



*Annual Report*  
**2020**



## what is a corps?

### *strengthening America through service and conservation*

Following in the footsteps of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the corps model seeks to lessen the skills gap between education and employment. Corps are locally-based organizations that engage young people in service projects that provide in-demand skills training through service-learning and community engagement. AmeriCorps members earn a Living Allowance and are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award upon successful completion of their service term.

## letter from the executive director

*"I have worked with historic sites and artifacts all of my life and wanted to continue doing that even while COVID-19 is out here. I'm hoping to gain skills in historic buildings preservation, group building while camping, and a better sense of what I want to do in the future." - Corpsmember, pre-service survey response*



COVID-19 brought both unexpected challenges and a heightened focus on community to Northern Bedrock's 2020 field season. As the above quote from an 18-year-old's point of view illustrates, this year's members were thrilled to find a meaningful opportunity to get out of the house and serve. After collectively discussing best practices with other corps (thanks especially to Northwest Youth Corps), we started our season six weeks late and with two crews instead of three. We spent extra time and effort at Halfway Ranger Station Historic District both initially and throughout the season, beginning with an extra-long orientation period that doubled as a whole corps quarantine.

The pandemic encouraged staff to create more comprehensive health and wellness protocols that applied to everyone who was directly involved with the season. New procedures included logging daily health checks; heightened sanitization of spaces, vehicles, and tools; new guidance for Site Hosts, Technical Specialists, and volunteers; both physical distancing and significantly reduced time spent indoors; and, individual health and safety contracts that covered both time on and days off. We are proud to report no incidents of or significant time lost due to COVID-19 (or anything else, for that matter) on any of our hitches!

We are especially proud of what we accomplished this season despite it all. Corpsmembers put up with constant questions about health and welfare, embraced the value of PPE, managed some rather fluid schedules, and dealt with the usual allotment of bugs and harsh weather. For the first time this year, we bolstered our risk management training to include Wilderness First Aid (thank you, Aerie Backcountry Medicine). We hosted two impactful public outreach events and ran one of the few Passport In Time projects in 2020 (thank you to our intrepid volunteers Kim, Walt, Steve, Sally and Paul). And we completed some pretty cool projects with some pretty great hosts. Enjoy the results in this report!

## organization timeline



## mission

*To develop enduring workforce and life skills through service learning in historic preservation and community stewardship.*

## values



*Serving*



*Transforming*



*Preserving*



*Honoring*

## northern bedrock historic preservation corpsmember program

*building pathways to the preservation trades*

While utilizing a camping program model, Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps provides corpsmembers hands-on experiences in historic preservation, community service, and conservation. We provide a variety of skills trainings to help prepare our corpsmembers for the trades field. Corpsmembers also practice their community living, leadership, and team building skills as they work to complete a successful field season. Consultants, Technical Specialists, and Project Hosts provide technical training and project supervision, and complete work projects alongside crews. Corpsmembers also learn the value of team-building, effective communication, goal setting, and conflict resolution.

## technical specialists

*skilled professionals, trades mentors*

To help foster pathways for young adults to enter the historic preservation field, Northern Bedrock partners with skilled tradespeople. Through expert instruction and project management, Technical Specialists guide Corpsmembers in learning a wide variety of trade skills and preservation techniques. When selecting Technical Specialists, Northern Bedrock prioritizes recognized industry experts with prior experience facilitating hands-on training and a proven record of proactive risk management.



*"As per usual, the crew did great and worked hard to finish things up. We ended up doing some fairly advanced woodworking and window repair along with the usual scraping and painting. The [host] seemed very happy with the work." - Technical Specialist*



## skills learned



### Scraping and Painting

Corpsmembers learned how to prepare buildings for new paint and stain finishes. By properly removing old paint and stain, Corpsmembers were able to identify areas of rot, insect damage, or mold prior to applying new finish.

### Window Restoration

Corpsmembers scraped paint, removed glazing, replaced and re-glazed glass, and painted and repaired window sashes. They restored windows at five sites through-out Minnesota – including a tugboat!



