

# Nonprofit introduces teens to conservation work

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SAGINAW, MI (WNEM) - A new group is focusing on preserving local wildlife and teaching valuable trade skills.

The nonprofit introduces teens and young adults to "green collar" work and potentially a whole new outlook on life.



(Source: WNEM)

Terry Burt, with Seeds, said he has never done anything quite like this. The 19-year-old and four other crew members belong to Seeds, a youth conservation corp. It has them getting up close and personal with nature.

It's a 10 week program and seven of those weeks are spent outside conserving the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge.

"The objective of the program is to engage inner city youth in what we call green collar work. And so we wanted to engage our community, engage our youth. Introduce them to the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, give them some job skills and just integrate with the community," said Pamela Repp, refuge manager.

Repp said this is the first year the Seeds program has been implemented in Saginaw. She is hoping to reach even more people in the future.

"We're really hoping that next year we can do this again with maybe a bigger crew," Repp said.

Seeds is a non-profit organization. Repp said grants and funding are crucial to its existence in Mid-Michigan, where she said it's changing lives.

"I was going into the service, but this job kind of actually made me want to switch my career to construction so it's kind of a hard decision," said Ireyon Carter, Saginaw resident.

He said the job not only helped him learn about himself, but his community as well.

"I didn't even know what Green Point was until like six weeks ago. So it's right in our backyard and people don't know that," Carter said.

The crew said it's been pretty fun too.

"It gives inner city youth something outside of what they're used to. Introduces them to something new," said Do'Maryie Lloyd, Saginaw resident.

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