

July 2012 Overview
Stanislaus Backcountry Trail Crew
Supervisor: Miguel Diaz

The month began with the steep 3-mile trek into the beautiful San Jacinto State Park Wilderness and a top the mountain we seemed to find the only refuge from the unforgiving heat of Southern California. Upon arrival we met up with our new sponsors, Gardner (Stan '05) and Lance (Yosemite '10) from State Parks Statewide Trail Crew, our new cook Marla DeKlotz (Stan '09), and Team Leader Chelsea Saeland (Kings Canyon '11). We were eager and ready to begin our 7-week stay.

Immediately we were thrust into the technical rock work world, with it came the introduction of many new tools including the pion jar, grip hoist and plugs and feathers. We quickly learned the proper techniques for rolling rocks down steep grades, rock placement, and how to move mass amounts of rock by hand.

Along the Fuller Ridge Trail, part of the PCT the crew was split up on five projects over half a mile. Projects include massive junk walls, multi-tier walls and check steps. Within weeks we have moved on to other projects.

The weekends have brought the crew out to enjoy the beautiful park, highlights including Carumba Waterfalls and the peak of San Jacinto.

July also brought Marina and Minas' parents for a visit. Corpsmembers had the opportunity to meet their families and tell them stories of their adventures thus far in the season.

Curriculum this month has been mostly corpsmember-led with highlights being a debate class led by Marina Swain, a meditation and mindfulness class by Martin Schumacher and Minas led a spirituality class. The sponsors had their own class in store for the corpsmembers which was tree climbing including knots and all the harnesses required to climb up a tree safely.

Although it seems there had been a brief plague of the midseason blues, an acoustic techno boogie party featuring the band Dirty Wet Tofu premiered along with the end of the stay at the San Jac which has given us a second wind and we are eagerly waiting for the return to the Stanislaus to finish off our backcountry season.