### Cemetery Preservation

Corpsmembers reset, cleaned and edged monuments at six different cemeteries across Minnesota. This work ensures the safety of monuments and visitors. Cemetery projects provide Corpsmembers a chance to learn about the people who helped develop the communities we serve.

### Masonry Restoration

Corpsmembers restored rock walls and staircases at two sites in 2020. Corpsmembers learned the importance of accurate restoration work and how to evaluate and apply mortar and replace rocks.



### Log Structure Maintenance

Corpsmembers learned how to treat insect and water damage, prepare and install log replacements in structures and stockades, and seal structures through finishing waxes, stains, and paints.

### Documentation

Corpsmembers enthusiastically learned the importance of project documentation. By recording daily logs, hitch reports, and project photos, Corpsmembers are able to document project progress and accomplishments.



### Leadership and Teamwork

Corpsmembers served in rotating leadership roles on our two field crews this season. Crews cooked meals together, camped under the stars (or rain clouds), and traveled throughout the state to improve historic structures and landscapes all while adapting to new COVID-19 health and safety guidelines!

## 2020 by the numbers

- 13 project hosts welcomed crews
- 11 corpsmembers served communities
- 6 technical specialists taught trade skills
- 4 staff organized programming



- 146,060 square feet of buildings cleaned
- 80,732 square feet of brush removed
- 12,872 square feet of pest mitigation
- 11,432 square feet of exterior finishing
- 8,181 corpsmember service hours
- 5,850 square feet of landscaping completed
- 2,179 square feet of masonry cleaned
- 805 square feet of masonry repointed
- 333 monuments improved
- 192 square feet of demolition
- 197 linear feet Stockade Repair replaced
- 52 windows restored
- 15 pages of COVID-19 Protocols implemented
- 8 Minnesota counties served
- 1 successful field season enjoyed
- 0 COVID-19 cases

*"The program is a great stepping stone for my career with the hands-on trades that we develop. When I can learn and perform how to preserve something with its original technique, then I can help the people around me understand history."*

-Corpsmember



## corpsmember post season surveys

- 82% agree or strongly agree that they have a solid technical skill base, up from 45% on pre-season surveys
- 91% agree or strongly agree that they are good at planning, organizing, and completing tasks
- 91% agree or strongly agree that they are knowledgeable about historic preservation

## 2020 field schedule

### Hitch 1: 6/23 - 7/6

1. Halfway Ranger Station Historic District, Ely  
- Welcome to Northern Bedrock!  
- orientation, training, and team building

2. Ely Cemetery, Ely  
- cemetery restoration

### Hitch 2: 7/11 - 7/16

3. Forest Lodge, Cable, WI  
- masonry and window restoration, site stabilization
4. Historic Duluth Armory, Duluth  
- demolition and site preparation, window restoration

### Hitch 3: 7/21 - 7/29

5. Anderson Center at Tower View, Red Wing  
- window restoration

1. Halfway Ranger Station Historic District, Ely  
- scraping and painting, site stabilization

### Hitch 4: 8/4 - 8/12

6. Chippewa National Forest - CCC Camp Rabideau  
- scraping and painting, cleaning
7. Pope County Historical Society: Lake Ann Cemetery, East Zion Cemetery, Lake Reno Reformed Cemetery, Lake Emily Cemetery, Pope County Court House  
- cemetery restoration, floor installation, community outreach workshop

### Hitch 5: 8/18 - 8/26

8. Voyageurs National Park- Kabetogama Visitor Center, Kabetogama  
- scraping and painting

### Hitch 5.5: 9/1 - 9/4

9. Riverside Park, St. Cloud  
- masonry restoration

1. Halfway Ranger Station Historic District, Ely  
- pest mitigation

### Hitch 6: 9/9 - 9/17

9. Riverside Park, St. Cloud  
- masonry restoration, community outreach workshop

10. Morrison County Historical Society, Little Falls  
- scraping and painting

11. Old Frontenac Cemetery, Frontenac  
- cemetery restoration

### Hitch 7: 9/22 - 9/30

12. Grand Portage National Monument, Grand Portage  
- stockade restoration, trail maintenance
1. Halfway Ranger Station Historic District, Ely  
- roof and log replacement, site stabilization, floor restoration

