

Glacier Park Restoration Internship 2004

Harlan Vaska

Introduction

My name is Harlan Vaska. I was selected for the intern position, and worked at Glacier National on the restoration crew. My supervisor was Joyce Lapp, she traveled down to my botany class last spring quarter. She spoke to the class regarding this position with the restoration crew; she told us they have an intern position available for 12 weeks during the summer. I was very interested and turned in my resume. I was selected for the job!

Over all I must say that working in Glacier Park is exactly the type of job that I am going to school for. I have hiked most of the entire backcountry campgrounds in Glacier Park. The people that I worked with this summer were all great people. Each and every person that I came into contact with has taught me more about environmental science. I thoroughly enjoyed working with my crew of Matt, William, Rebecca and Kristen. This is a dream job and I love everyone involved with my getting this position a dept of gratitude. I am welcomed back next year and I am excited to learn more about Glacier National Park. I love this job!



Fig. 1: Caging whitebark pine cones to save the seeds from being eaten.

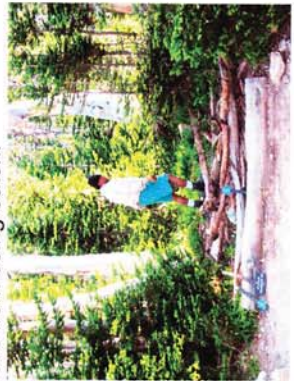


Fig. 2: Harlan brushing out the impacted area around a campsite at Old Man Lake

Objective

The objective of the restoration crew is to lighten the impact of the tourists on the native vegetation. Brush out the social trails and campsites where it is most needed. The restoration crew also educates the tourists of the job that we are performing and why we are doing it.



Fig. 3: Last year's work that needed improving. Vegetation was making progress, but more brushing was needed to keep tourists from trampling the site



Fig. 4: The same site as Fig. 3, after scarification, reseeding and brushing



Fig. 5: A campsite after the restoration crew scarified, Seeded with native grasses, and brushed out.



Fig. 6: Brushed out campsite with a restoration sign.

Acknowledgments

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Restoration Intern

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In the fall seeds are collected from various places all over the park. The seed are taken to the native plant nursery to dry and be prepared for planting. They are grown at the nursery until they are ready to be planted. The seedling will be planted where the original seed was collected. Every plant has its place in the nursery. The nursery crew must take down data and keep accurate account of each seed they collect and where it came from. It is a big job because a plant, for example *Symphoricarpos albus*, can not be taken from McDonald Lake and expect to survive on Logan Pass. Plants adapt to the environment that they are in.

I have hiked most of the entire backcountry campgrounds in Glacier Park. Campground sites must not exceed the acceptable dimensions. The restoration crew then takes the GPS of the campground, so that the park management will know the location of

each site. The revegetation crew then scarifies the impact area with Pulaski's and shovels. Native grass is then seeded and native plants are planted. Finally the revegetation crew brushes out the impact area to try and keep people from walking on the vegetation.

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Sincerely

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