

Conservation and Climate Corps

Over the past several decades, conservation corps have become an essential part of national and community service. Recent efforts to develop an ambitious Civilian Climate Corps, as well as more modest versions of the American Climate Corps set up during the administration of Joseph Biden (2021-2025), have built upon these foundations. While the Trump administration has recently declared an end to the American Climate Corps, corps members are likely to be recruited through the existing infrastructures of national and community service.

National service has had several main periods of development in the United States, with the current one structured through the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). AmeriCorps is its signature program. These were put in place during the early 1990s.

Conservation work has been important to national service since the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression in the 1930s. Today, CNCS funds a wide array of conservation work, including forest and coastal restoration, wildfire prevention and response, land conservation and stewardship, park and trails maintenance, disaster response in face of hurricanes and floods, energy efficiency in homes and low-income housing construction. This work typically occurs through nonprofit conservation corps, other community organizations, and in partnership with various federal agencies, as well as state and local agencies.

In this essay, we first review the history of conservations corps through its main periods of development and examine the sources of institutional resilience in national service programs. We then provide an overview of research on the impacts of national service, and then turn to contemporary conservation and climate corps.

The potential of national service to become a central component of sustainable and resilient communities and ecosystems in the face of climate crisis is enormous.

History

National service has had three main phases of innovation, each with a different mix of program goals, recruitment mechanisms, and institutional features, as well as conceptions of active citizenship that the programs have emphasized. The first began during the Great Depression in the 1930s, the second in the 1960s, and the third in the 1990s.

1933-1942: Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)

The CCC was created by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) during the Great Depression to provide work relief and conservation jobs to unemployed young men, primarily those without high school degrees. It came to be viewed as a job training program and recruited more than three million over the course of the program. The CCC was discontinued as WWII generated needs for labor in war production, as well as recruits for the military after the U.S. entered WWII in late 1941.

Conservation work took the form of planting trees to restore federal and state forests, preserve land from soil erosion, clear trails, and build parks. In all, the CCC planted two billion trees, slowed soil erosion on forty million acres of farmland, and developed or renovated 800 state parks. The latter was part of an emerging mission of building outdoor recreation structures.

In return for assistance, the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) had farmers sign a “cooperative agreement” requiring them to contribute personally to the work of Corps enrollees and to promise to maintain the improvements for at least five years. Those who signed were referred to as “cooperators,” though soil conservation practices also spread to many “non-cooperators.”

SCS also established 175 soil and watershed conservation districts that showcased “demonstrations” and “demonstration areas” for emulation as “best practice” (though not using the contemporary terminology).

Some of the work of the CCC became controversial among prominent conservationists and ecologists of the period, as well as leading groups, such as the National Audubon Society, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Izaak Walton League. Certain practices, such as draining swamps or using poisons to control rodents, were criticized as inconsistent with ecological science. The building of so many roads and recreation centers threatened wilderness areas. These criticisms had broad resonance among the public.

However, CCC work also set the stage for the postwar wilderness movement and the eventual achievement of the Wilderness Act in 1964. The CCC helped to broaden the debate about conservation and to democratize the movement by including lay and working class conservationists from the public at large alongside professionals from scientific and government institutions.

Thousands from the CCC later became activists in environmental groups and took jobs in conservation agencies. Some had complemented their daily CCC work with formal night classes in forestry and natural resources.

The CCC also publicized its work broadly to the American public through newspapers, radio, and magazines. Other civic groups, such as the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, emulated its tree planting efforts, with the help of the CCC and the U.S. Forest Service. Strong support existed in all regions of the country and across party lines.

Camp life was diverse in some ways – rural, urban, hill country, multi-ethnic and recent immigrants – but exclusively male (except for one camp for women) and segregated by race, with separate camps for Native Americans on Indian reservations.

The CCC was disbanded in 1942 as the overwhelming majority of those who served joined the military, and it did not leave much of a direct federal institutional legacy. However, various others “corps” were created after the war in a wide variety of programs that replicated the CCC’s conservation work. Atlanta and San Francisco had Corps-like

programs, as did some counties, and eventually several states (California, New Hampshire, Arizona, Montana, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Michigan).

