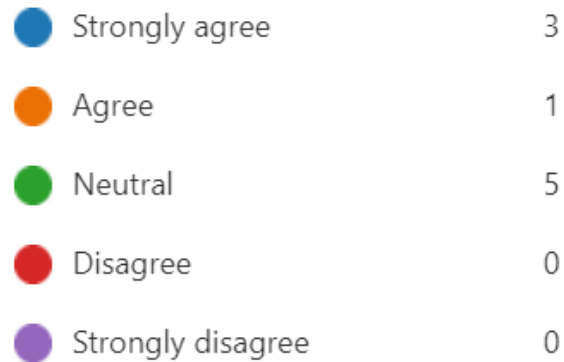
## AFTER



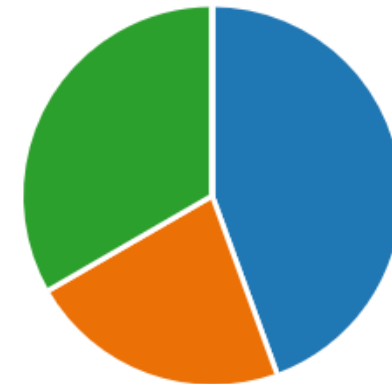
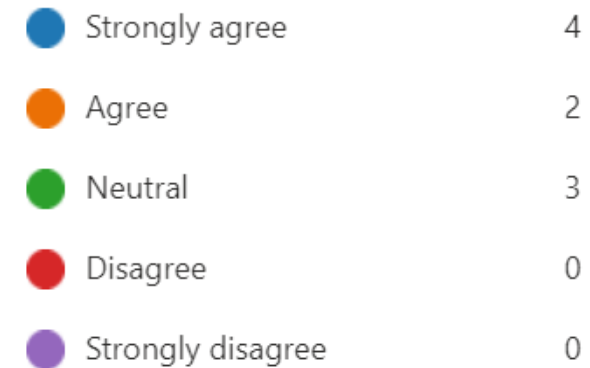


# I can be a good group leader.

## BEFORE

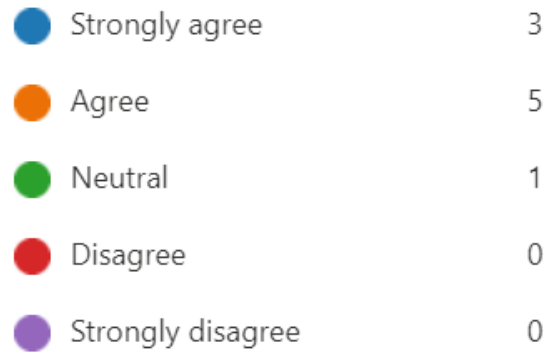


## AFTER

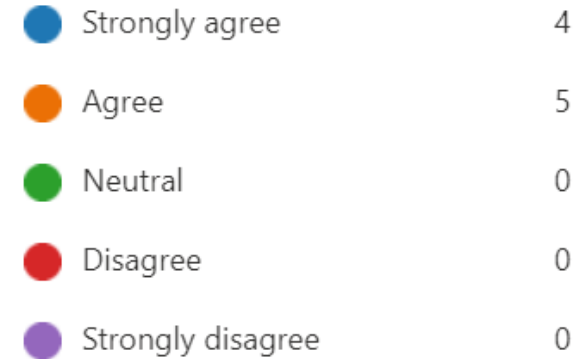


# I can appreciate opinions that are different from my own.

## BEFORE



## AFTER





# Survey Highlights and Participant Impact

100% of respondents report that they enjoy being outdoors after participating in the CJC.

22% more members could see themselves in a career and working outside after participating in the CJC.

Approximately 88% of members reported that they strongly agree they will be successful in life after the CJC program – a ~33% increase from member self-perceptions before the program.

100% of members report that they can appreciate opinions that are different from their own after CJC – an ~11% increase!



# Great Stories

from Crew Leaders

*“The highlight of the summer was enrichment week. It was my very first-time fishing. On my first day I caught 2 fish for the first time. That wouldn’t be possible without CJC and SCA staff help. They really supported me this whole summer, by making me feel welcomed.” - Will (Patapsco Valley State Park crew)*

Will is an extremely hard-working member with a genuine curiosity in learning new skills such as knot tying, fishing, and manually chopping wood. Will’s attitude and communication skills helped our team to function smoothly and safely throughout the summer. Although Will looks to pursue a career as a physical therapist, he showed great appreciation for the opportunity to reconnect with the outdoors since participating in Boy Scouts when he was younger.





# Great Stories

from Crew Leaders

*“I’ve never done any of this stuff before, I was skeptical at first but once I seen the finished product, I felt a sense of accomplishment and that felt good”. - Shawnice (Gunpowder Falls State Park crew)*

Shawnice is a bright young woman who aspires to be a nail technician when she graduates high school and because of this program, would like to volunteer for the park service when she can. Shawnice has great leadership skills, problem-solving skills and works well on a team. After completing the program, Shawnice mentioned she has never used power tools or been fishing before. She explained she was excited to take some of the skills she learned during our projects and put them to use around her house by fixing things and helping her mother with her small garden. She hopes to teach her brothers and sisters how to fish one day.



# Graduation

At the end of the summer, a graduation ceremony was held to acknowledge the hard work and accomplishments of the crews this year! Members received certificates of achievement and spoke about their experiences this summer.





# Acknowledgements

The Maryland Conservation Jobs Corps maintains partnerships with local governments and organizations to connect and support CJC members and ensure a successful summer. These partners include:

- Chesapeake Research Consortium
- Civicworks
- Harford County Department of Social Services
- Mayor's Office for Employment Development (Baltimore City) - Youthworks
- Montgomery County Department of Recreation
- Prince George's County Department of Social Services
- Telamon Services
- Worcester County Board of Education







"In nature nothing exists alone."  
- Rachel Carson, Silent Spring

