



Lettuce Has Many Uses

By Warren Brower

Copper River Stewardship Program 2018



Hi my name is Warren Brower, two days before the program I was called to see if I wanted to go I said yes. I had packed what I needed in a hurry, when I got there it was a bit awkward because we all where just meeting each other. Here's a group photo of all the stewards and our leaders.

This years theme was movement.



We talked to each other and we hung out for awhile. Then we went to the cultural center and got to learn about the Ahtna people and learned about the land. After that we went to a nice view, talked about the mountains and we took some nice photos. Then we all ate pizza in Glennallen. We then went to the bluffs behind the Kenny Lake school where we hiked for a good hour and a half. During the hike all of us stewards imagined being plants and drew the plants we were interested in.



On day three all of us stewards woke up and had sausage and pancakes, then we all got packed and got ready to be on the road again. It was a five hour drive to McCarthy but we had four pit stops and enjoyed all the views. We stopped at Pippin Lake and cooled off for a while. When we got to McCarthy we went to our river guide, tried on dry suits and took pictures of us in them. Then we hiked to the spot where we would take off into the river and before we went down the river we all jumped in

the freezing cold water, then we went down the white water river. While we were going down we hit some big waves, Marissa saved Robin from falling in and Taylor almost fell in too. When we stopped and got off the rafts we walked back to camp and we all had hot dogs, smores, and leftover pizza. We all played fun games together for a while, then we set up the tents, and made our beds. The next morning we woke up to the river's white noise, took down our tents, and moved on. For the "most important meal of the day" we ate bagels, oatmeal, ham and apples. Then we checked out the Kennicott area for awhile, we stewards went to our tour leader who was a very nice lady. Then we all started walking up to the mine, we stopped at the mine office and it was nice inside. Up stairs in the back was an old safe room which was interesting. Then we headed up the mountain to the top of the Kennicot mine.

We all had to put hard hats on because there was low areas in the mine. It was amazing! We talked about the miners and what they did back then. It was quite interesting to learn about the copper and how it was dug up, smashed up into smaller pieces, and then was sent to Washington DC. After the mine tour we took the power plant tour. Man, it smelled like WD40 in there which was funny at the time and we learned how they operated everything there. After we had an hour and a half to wander Kennicott. Some friends and I wandered around but one of my friends was hungry so he went to a food truck which had some pretty good food. We dared him to drink tea with hot sauce in it and after he drank it he said it tasted so weird and hot. That was the funniest thing I ever seen! When our hour and a half was up we all met up back where we were dropped off, then we drove to Silver

Lake where we all went swimming and had fun. One of our leaders had a flat tire for a while. We spent a couple hours there, then we all got ready to leave and spent the last night at the WISE office. When we all woke up, we left to Valdez. When we got to Valdez we went to the Regional Citizens Advisory Council, also known as RCAC. We talked about the oil spill and heard recordings of the captain saying they have gotten stuck on a coral reef. An hour later we went on the Aurelia. We had lunch then some of us took long naps and played some games. While we were on the Aurelia we seen Porpoises swimming along side the boat. The next day we woke up around eight o'clock and had some bomb scrambled eggs and Canadian bacon. After we ate we all got ready to go on shore to explore the beach. One of our friends found a hermit crab and they named it Henry the Hermy. We walked to a nice waterfall, took pictures and we played around for a bit. Then we went back on



the boat to do some work and Lauren showed us a presentation on how the ocean's current, which way it goes and there's a thin layer of warm water which is at the top and a cold layer beneath it. It was nice to learn about that. When we got to Cordova we seen the museum, drew paddles that were tall as us, and we decorated them like the Indians from Cordova did. Then we went to camp and got dinner ready. After that we got ready for bed. We all woke up and had a wide variety of breakfast choices. We left around eight am



to the Haystack Trail. We met Nathan from the US Forest Service, he talked about fungi and how they produce. He was a very enthusiastic and fun person. After that we helped make a new trail because the old one needed replacement. We all started to head back to the van and go to the boat launch where we all ate sandwich wraps. We talked about the wetlands, we all had an hour to explore around the area, and then we all started to go to Dusky.



It took us three hours to get to Dusky camp, while we were heading there we seen an eagle, ducklings, and when we got there all us stewards were so tired. We put the canoes close by the air boat and tied them up. We all unpacked and then met with the field workers, who were very nice people. We talked for a while and hung out with each other then we went to our tents and went to sleep. The next day we woke up had a pretty good breakfast and afterwards we got ready to go out on the wetlands. We took pictures of decoy geese and the nests, took notes on where we found the nests, and if the nest were eaten by any animals. After we went back to camp and talked about the nests and the eggs.



The next day we helped make a better living area for the Dusky geese. They had their own little islands. We stayed out there for a very long time, just kidding we stayed out there for three hours, we all had fun. The next day we woke up, had breakfast, looked at some photos of some birds, and then we all decided to go swimming in the slough. We had some good laughs but at first some of us didn't want to because it was raining and kinda cold, but then one by one we started to get in our swimming trunks and slide on in the water.



After awhile we started a mud fight. We had mud everywhere on us, well some of us did like me and Cozmo. When we were done we all washed all the mud of us and went to our tents to change into warm clothes then we talked and hung out for awhile. We all ate and then we all we went to sleep. As soon we woke up we had a quick breakfast and got the canoes ready to go back to the boat launch. It took us a long five and a half hours to get back because the water has risen a bit. We had walked most of the way there. We fought the river because we were paddling against the current which was like five miles an hour. When we got there we packed the canoes and went back to camp.



As soon as we got there we changed out of our wet gear and changed into dry clothes. Then we all went into Cordova to wash all our gear. We stewards pretended to be organizations on a future mine, and asked ourselves what would happen if the mine was there and what would happen to the habitat around the area. Then we went to the WISE office in Cordova, had a nice barbecue, and said our goodbyes. We all knew we would miss each other. We spent our last night in Cordova and woke up around five or six in the morning to get on board the ferry. Some of us went back to sleep while others stayed up for awhile. We played some games on the ferry and when we got to Whittier we spent a couple hours there and looked around.

We all ate pizza and looked inside some gift shops. As soon the ferry was ready to go we got back on and I watched part of a movie while others were on YouTube. We were all laying down laughing about what we did all week. When we got to Valdez we put our stuff in the van and we all went home after a long fun week.

I encourage you to do fun things like this because you'll learn a lot in the wilderness. You also might meet some nice and funny people. It may cost you but in the end it was worth it! Thanks to the sponsors and WISE for a great and educational experience! And always remember, lettuce has many uses.



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