



# The Corps Network

Strengthening America through  
service and conservation



## **The Corps Network**

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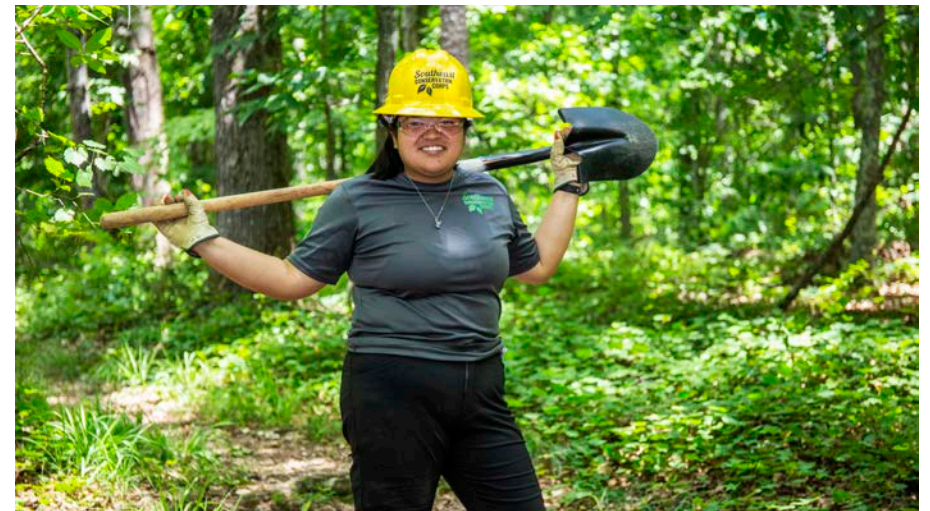
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**National Association of State Park Directors, September 2021**



## What is a Corps?

- **Service and workforce development programs** *(some Corps also offer GED, high school diploma or college preparatory programs)*
- Operated by **nonprofits** or units of **state or local government**
- Engage in **public-private partnerships** on **service projects** focused on stewardship, community improvement, outdoor recreation access.
- Based on model of **Civilian Conservation Corps**



## Each Corps is a little different, but they share common elements

- Paid service-learning/work experience
- Corpsmembers work under supervision of trained Crew Leaders and mentors
- Intensive orientation/training
- Individualized assessments and personal planning
- Workforce development
- Civic engagement
- Corpsmember transitional support/follow-up services



# The Corps Network

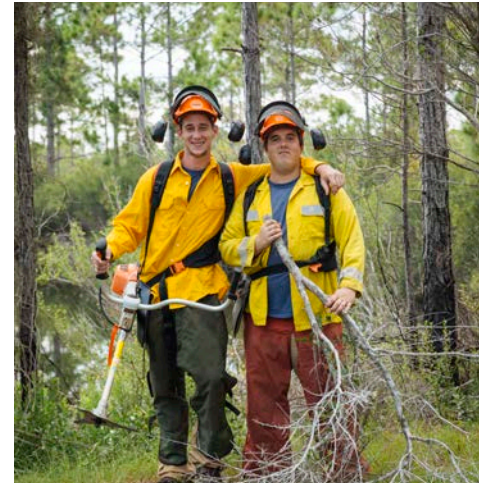
- National Association of Service and Conservation Corps
- Founded in 1985
- Based in Washington, DC
- Provide technical assistance, project and grant opportunities, best practices, advocacy
- **139** member organizations across the U.S.
  - Annually engage ~20,000+ diverse young adults (**typically ages 16 – 30**)
  - Corpsmembers represent range of backgrounds and life experiences



# Types of Work with Parks

## Examples include:

- Trail maintenance and construction
  - *Stairs, bridges, erosion control, accessibility*
- Invasive species treatment
- Habitat restoration
- Fire fuels treatment
- Hazardous tree removal / saw projects
- Campground maintenance
- Visitor education and interpretation
- Historic preservation
- Prescribed burns
- And more...



## Outcomes Snapshot

From 2019 - 2020, young adults in Corps...

