

Veterans trade in guns for fire hoses

By Timothy Sandoval, Sacramento Bee

Traditionally, there has been a friendly rivalry between different branches of the military.

But it was more like cooperative teamwork Wednesday when more than 50 veterans from the Army, Navy, National Guard and Marines learned together how to prevent and extinguish wildfires at the California Conservation Corps' Placer Center in Auburn.

On the third day of a four-day training program, the vets learned how to lay down hose when they battle a fire, clean up after fires to ensure they will not reignite and use flares and other firefighting equipment.

"It's a good program because not only do you get to spend more time with veterans, you also get to spend more time with different types of veterans," said Jacob Delaney, 21, who served in the Iraq War. "All around you start to realize the different jobs and the different branches that everyone comes from, and their experiences will help you in the long run."

The four crews of veterans came from San Bernardino, San Diego, Placer County and South Lake Tahoe. They all arrived at the Placer Center on Friday and have been living in tents on the training area's lawn.

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