### Hitch 8: 10/6 - 10/14

12. Grand Portage National Monument, Grand Portage  
- stockade restoration, trail maintenance
13. Edna G. Tugboat, Two Harbors  
- window restoration, carpentry

### Hitch 9: 10/21 - 10/28

14. Duluth Children's Museum, Duluth  
- demolition, site preparation
1. Halfway Ranger Station Historic District, Ely  
- site winterization



## 2020 partnerships

- AmeriCorps
- Conservation Corps Minnesota and Iowa
- Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums
- Minnesota Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment
- Minnesota Historical Society
- Minnesota State Historic - Preservation Office
- Northland AmeriCorps Collaborative
- Northland History Coalition
- National Park Service
- Rethos
- Superior Fuel
- The Corps Network
- U of MN Cloquet Forestry Center
- USDA Forest Service



Before



After

*"They were as interested in the history of our village and cemetery as much as we old people living here are. Preservation was as important to them as to us. The changes they have brought to our cemetery are incredible. Stones which can now be read, stones which have been put back together, stones which were formerly buried have been brought to light - all an incredible betterment. But the most incredible thing they brought - at least to me - was hope for the future in this next generation. We are in good hands!"*

*- Frontenac Community Member*

## halfway ranger station historic district

### *saving the past, in the present, for the future*

Halfway Ranger Station Historic District (Halfway) sits on 12 acres within the Superior National Forest. Dating back to the early 1900s, the site has a rich history that encompasses a logging camp, USDA Forest Service administration, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), wildlife conservation research, and community programming.

In 2015, Northern Bedrock entered into a participating agreement with the USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station to maintain the site by facilitating Corpsmember and community focused hands-on trainings. Northern Bedrock's board and staff continue to work on developing a sustainable business plan that engages Corpsmembers, volunteers, and the historic preservation community through year-round programming and outreach.



*Halfway boasts an architecturally unique complex of buildings, including seven Rustic/Adirondack-style log buildings built in 1934-35 by the CCC and three stick-framed structures used by the Northern Research Station.*

## minnesota state historical society

### *legacy grant*

Since 2018, Northern Bedrock has been improving the Halfway Ranger Station funded thanks to a Legacy Funds Large Grant for the rehabilitation of the Ranger Dwelling and the Lake State Forest Experimental Station (LSFES) Building. This year's projects focused on stabilizing the site and upgrading utilities to increase site capacity. The grant enabled us to complete plumbing and electrical system updates as well as refinish the floors in the Ranger Dwelling.

## *Passport In Time*

### *preserving the nation's past with the help of the public*

Early October brought five US Forest Service Passport In Time (PIT) volunteers and one crew to Halfway. Together we were able to tackle larger projects including log replacement, windows restoration, fascia replacement, and roof repair. This year's focus was on the Warehouse, Insectary, Pumphouse, and Oil House. Many thanks to everyone for your expert help and great conversations!



## orientation

### *hello halfway, welcome corps life*

After initial introductions and enrollment paperwork in Duluth, Corpsmembers and staff headed north to Halfway for an immersive orientation and jumped right into living and learning together! This year orientation doubled as a 14-day quarantine period for all Corpsmembers and staff.

Hands-on trainings included team building, OSHA 10 construction safety, Wilderness First Aid/CPR, Leave No Trace, risk management, crew leadership, tool use and safety, AmeriCorps policies, spike camp management, meal planning, and Historic Preservation 101 - plus two full days of cemetery restoration!



### **Why are you serving with Northern Bedrock? How does this fit into your future goals?**

*"I'm serving to get a chance to explore Minnesota history and to have a foundation of technical skills that will help me in the future. I'm learning a lot about myself and others."*

*- Corpsmember, recent high school graduate*

*"I plan to work in museums and archives someday, and this program is excellent for experience in the field."*

*- Corpsmember, current college student*

*"I wanted to try something very different from what I had been doing before and get a little out of my comfort zone. I've always liked service learning and I was interested to get some hard skills from trades. I also wanted to try more job options before fully applying to a master's program."*

*- Corpsmember, recent college graduate*



**Ranger Dwelling Floor Restoration**



**Insectary Stabilization**



**Warehouse Log Replacement**

## public workshops

Public programming allows Corpsmembers, Staff, Hosts, and Technical Specialists to share their site, passion, and technical expertise with the community they are serving. These personal connections help to foster a sense of community stewardship, purpose, and place in Corpsmembers.

Through planning and facilitating public workshops, Corpsmembers hone their leadership, public speaking, and programming skills. This provides Corpsmembers an opportunity to become the teachers and share their new skills with the public.



*"In the future, I would like to be an active member of my community with work experience that goes beyond an office. I hope to study public interest law and this program offers a unique perspective on community engagement."* - Corpsmember

### Cemetery Restoration

In August, Northern Bedrock partnered with Pope County Historical Society to present a full day public workshop on cemetery preservation. Hosted at East Zion Church near Starbuck, MN, the workshop covered the five steps important to the long term care of cemetery monuments: cleaning, probing for hidden stones, edging, resetting stones and documenting your work. Fifteen people participated, rotating in small groups between hands-on stations led by corpsmembers.



### Masonry Restoration

In September, Northern Bedrock collaborated with Rethos and a host of additional invitees to demonstrate appropriate masonry repair at a project we started last year. Local historian, Bill Morgan, discussed the history of the Works Progress Administration era and its impact on the St. Cloud area. Corpmembers and Technical Specialist, Ray Stenglein, shared how they repaired and restored parts of the stone retaining wall with integrated staircase and 1933 drainage flume. Corpsmembers divided participants into small groups to explore the many tasks involved. Eighteen people participated in this morning outreach session.



## 2020 field season staff

Jill Baum, Executive Director  
 Jessica Fortney, Historic Preservation Program Manager  
 Luke Sharman, Outreach Coordinator  
 Grace Leppink, Field Logistics Coordinator

## board of directors

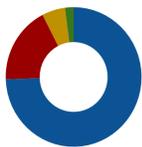
Inez Wildwood, Chair  
 Kaitlyn Rudolph, Treasurer  
 Laura Leppink, Secretary  
 Dylan Klein  
 Doug Thompson  
 Walt Ogstad  
 Rachel Peterson



We were honored to host the Chair of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Aimee Jorjani, this summer. She is pictured above at Voyageurs National Park where she and her son spent the night camping with both crews under the stars.

## financial summary

### Funding Sources



Minnesota State Historical Society	\$400,000
Fee-for-Service	\$96,500
PPP Loan (Forgiven)	\$29,625
Donations	\$11,080
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$537,205</b>

### Expenditures



Program	\$256,115
Management and General	\$145,035
Fundraising	\$22,480
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$423,630</b>

Because of our committed financial supporters, increased fee-for service revenue, and sustained community partnerships, Northern Bedrock hopes to eventually expand our field season capacity to five crews, explore year round programming, develop a community-based virtual historic preservation ambassador corps, and increase public workshop opportunities.

Thank you to all our in-kind donors for site interpretations, story telling, floor scraping, lemon bars, and herring! Because of you, (and despite COVID-19), Corpsmembers were able to experience a successful Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps Field Season! Northern Bedrock is also beyond grateful for the continued support offered by our Project Hosts, Technical Specialists, Partners, Corpsmembers, and the Communities in which we serve.

*“Not everything you do is something you came expecting to do or wanting to do, but that does not make it any less important to project hosts and to you as a corpsmember. Everything you do in the corps is going to help make you more well-rounded and capable of dealing with whatever life throws at you.” - Corpsmember, advice to future corpsmembers*



*Northern Bedrock is a member of 21<sup>st</sup> CSC. This provides relevant federal agencies and departments the enhanced ability to engage corps through public-private partnerships to complete pressing projects, which encourages coordination across the federal government. Participating agencies and departments including the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, Transportation, Defense, Veterans Affairs, Labor, Energy and NOAA, the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Corporation for National and Community Service.*