- Restored over **1.73 million** acres of habitat
- Planted **1.3 million+** trees
- **32,000+** acres of fuels treated
- Built/improved over **25,300** miles of trails
- Maintained/improved over **7,300** miles of waterways



# Next Generation of Park Leaders: Certifications / Training

- ~10,000+ certifications earned annually
- **Examples of certifications:**
  - Wilderness First Aid
  - Wilderness First Responder
  - OSHA 10-hour, OSHA 30-hour
  - Chainsaw/Sawyer Certification
  - ATV/OHV Operator
  - Pesticide/Herbicide Applicator
  - Government Driver's License
  - Boating License





## Valued Project Partners

- Many Corps have worked with federal, state and local park agencies / resource managers for decades
  - Fee-for-service
  - Some programs based in state agencies
- Corps help extend staff capacity, address backlogged projects, get to projects sooner



# Corps that received funding through park agencies, 2018 – 2020 (>\$80 million in work completed)

ACE  
American YouthWorks  
Anchorage Park Foundation  
Appalachian Mountain Club  
**California Conservation Corps**  
Canyon Country Youth Corps  
Civicorps  
Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa  
Conservation Corps North Bay  
Conservation Corps of Long Beach  
Conservation Legacy  
**Delaware State Parks Veterans Corps**  
EarthCorps  
Fresno EOC Local Conservation Corps  
Great Basin Institute  
Green City Force

Greencorps Chicago  
Heart of Oregon Corps  
**Kansas Outdoor AmeriCorps Action Team**  
Kupu  
Los Angeles Conservation Corps  
**Maine Conservation Corps**  
**Maryland Conservation Corps**  
**Michigan Civilian Conservation Corps**  
Montana Conservation Corps  
Mt. Adams Institute  
Northwest Youth Corps  
Onondaga Earth Corps  
Operation Fresh Start  
PowerCorpsPHL  
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps – CO  
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps – NM

San Jose Conservation Corps  
SEEDS EcoCorps  
Student Conservation Association  
Urban Conservation Corps  
Urban Corps of San Diego County  
Utah Conservation Corps  
Vermont Youth Conservation Corps  
**Virginia Conservation Corps**  
**Washington Conservation Corps**  
Watershed Committee of the Ozarks  
Western Colorado Conservation  
Corps  
X-Cel Education  
YouthWork Conservation Corps

## Example:

### Maryland Conservation Corps

- AmeriCorps program
- Members ages 17 – 25 (from across country)
- Managed by Maryland Park Service since 1984
- Crews of 5-7 members serve under supervision of MD Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff.
- Do range of projects – examples include:
  - Aquatic restoration
  - Education for school groups and interpretive programs in parks
  - Historic preservation
  - Nature center improvement
  - Trail maintenance
  - Tree planting
  - And more...



## Example:

### Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa

- Founded in 1981 (originally based in Minnesota DNR)
- Became its own nonprofit in 2003
- >\$2.5 million annually in State Parks and Trails, and Natural Resource Management resource dollars
  - Youth and Young Adult field crew-based maintenance and improvement projects
  - The I Can! Program: Corpsmembers teach beginner paddling and camping classes to hundreds of park visitors annually
  - Year-long Individual Placement (intern) program with 20-25 positions. Provide more specialized projects (e.g. program planning, communications, community outreach, and field work)



## Civilian Climate Corps

- Calls to invest in engaging more Americans in critical conservation and climate resiliency projects
  - Executive order from White House in February
  - Nearly a dozen bills introduced in Congress
- Possibility of funding through budget reconciliation
- What we hope to see:
  - More funding for projects
  - More service opportunities
    - *Emphasis on recruiting underserved, underrepresented populations*
  - Support for career pathways, additional training
  - Increased stipend/wage



## How to get involved

Connect with us	Follow us on social media
<p><b>Mary Ellen Sprenkel, President &amp; CEO</b> <a href="mailto:msprenkel@corpsnetwork.org">msprenkel@corpsnetwork.org</a> Make connections/introductions Learn about starting a Corps</p>	<p>@TheCorpsNetwork</p>
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