

Submitter: Jared Conroy

On Behalf Of:

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Written testimony

Jared Conroy

Hello,

My name is Jared Conroy and I was a member of the northwest youth corps between May 2022 until November 2022 for two separate terms. My first term was on a residential crew stationed in Gold Hill, OR near medford. I was able to learn huge amount in the 3 months I was stationed in Gold Hill and I would say that we made a difference in the lives of many people in a town that is often overlooked yet was and is still at a huge risk of wildfire. Many people in town were unlikely to get an affordable insurance policy. Considering the generally older or less financially stable people we were helping, a fire could be devastating. I consider the work we did extremely important as well because just a month before we were set to leave at least two small fires started less than 5 miles away next to the interstate 5 freeway. My second session was on a camping crew which really solidified my skills on more of a leadership basis as I was helping a new crew leader train the other crew members. This experience really solidified the idea of a family in the workplace and helped me to create really great friends as well as forcing myself to get up every day and get the job done even in difficult conditions. Camping for a few days is nice, maybe a weekend here and there but 12 weeks of straight camping is hard, and I couldn't have done it without my friends. The people i met helped me in an especially difficult time in my life and have helped me move forward.

I think its important to note how important work like this is for communities at a higher risk of wildfire than ever before. Considering the mismanagement that has occurred in our forests as well as the huge increase of people living closer to forests at risk for fire there is an everpresent and increasing need for more work like what has happened in the past two years.

The work that Northwest Youth Corps is scientifically based on research done by leading fire scientists and ecologists. Jack Cohen one of the creators of the home ignitions zone commonly used by wildland firefighters and many organizations has proven that a 50-100 foot zone will successfully prevent wooden home that is prepared against wildfire threats. "Given nonflammable roofs, Stanford Research Institute found that 95 percent of homes survived where vegetation clearance of 10 to 18 meters was maintained around the homes"-

<http://www.saveamericasforests.org/congress/Fire/Cohen.htm>

Lastly i would also like to say that the lessons i learned including, chipper operation, chainsaw training and certification, firefighting classes, in person firefighting

introductions and training days have made me very prepared and confident. I have taken a job on a type 2 engine in Idaho and I am leaving tomorrow to start my work. I am prepared and excited to start my work and to help change the way we think about fire in any way I can.

Thanks