In 1957, the Student Conservation Association (SCA) was created to give college students the opportunity to volunteer in national parks and forests. A Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) was created in the 1970s for summer work through the Department of Interior and U.S. Forest Service, and a Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) provided year-round conservation work and educational opportunities. YCC and YACC were eliminated by budget cuts in 1981.

The National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, now [The Corps Network](#), was organized in 1985 to represent emerging Corps. Many are now partially funded through AmeriCorps.

For more on early conservation corps, see the following:

Melissa Bass, [*The Politics and Civics of National Service: Lessons from the Civilian Conservation Corps, VISTA, and AmeriCorps*](#) (Washington, DC: Brookings Press, 2013), for a comparative scholarly analysis across the three periods. **CivicGreen Bookshelf** for a [full review](#).

Neil M. Maher, [*Nature's New Deal: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Roots of the American Environmental Movement*](#) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Benjamin F. Alexander, [*The New Deal's Forest Army: How the Civilian Conservation Corps Worked*](#) (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018).

Douglas Brinkley, [*Rightful Heritage: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Land of America*](#) (New York: HarperCollins, 2016).

Olen Cole Jr., [*The African-American Experience in the Civilian Conservation Corps*](#) (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999).

Richard Melzer, *Coming of Age in the Great Depression: The Civilian Conservation Corps in New Mexico, 1933-1942* (Las Cruces, NM: Yucca Tree Press, 2000).

Jason Scott Smith, [*Building New Deal Liberalism*](#) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Frank C. Davis, [*My C.C.C. Days: Memories of the Civilian Conservation Corps*](#) (Boone, NC: Blair, 2006).

1965 onwards: Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)

VISTA was established in 1964 as part of the War on Poverty by President Lyndon Baines Johnson (1963-1969), modelled partly upon an earlier proposal by President John F. Kennedy, whom LBJ succeeded upon Kennedy's assassination in November 1963.

The program enrolled around 5,000 at its height, who competed for slots. Men and women were eligible, although initially the program favored white, middle-class, and educated volunteers to serve as “outside catalysts” for change. Increasingly, however, 75 percent of slots were reserved for “locally recruited volunteers,” thus ensuring greater diversity and the recruitment of women of color already active in their communities.

In line with the civil rights movement's claims for expanded democracy and federal mandates for citizen participation in anti-poverty programs, the Johnson administration favored a view of VISTA volunteers as community organizers addressing structural issues of poverty. Jimmy Carter, another Democratic president (1977-1981), likewise tended to favor organizing models.

Republican presidents, such as Richard Nixon (1969-1974), Gerald Ford (1974-1977), and Ronald Reagan (1981-1989), preferred a service model over an organizing model, and attempted to cutback or eliminate VISTA altogether. President George H.W. Bush (1989-1993) likewise preferred a service model, but did not try to eliminate VISTA.

VISTA was incorporated into AmeriCorps in 1994 as AmeriCorps VISTA.

References:

Melissa Bass, [*The Politics and Civics of National Service: Lessons from the Civilian Conservation Corps, VISTA, and AmeriCorps*](#) (Washington, DC: Brookings Press, 2013), Part II.

Marvin Schwartz, [*In Service to America: A History of VISTA in Arkansas, 1965-1985*](#) (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1988).

1994-present: Corporation for National and Community Service

In the late 1980s, several influential studies began to reignite debate on national service. Sociologist Charles Moskos published an especially influential book in 1988, as did Don Eberley. The Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) published its own Blueprint the same year.

Republican president George H.W. Bush, building upon some models in the field in the 1980s, created the Points of Light Foundation in 1990 and signed the national legislation proposed by Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) that same year. Kennedy looked to the model of City Year in Boston, developed in 1988 by Michael Brown and Alan Khazei.

Bush also created an Office of National Service at the White House, and he and Bill Clinton (former chair of the DLC and governor of Arkansas) competed in the election of 1992 based partly upon their conceptions of national service.

President Clinton (1993-2001) signed the National and Community Service Trust Act in 1993 as his signature program and created the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) as a wholly owned government entity to administer its various programs. While the legislation had broad bipartisan support, it was subject to some conservative critiques as an unwarranted and corrupting intrusion of the federal government into the sphere of voluntarism.

After Republicans took over the House of Representatives in the 1994 midterm elections and Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-GA) became speaker, the charged political context made it difficult for CNCS to develop the institutional arrangements to support national service. House Republicans repeatedly refused to approve funding until compelled to do so by Senate action.

Leadership at CNCS during the initial years was spent mostly in a defensive posture, which came to distort measures of program accomplishments, focusing primarily upon a very narrow and instrumental conception of public work and “getting things done” as enumerating trees planted, kids tutored, and the like. Nonetheless, Eli Segal, the first executive director of CNCS, succeed in launching and legitimating the agency in its critical first years.

While these output measures helped legitimate the agency, they also made it difficult to evaluate other impacts of national service, such as future civic engagement, social capital, and personal development (see below), or even to develop more complex understandings of public work. The latter term, developed by Harry Boyte and colleagues, was never intended as narrow outputs.

Partisan conflict also drew energy away from working out the managerial and financial framework for such a complex program, which involved many local and state partners in design and implementation. These challenges lasted into the second decade.

CNCS directors and chairs under president George W. Bush (2001-2009) set the program on a much more manageable path, while bipartisan champions, such as Senator John McCain (R-AZ) and Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) provided critical support and renewed authorization. President Barack Obama (2009-2017) and Michele Obama had a profound commitment to national service and further strengthened it.

The complex structure of AmeriCorps responded to the mantra of “reinventing government” and accommodated the array of decentralized nonprofits in its funding and administration, thus insulating national service from some of the conservative critiques of the very idea of national service. Within this complex structure, benefit-cost ratios have proven quite positive.

References:

Peter Frumkin and JoAnn Jastrzab, [*Serving Country and Community: Who Benefits from National Service?*](#) (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

Melissa Bass, [*The Politics and Civics of National Service: Lessons from the Civilian Conservation Corps, VISTA, and AmeriCorps*](#) (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), Part III.

James L. Perry and Ann Marie Thomson, [*Civic Service: What Difference Does It Make?*](#) (Armonk, NY: Routledge, 2004).

E.J. Dionne, Kayla Meltzer Drogosz, and Robert E. Litan, eds., [*United We Serve: National Service and The Future of Citizenship*](#) (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003).

Charles C. Moskos, [*A Call to Civic Service: National Service for Country and Community*](#) (New York: Free Press, 1988).

Democratic Leadership Council, *Citizenship and National Service: A Blueprint for Civic Enterprise* (Washington, DC: DLC, 1988).

Suzanne Goldsmith, [*A City Year: On the Streets and in the Neighborhoods With Twelve Young Community Service Volunteers*](#) (New York: Norton, 1993).

Steven Waldman, [*The Bill: How Legislation Really Becomes Law: A Case Study of the National Service Bill*](#) (New York: Viking, 1995).

Thomas A. Bryer, ed., [*National Service and Volunteerism: Achieving Impact in Our Communities*](#) (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015).

Clive Belfield, [*The Economic Value of National Service*](#) (Voices for National Service, with Civic Enterprises and the S.D. Bechtel Jr. Foundation, September 2013).

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is the main program within the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), and AmeriCorps State and National is the main program within this. It funds across a broad range of program areas: conservation, disaster response, public safety, education, human needs, homeland security.

The other two AmeriCorps programs are the National Civilian Community Corps (AmeriCorps NCCC), which is organized as teams of young people who live in camps and travel to assist communities for intensive multi-week projects, and the former VISTA (AmeriCorps VISTA). CNCS also sponsors Senior Corps and several other programs.

Administrative and funding structure

AmeriCorps State and National has several key organizational features:

- *state service commissions*: public agencies appointed by governors. They are composed of some 1,200 citizens nationwide from philanthropic and service groups, are nonpartisan or bipartisan, and re-grant funding from CNCS, as well as from private philanthropic sources. Their purview is broader than AmeriCorps State and National, and most are members of [America's Service Commissions](#).
- *nonprofit service organizations*: these groups recruit and supervise Corps volunteers and organize projects. They can be stand-alone or part of branded organizations with multi-city affiliates and national scope.
- *funding*: funds are distributed according to several formulas:
 - *population-based*, which go to state service commissions for re-granting to nonprofits and public agencies
 - *national nonprofits* that operate national service projects in two or more states (e.g. City Year, Teach for America, YouthBuild)
 - *competitive grants to state commissions*, which then re-grant

Living allowances and educational grants

AmeriCorps programs have various formulas for living allowances during service, as well as educational grants after service. If you are interested in enrolling, please check for the latest data on the official AmeriCorps website ([Your Benefits](#)) and for the specific program you wish to join.

As of 2020, stipends and awards are the following:

- *living allowances*: these vary, depending on whether a full-time placement with AmeriCorps State and National or VISTA is for nine, ten, or eleven months (in some programs renewable for a second year). They range roughly from \$10,890 to \$12,100, which is paid in monthly installments. These are designed to cover rent, food and other living expenses at modest amounts. Various part-time arrangements are also available.

NCCC members live at regional campuses with full room and board covered, and during field projects they are lodged at community centers, churches, campgrounds, and hotel/motel rooms. Travel expenses are provided. Yearly stipends are approximately \$4,000, with the possibility of a childcare allowance of \$400 per month.

- *educational awards*: a full-time member can choose to receive the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, worth approximately \$6,000, which is usable up to seven years

after completing service. It can be used to pay for tuition or to repay student loans. The amount of a full-time Education Award increases every year based on the Pell Grant. Some colleges and universities match these awards.

Members can also opt to receive instead a cash stipend worth approximately \$1,800 at the end of their service term.

Impacts on future civic engagement

One important set of claims about the value of national service is that it can have an impact on civic engagement over the lifetime of participants.

In outlining the impacts of AmeriCorps on civic engagement, personal growth, social capital, and public work, we largely follow Peter Frumkin and JoAnn Jastrzab, [*Serving Country and Community: Who Benefits from National Service?*](#) (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

This study uses longitudinal survey data gathered over four rounds in a quasi-experimental design that matches AmeriCorps State and National as well as NCCC participants to those who have similar propensity to volunteer and who expressed interest, applied and/or were accepted, but did not enroll. The quantitative data for VISTA were taken from a 40-year retrospective study. See chapter 3 for the methodological discussion.

Overall, national service has been an important catalyst for greater civic engagement, although not consistently on all measures or across all programs.

- *volunteering*: AmeriCorps members reported increases in civic engagement after their service, yet the differences with the comparison group that did not enroll were not large. The major exception was among those that had not volunteered before, where the “gain score” over the comparison group was 25 percent. NCCC female participants also saw significant gains. Prior religious attendance during youth, as well as working in teams, also contributed positively.
- *neighborhood obligations*: AmeriCorps State and National participants showed a small, but positive and statistically significant net effect on their sense of obligation to help solve neighborhood problems and join neighborhood organizations. This was not the case, however, for NCCC participants, likely because they moved from project to project and community to community over the course of their service.
- *community problem identification*: AmeriCorps members were considerably more confident than the comparison group over the short and medium term (eight years out) in their ability to identify problems across various areas of environment, public health, crime, literacy and community engagement.
- *grassroots activity and efficacy*: while there were some differences among the three sets of former AmeriCorps members, they reported significantly greater grassroots

engagement, as well as a sense of efficacy and optimism that such engagement can make a difference.

- *political participation*: AmeriCorps members are explicitly precluded from campaigning for a candidate or lobbying on issues during their work hours or in uniforms with AmeriCorps logos. These constraints have been a precondition for bipartisan support and help ensure that the program does not become politicized. Many participants receive in-service training on broad democratic principles.

AmeriCorps State and National, as well as NCCC, does not tend to increase voting over their comparison groups (during the 2000 and 2004 elections), nor does it tend to lead to shifts in political identification from liberal to conservative or vice versa. African Americans and Hispanics were somewhat more likely to increase voting rates than their white counterparts.

VISTA alumni, whose retrospective reports go back over some forty years, report considerably greater levels of participation in local, state, and federal elections, campaigning for candidates, serving on local boards and commissions, collecting signatures for petitions, boycotting products, and attending marches and rallies.

To be sure, citizenship is a multifaceted and contested concept. It means different things to different people and in different contexts. Its various meanings can be complementary, but they can at times also be contradictory.

National service programs can support multiple perspectives simultaneously, but no program can support all equally, and tradeoffs are inevitable. Choices of program design thus matter for how we enable active citizenship across varying contexts and for different goals.

For a discussion of these multiple meanings and potential tradeoffs, see especially Melissa Bass, *The Politics and Civics of National Service: Lessons from the Civilian Conservation Corps, VISTA, and AmeriCorps* (Washington, DC: Brookings Press, 2013). **CivicGreen Bookshelf** has a [full review](#).

Impacts on personal growth

Another set of claims about the value of national service is that it can have an impact on personal growth over the lifetime of participants, but especially in early years of developing the skills and confidence that enable healthy and productive lives, including careers of public service. The data show positive or mixed results on four measures, and negative ones relative to their comparison groups on one, namely educational progress.

- *personal growth through community service*: reported personal growth after one year of service was higher than for the comparison group, but tended to fade after eight years. Personal growth was higher for those who did not have previous volunteer experience. It was also higher for those in more diverse work groups in NCCC (where residential living and team projects prevail), but was negative in diverse work settings

in State and National. In NCCC, females scored higher on personal growth than males.

- *personal effectiveness of community service*: this generally increased in both State and National and NCCC, though for many in NCCC it took them some time to realize how important the impact had been in their lives (measured at eight years out). Those in programs with planning and teamwork benefitted more, as did Latino members of NCCC. A substantial percentage of VISTA members in a separate survey reported fundamental transformations in their personal and professional lives.
- *educational progress*: a smaller percent of AmeriCorps State and National and NCCC reported completing some college than those in the pertinent comparison groups. Older participants and those who had completed some years of college before their service year were more likely to continue their education.
- *basic work skills*: alumni from AmeriCorps State and National and NCC reported that their service work increased their skills in a broad array of areas, such as problem solving, team leadership, and conflict resolution, managing time, and collecting and analyzing information. Their gains relative to their comparison groups were small, but positive and statistically significant. Their career choices oriented them more to community and social work.
- *public service employment*: AmeriCorps State and National participants (and especially those with prior volunteer experience) showed a statistically significant but modest positive gain score over their comparison group in regards to public service employment, both in the short and medium run, while NCCC participants did not.

Impacts on social capital

Another set of claims about the value of national service is that it can enhance social capital in the form of trust, networks, and reciprocal relationships. Social capital represents a stock of these that can be drawn upon for mutual support and community problem solving, as well as for accomplishing work-related tasks. While the stock exists in communities and individuals, the Frumkin and Jastrzab study was only able to measure individuals through their response to survey questions and retrospective reports.

The quantitative and qualitative data suggest that national service strengthens connections among participants and between them and members of the community. The program is “an imperfect but not implausible tool for social capital construction.”

- *connection to community*: there were positive and statistically significant short- and medium-term effects for both State and National and NCCC participants relative to their comparison groups. For State and National, this was especially true where planning opportunities were available, where participants worked at sites with many other participants, and where programs were run by faith-based organizations.

However, there were not significant differences or positive effects for generalized social trust or trust in government.

- *constructive group dynamics*: those who served in State and National as well as NCCC do not show significant positive gains on measures of careful listening in group discussions, considering all points of view before making decisions, or helping to find solutions when problems arose. College attendance before service increased gains, as did working in teams, while prior participation in religious youth activities dampened them.
- *appreciation for cultural and ethnic diversity*: AmeriCorps State and National participants do not show significant positive gains here, especially where trainings are frequent and participants do not have opportunities to define their own relationships with other service members in their programs. NCCC participants became less tolerant and less positive toward diversity. This may be related to small teams having less of a critical mass of diverse members, as well as very intense living circumstances in the camps. However, this negative diversity effect disappears in the survey eight years after service.
- *social networks*: data was limited on this issue. AmeriCorps State and National participants developed networks that were more racially heterogeneous than NCCC. VISTA volunteers recount stories of developing friendships and networks that cut across lines of income and racial/ethnic diversity that profoundly affected life and work choices in subsequent years.

