

# The Leader

## Environmental restoration program pays teens

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**YES participants gather to for a break near the mouth of Tarboo Creek. Kayaking is part of the work and the fun during the YES summer program.**

**by Megan Brookens**

Building off the success of the Youth Environmental Stewards (YES) Program, the Headwater to Bay YES field internship offers a two-week paid

opportunity for 15 high school students to learn about and work on restoration projects along the Tarboo Watershed in Quilcene.

The field internship will take place Monday-Friday starting July 31 and run through August 11.

In an effort to reduce financial barriers to meaningful summer opportunities, participants can earn a stipend of up to \$1,000 (\$500/week) and academic credit may also apply. Transportation will be provided with pick up and drop off at Port Townsend, Chimacum, and Quilcene high schools. Rising 10th-12th grade students are encouraged to apply.

With a unique whole watershed approach, Northwest Watershed Institute has worked with students for more than two decades to help restore local watersheds and protect the environment. This summer, students will participate in projects and activities from the upper wetland areas along Tarboo Creek all the way to Tarboo-Dabob Bay showcasing the diversity of ecosystems in this rare intact watershed.

Students will have opportunities to monitor birds, fish, amphibians, and mammals along different parts of the watershed and to hone plant identification skills. Recreational activities will involve hiking, kayaking in Tarboo-Dabob Bay, swimming, free time in nature, and other activities guided by student interest. Restoration projects may include trail clearing, invasive species removal, beach clean-ups, installing protective cages around young trees, and other projects.

As a culmination of the field internship, students will lead a Dabob Days community volunteer project from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Friday, Aug.11. Volunteers will clean up debris and remove invasive English ivy along Tarboo-Dabob Bay.

“Dabob Days projects are a great opportunity for students to lead other community members in direct action that makes a huge difference,” shared Megan Brookens, Education and Outreach Director for the nonprofit.

“Youth are leaders in our community, and I am inspired by their commitment to the environment,” she added.

Throughout the school year, there will be leadership opportunities with stipends up to \$200 available for interested students to continue being involved in monthly Dabob Days community projects. Teens who complete the summer program will also receive rain gear, boots, and gloves to support their continued involvement.

For more information, contact Megan Brookens at [megan@nwwatershed.org](mailto:megan@nwwatershed.org) or 407-383-0851.

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