

Gabriel R. Angulo

Weekly Journal: 7

We spent most of this week in Eastern Washington, which differed greatly from the western region of Washington. Although a bit warmer, I really enjoyed being in Eastern Washington because not only did it remind me of my home town, I was also able to interact with a community that I feel comfortable with. Eastern Washington is huge on agriculture and relies a lot on farmworkers, which predominantly reside from Hispanic heritage.

We first visited the Moses Coulee Conservation Center, which is operated by The Nature Conservation, where we spent our nights. We visited an organic orchard, Double M. Orchards in Quincy, where we witnessed the biological benefits of organic farming and moreover reflected on the social aspect with consumers and farmworkers. We were also able to learn with regards to the business profitability and benefits towards and against organic apple farming. I was able to speak to the supervisor, whose name was Ignacio (“Nacho”). Nacho talked to me about the field workers, which worked under the H2A visa program. He expressed his concern for the well-being of the workers and their strict rules imposed for their safety. I began to reflect on my memories of working in the fields and thought of my mom who was currently working in the fields. I noticed significant differences in the working conditions, which were more gruesome in the grape fields back at home. Moreover, the dry environment of Eastern Washington is more prone to contain invasive species. Under a sunny day in Ellensburg, we learned about shrub-steppe ecology, the importance of sagebrush, and the impacts of invasive species in that specific ecosystem.

After a few days in Eastern Washington, we traveled back to Western Washington, where we met with some Carnivore Investigations professionals. We hiked through the forest while learning about cougar ecology. Back in Seattle, we visited the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks to learn about their new strategic plan to weave equity and inclusion through their policies and activities for improving ecosystem conservation, water resource use, its food system, and climate adaptation. I was really interested in many projects that were being conducted and learned more about my possible roles as an engineer if I worked there.

It is strange to think that my time interning for this summer is almost over. I have learned a ton during these past few weeks and view things a bit differently. I will continue to learn and will make an impact some day in the future, possible tomorrow and hopefully the day after that.

