

Montana Conservation Corps members through the Warm Hearts Warm Homes Initiative have weatherized homes on the Blackfeet Reservation for the last eight years.

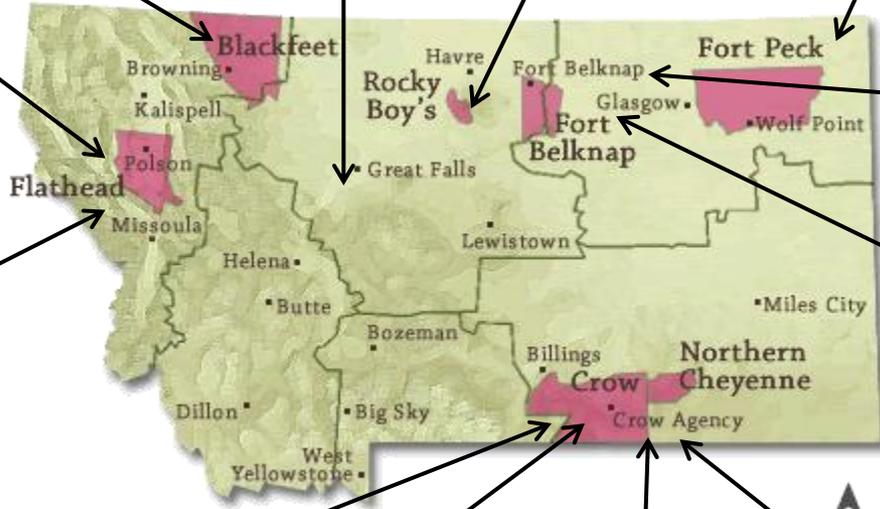
A **Montana State Parks** member organized a cleanup at First People's Buffalo Jump State Park with students from the local high school's Indian Club.

A **FoodCorps** member serving in Rocky Boy provided 409 school children with hands-on cooking classes, taste tests, and windowsill vegetable gardens.

Compact Service Corps enrolled 5 students as AmeriCorps members at Fort Peck Community College who provide educational programs and support for schools and community organizations.

A **FoodCorps** member serving in Ronan taught 553 school children about eating healthy, local food and revitalized the school garden.

Montana Conservation Corps Youth Crews have helped develop the Mission Canyon trail system in partnership with Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes with support from a Recreational Trails Grant.



Compact Service Corps enrolled 13 students as AmeriCorps members at Salish Kootenai College who provided health care to uninsured tribal members and helped organize and run the Women 4 Wellness health fair in May.

A **Justice for Montanans** member attends law clinics at the Fort Belknap and Chippewa Cree Tribal Courts to assist survivors of domestic violence and she attended a Tribal Listening Session on domestic violence put on by the Montana Native Women Coalition.

Energy Corps members weatherized 52 homes on the Crow Reservation in partnership with University of Colorado Boulder's Sustainable Tribal Housing Project and the Apsaalooke' Nation Housing Authority.

A **Montana State Parks** member at Chief Plenty Coups State Park near Pryor organizes regular outdoor activities for local Crow youth.

A **Justice for Montanans** member travels bi-weekly to the Crow and Northern Cheyenne Reservation to interview clients, assist with intake forms, and connect clients with legal information and resources.

Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest members provide academic support at the St. Charles Mission School in Pryor, the Pretty Eagle Academy in St. Xavier and the St. Labre Catholic School in Ashland.

AmeriCorps in Indian Country

This map highlights some of the activities AmeriCorps State and National programs are doing on Indian Reservations or with Indian people. Information was compiled by the Governor's Office of Community Service May 2013 and presented to the Montana Commission on Community Service June 14, 2013.



Examples of AmeriCorps Partnerships with Indian Country

Montana State Parks AmeriCorps Member Dan Shook shares his experience from Milltown State Park:

"Last year, we spent a lot of time working on creating and placing interpretive signs at the bluff overlook. The Salish were involved with this interpretive process from the very beginning. Tribal elders and leaders have expressed to myself and my park manager how grateful they were to be included in the telling of their own story. Apparently no one has ever asked them if they would like to, which is shocking. On several occasions I had tribal members approach me saying that this was the first time that any agency, individual or park had ever approached them to tell their own stories and interpret their own culture as they wanted it told. It's amazing to me that such a simple request has had such an amazing impact to the Salish.

I participated and observed a sacred Salish ceremony at the bluff involving tribal elders and leaders, with then Regional Parks Supervisor Lee Bastian. This ceremony was a blessing for the parks opening and to give thanks for the return of a healthy confluence. The confluence area is sacred to the Salish and has been used by their culture for thousands of years. This ceremony marked a new chapter for the Salish since they were kicked out of this area and their sacred bull trout was decimated by the dam, which resulted in a great loss of traditional life and culture. This ceremony marked the return of the Salish to the site and to give blessing that the area had been finally healed. This particular ceremony involved traditional languages and prayers that are hardly spoken and almost lost on today's tribal youth. It is very rare, we were told for any non-tribal members to be present at these events and the elders expressed their gratitude to us and Montana State Parks for allowing this to happen and for restoring this area back into a beautiful park."

Montana Conservation Corps Bridging Cultures Conservation Corps (BC3)

For the past year, the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) has been partnering with the US Forest Service (USFS) to develop a program targeted toward Native Americans who are interested in pursuing careers with the USFS or other land use agencies. This five-month program introduces participants to various disciplines including silviculture, trails recreation, fire & fuels reduction, inventory of timber, fisheries & watersheds, wilderness, and more. Participants will also be exposed to various USFS entities and rotate through 4-7 different forests and districts. Though MCC cannot selectively hire Native Americans for this program, they have directed most of their outreach efforts toward tribal communities in the USFS Region 1 area (MT, SD, ND, and ID). MCC's extensive outreach included contacting 35 tribal colleges, clubs and organizations with a Native American affiliation. Having a Native American crew leader conducting much of the outreach has also helped develop stronger relationships with these entities. The Bridging Cultures Conservation Corps crew started June 10 and serve through October 10, 2013. The majority of the AmeriCorps members in the crew are tribal members.

Energy Corps Crow Weatherization Squad

In February of 2013, the Energy Corps program organized a week long weatherization project on the Crow Reservation. In partnership with the University of Colorado Boulder's Sustainable Tribal Housing Project and the Apsaalooke' Nation Housing Authority (ANHA), seven AmeriCorps members spent a week working with tribal housing staff and tribal college students to weatherize 52 homes. This was a unique learning experience for the members, who witnessed wretched poverty in the homes in which they worked. However, the feedback from the Energy Corps members was overwhelmingly positive, many stressing the importance of having tribal members as a part of their team.

One member wrote: "My service at the Crow Reservation was one of the most eye-opening and heart-breaking experiences I have had. I thought I was ready for what I would see and feel when I worked with the Native American people. In reality, I was ill-prepared for the sadness, despair, and desperation I would face. The houses that I worked in were quietly dilapidating, rotting away right under the residents. Many houses were filthy, cluttered, and nearly uninhabitable. These residents seemed to have lost all hope and that saddened me the most... As I weatherized more homes and visited with more people, I realized we were there for many reasons. Just by listening to the challenges the Native Americans have faced, we were providing a bridge to close the gap between despair and hope... I feel truly blessed to have been part of this collaborative effort. I have gained invaluable knowledge, perspective, and life skills. Serving [with] Energy Corps continues to open my mind and provide some of life's most rewarding experiences. "