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Chadrad Communications, Inc.
226 Bordeaux St - Chadron, NE 69337
308-432-5545 fax 308-432-5601
E-mail: kcsr@chadrad.com

(Neb.)-AmeriCorps NCCC Assists Nebraska Game & Parks Commission



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 10/22/2013 08:29 AM

(CHADRON)-An AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) team is serving with the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission (NGPC) from October 21st-30th. The team is helping with wildfire cleanup and maintaining fire access roads.

The NCCC team of eight from the Vinton campus is helping NGPC cut and clear downed slash from fire access roads as well as felling, bucking and dragging burned trees; clearing fence lines; working on a reclamation seeding project; and a variety of other tasks. The project includes several different worksites including Chadron State Park, Gilbert-Baker Wildlife Management Area, Chadron Creek Ranch Wildlife Management Area and Ponderosa Wildlife Management Area. The NCCC team aims to keep fire roads well-maintained in an effort to keep people safe and preserve natural forestation and wildlife.

Fire roads are an important measure to help prevent the spread of forest fires. They can act as part of a firebreak as well as allow access for other fire prevention measures. Lucia Kerr of Madison, Wis., says, "Every person has their own role to play in the natural world, whether it be big or small. I worked with the State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources and my small contributions can still be seen today. I am excited to work on this project with this team because we have the capability to create a bigger impact that will last and affect the lives of many people."

The mission of the NGPC is stewardship of the state's fish, wildlife, park, and outdoor recreation resources in the best long-term interests of the people and those resources.

AmeriCorps NCCC is a full-time, 10-month, residential, national service program in which 2,800 young adults, all 18 to 24 years old, serve nationwide each year. The NCCC program oversees two service tracks, NCCC and FEMA Corps, and members in these programs serve in teams of eight to twelve on three to seven service projects during their service. NCCC members serve on projects that address critical needs related to natural and

other disasters, infrastructure improvement, environmental stewardship and conservation, energy conservation, and urban and rural development. FEMA Corps members focus solely on emergency management and long-term recovery projects. The North Central Region campus in Vinton is one of five regional campuses in the United States and serves Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The other campuses are located in Denver, Colo; Baltimore, Md.; Sacramento, Calif.; and Vicksburg, Miss..

In exchange for their service, members receive \$5,550 to help pay for college or to pay back existing student loans. Other benefits include a small living stipend, room and board, leadership development, increased self-confidence, and the knowledge that, through active citizenship, people can indeed make a difference. AmeriCorps NCCC is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The Corporation improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering.

For more information about AmeriCorps NCCC programs, visit www.nationalservice.gov/nccc.

--Justin Haag, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission