



BORDERLANDS
EARTH CARE YOUTH



BECY 2022

PROGRAM REPORT

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION



Borderlands Earth Care Youth (BECY) inspires and trains the next generation of land stewards by hiring culturally diverse youth living in the US/Mexico borderlands to restore the trans-national watersheds they call home. Youth work with rock, wood, seeds, hands, and hearts to return flowing waters and riverside ecosystems to the arid borderlands. Youth interns work alongside conservation professionals to make grassroots systemic change in historically overlooked and underserved communities.

Two crews, one from **Patagonia** and one from **Douglas**, Arizona work four days a week over six weeks in a variety of locations across the borderlands learning about watershed restoration, rainwater harvesting, native seed collection, gardening, and permaculture.

Participants also complete their own community restoration project to further explore a topic of personal interest and share with their peers at a graduation ceremony.



2022 BECY PROGRAM STAFF



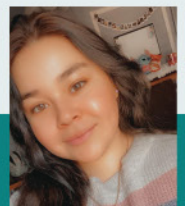
Denisse Ortega Lorona
Education Director



Caleb Weaver
Youth Education
Program Manager



Jordan Sene
Youth Education
Program Coordinator



Nicole Luna
BECY Douglas
Program Facilitator

Through BECY, my biggest accomplishment was building one rock dams at T4 Ranch. With these I was able to see something I created that serves as an amazing purpose, to conserve water on these lands and contribute to sustainable ranching.

— Nicholas Dekhtyar,
1st year BECY Patagonia intern



BECY has given me so many opportunities not only allowing me to have more time in the outdoors, but also showed me the importance of our community, taking care of our ecosystem, and meeting great people. I absolutely adore these two years that I have been in the program and I highly recommend it.

— Deyanira Victor,
BECY Douglas Facilitator



BECY Celebrates 10 Years

Since
inception
in 2012,

170
youth
have graduated
from BECY



Deyanira Victor
BECY Douglas
Program Facilitator



Nicholas Botz
BECY Patagonia
Program Facilitator



Ismael Vega
BECY Patagonia
Program Facilitator



Karen Ornelas
University of Arizona
Doris Duke
Conservation Scholar

2022 RESTORATION IMPACTS

Maintained

16

Existing Erosion
Control Structures

Built

167

New Erosion
Control Structures

Planted

678

Native Plants, Grow Out Field
Plants, and Vegetable Plants

Pelletized

367

Pounds of Seed

Transplanted

1022

Native Plants

Prepared

26

Garden Beds

Installed

1

5,000 Gallon Rainwater
Harvesting Cistern

Installed

7

Irrigation Systems

Collected Wood for
Native Mulch from Across

17

Acres

Worked in

18

Unique Locations

2022
HAD

13

BECY
interns

AND

5

program
facilitators

FROM

5

borderlands
communities

AGE
15 - 22

2022 COMMUNITY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

PATAGONIA

The BECY Patagonia crew worked on several community projects in the heart of Patagonia. Thanks to the generous support of the community, the BECY Patagonia crew shaped and armored the earth to passively harvest rainwater that flows down the side of the street during rainstorms. This rainwater will now soak into the Patagonia Memorial Garden, supporting native trees and newly planted native plants. This project was supported by local residents and the United States Forest Service, through a local Secure Rural Schools grant.

BECY Patagonia also partnered with the Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center to create four new vegetable garden beds, install a rainwater-fed drip irrigation system, and install a second rainwater collection cistern to collect rainwater from the roof supporting the sustainable mini-urban farm project. Additionally, the interns put in a 9 ft x 15 ft rock wall alongside the sloped bank at Patagonia Union High School. This project built upon work completed by the BECY 2019 cohort. The purpose of this project was to slow down water to mitigate flooding in the area and eliminate further erosion.

Patagonia Memorial Garden



DOUGLAS

BECY Douglas had the opportunity to tour the Huachuca City Community Garden (HCCG), a project that BRN helped design and create. Interns helped maintain the entrance of the organization by weeding and planting native plants. They were able to learn more about how HCCG, a donation and volunteer-run project, wants to scale up their food production in order to continue serving the surrounding community with fresh healthy food.

BECY Douglas also worked alongside Youth Conservation Corps to complete trail brushing in the Rucker Canyon area. Brushing is the maintenance act of removing debris and excess vegetation from the sides of the trails, up to two feet on the uphill sides of trails and one foot on the downhill side. The youth were able to learn about the effort it takes to take care of local trails and contribute to making them safe and enjoyable.



Jesus Yanez at HCCG.

INTERNS HIGHLIGHTS

In order to graduate from the program, BECY students must complete their own community restoration project over the summer. At their graduation, they present it to their friends, family and community. Community-based ecological restoration preserves ecosystems while giving community members an opportunity to improve their neighborhoods and build stronger communities.

DOUGLAS

CESAR SALCIDO



Cesar Salcido's project focused on the impacts of textile waste on the environment. He shared that 85% of clothes bought end up in landfills or burned, contributing to pollution. Additionally, the average American throws away 81 pounds of clothing each year. Cesar was interested to learn what small steps he could individually take to support a more sustainable future. Cesar went door to door to collect unwanted clothing so that he could donate it to Centro de Atención al Migrante Exodus (CAME). He ended up collecting 384 pieces of clothing which will be reused by many other adults and children before it ends up in a landfill. For him, this summer was an opportunity to connect with his community and give back to it. The mission of his project was to share information he learned over the summer and to explain to others why it is important to stop excessive consumerism. He encourages pursuing new trends: buy second hand, swap clothes and donate gently used textiles to charity.

DOUGLAS

HECTOR MORENO

Hector Moreno took a different approach to raising awareness about the BECY program and the environment within his community. Over the summer, he volunteered to become an assistant coach for the Douglas Spartans basketball team. After basketball practices, he would give brief presentations about the BECY program and the importance of watershed restoration. Since the youth on the team are 15+ years old, he encouraged them to apply for the internship program next season.



KAREN ORNELAS, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA DORIS DUKE CONSERVATION SCHOLAR

YUMA INTERN

My name is Karen Ornelas, my pronouns are they/them, and I am a junior at the University of Arizona majoring in Natural Resources with an emphasis in Rangeland management. I grew up in Yuma, Arizona, which resides on the original land of both the Cocopah and Quechan native tribes. Yuma county is known for its agriculture so from a young age I had a basic understanding of why we should respect the land we live on and why it is important to observe and protect these areas. I have always loved science and knew I wanted a career in it but never knew what specific field. Growing up I never had the opportunity to go hiking, camping, or exploring nature so I never thought of environmental sciences or natural resources as a potential career. I also never saw scientists who were like me specifically first-generation Mexican-American and really wanted to change that. Once I got to college, I realized the only way I would be happy with my career was if I changed my major to natural resources. Ever since that change, I have been so eager to learn more about Natural Resources and how I can play a part in protecting the Earth. Being a part of the DDCSP only solidified my passion for protecting and maintaining both wildlife and the environment. It also motivated me to continue my studies so I can show younger generations there are researchers and scientists who share the same struggles and upbringings but were still able to chase their dreams.



Going to El Coronado Ranch was an opportunity to visually see the importance and positive consequences of our work. Although our work seems small, it has large scale consequences. The results of environmental restoration helps nature and ranchers that live off the land. Thank you!



— Cesar Salcido,
1st year BECY Douglas
Youth Leader

I gained a lot from this program and I think the impact that it has is very visible to me. Three years ago, we were building these rock structures, I got to see them again and the soil level was up at least seven inches. It was great! There were plants everywhere and native pollinators that weren't there three years ago. The impact is measurable and I think from here on, it's all about expanding this kind of work to make sure it's happening in other areas.



— Nicholas Botz,
BECY Patagonia Facilitator

THANK YOU

GRANTORS:

Arizona Community Foundation
Arizona Department of Water Resources
Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
Malpai Borderlands Group
National Forest Foundation
Southern Arizona Quail Forever
United States Forest Service
University of Arizona
Wildlife Conservation Society
Wildlife Corridors

PARTNERS:

Barboot Ranch
Borderlands Nursery & Seed
Borderlands Wildlife Preserve
Coronado National Forest
Deep Dirt Farm
Douglas High School Land Lab
Douglas Public Library
El Coronado Ranch
Huachuca City Community Garden
Malpai Borderlands Group
Patagonia Union High School
Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center
Sycamore Ranch
T4 Ranch
Town of Patagonia
United States Forest Service
University of Arizona Southwest Field Studies in Writing
Winkler Ranch
Youth Conservation Corps

BORDERLANDS EARTH CARE YOUTH

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BORDERLANDS RESTORATION NETWORK

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