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High school seniors complete conservation camp

University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations

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MISSOULA --

Forestry and conservation underwent intense scrutiny by 22 interested high school seniors last week in the Swan River Valley.

Don Drummond and Bob Lange, co-directors of the Conservation Orientation Camp held at the Goat Creek Ranger Station, said the camp gave the boys an opportunity to see all aspects of the forest and conservation industry.

The students were housed and fed at the Goat Creek Station by the State Forestry Office and were taken to the various areas each day to hear, see and participate in the different phases of forestry and conservation.

Lange, University of Montana assistant professor of dendrology, said the highlight of the field activities was when the boys located and suppressed a forest fire.

Drummond, deputy state forester from Missoula, explained that governmental agencies must protect the forest and utilize it to the maximum potential. He told the group that many times the best interests of forest management do not meet with public or private approval, but forest conservation is our primary interest.

Larry Osborn, Northern Pacific resident forester from Seeley Lake, explained industrial forest usage and its role in conservation. He said, "Wherever you have logging, it is not beautiful. But after the scars heal in about five or ten years and a management stand is set up, the new stand is more beautiful and productive than the virgin stand."
During the week the students heard members of the UM faculty, representatives from the State Foresters Office, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Park Service, Northern Pacific Railway, Anaconda Forest Products Co., State Board of Institutions and Horner-Waldorf Paper Co. explain their roles in forestry.

The week, however, was not without a work session. The group cleaned up a campground, and got a first hand look at what one week's use can do to a recreation area.

Friday evening the students were guests of Missoula area foresters at a banquet held at the Club Chateau. Each boy was sponsored by a forester and Saturday morning, the Blackfoot Protective Association held a breakfast for the group at Bonner.

Lange concluded, the program was designed to give the boys actual experience in the field of conservation and forestry. They saw how forests, if managed and conserved properly, can serve man for many years.

Drummond added, if nothing else, the boys know now whether they are cut out to be foresters. I think this experience illustrated to them there is more to forestry than chopping down a tree or building a picnic table. It is a field that requires a great deal of scientific planning and consideration of all that are involved.

The June 9-15 camp was sponsored by the State Office of Forestry and the University of Montana School of Forestry.

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