Impacts on public work

Another set of claims about national service is that it can accomplish public work that is visible and valuable in many kinds of community and public settings. In AmeriCorps, “getting things done” has been a core mission from the beginning. Public work is accomplished by State and National, NCCC, and VISTA.

There are four main areas of public work in AmeriCorps: environment, education, public safety, and human needs, with crisscrossing linkages often emerging among them. To be sure, these are often related to other forms of building community capacities, social capital, and personal development.

CivicGreen is primarily concerned with those national service programs that enable environmental protection, conservation of forests, watersheds, and other key ecological systems, disaster response and recovery, environmental and health justice collaboration, energy efficiency through home weatherization and public housing improvements, environmental education and conservation career development.

Indeed, **CivicGreen** values the potential development in all professions where civic engagement and professional expertise can be melded fruitfully to enhance overall

community and institutional capacities for creating sustainable, resilient, and just communities in an age of climate crisis.

Voices for National Service

Founded in 2003 as the Save AmeriCorps Coalition, Voices for National Service is a diverse coalition of national and local service programs, state service commissions, and individual champions who work together to protect and expand national service. It led the effort to design, develop, and pass the [Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act](#) in 2009. It supports AmeriCorps, the Senior Corps, state commissions and other funds designed to support service.

The steering committee of Voices for National Service includes representatives of prominent service groups, such as the Corps Network, City Year, Public Allies, YouthBuild, Teach for America, and America's Service Commissions, as well as Habitat for Humanity and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the major national community development intermediary in the field. AnnMaura Connolly serves as president.

[Policy Corner](#): provides legislative updates, a list of supporters in the bipartisan National Service Congressional Caucus, and research and reports.

Reports include:

Dominic Modicamore and Alix Naugler, [AmeriCorps and Senior Corps: Quantifying the Impact](#) (Fairfax, VA: ICF for Voices for National Service, July 2020). Provides a cost-benefit analysis.

Voices for National Service, [I Will Get Things Done for America: Celebrating 20 Years of AmeriCorps](#) (2014).

Conservation corps

These engage in a range of activities: forest and coastal restoration, energy efficiency, wildfire prevention, disaster response and recovery (hurricanes, floods, wildfires, oil spills), urban forest and stream restoration. As noted above, they are an outgrowth of the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s, but not a direct institutional or policy legacy.

Federal agencies partner with various Corps, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Forest Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Defense Department, and others. Scores of local and state agencies are likewise partners.

President Obama launched an initiative in 2010 to create a [21st Century Conservation Service Corps](#), with the collaboration of eight federal departments and agencies, as well as the support of the Corps Network. The 21CSC was a national initiative to increase the capacity

of the Corps movement through expanded public-private partnerships. The vision was to annually engage 100,000 young people and veterans in service on public lands.

The 21CSC was a bipartisan idea supported by the past five Secretaries of Interior, as well as private businesses and nonprofits. The bipartisan 21CSC Act was introduced in the U.S. Senate (S.1403) and House of Representatives (H.R. 2987) in June 2017. Among other provisions, the bill would have given relevant federal agencies and departments enhanced, and less burdensome, ability to engage Corps in completing priority projects. The American Climate Corps Memorandum of Understanding (December 2023, see below) superseded 21CSC.

Some examples of conservation, climate, and youth corps today, as well as their capacity building networks, are:

- [The Corps Network](#)

The National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, now the Corps Network (TCN), was organized in 1985 and includes 150+ Corps working in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories. Many of these Corps were partially funded through the 1990 American Conservation and Youth Service Corps Act and are now more substantially funded through AmeriCorps. Tens of thousands of corps members are currently funded annually through AmeriCorps and various TCN partners.

- [Student Conservation Association](#) (SCA)

Created in 1957, SCA aims to build the next generation of conservation leaders and inspire lifelong stewardship of the environment and communities by engaging young people in hands-on service to the land.

SCA began slowly with several projects in national parks. With the blossoming of the environmental movement in the 1960s and 1970s, it expanded its range, including to inner-city projects in Washington, DC, Denver, and San Francisco. In the 1980s, more cities were added and new partnerships with several federal agencies were forged. These are managed through “cooperative agreements.”

In 1994, SCA partnered with AmeriCorps. In the 2000s, it added disaster response to its land conservation work. SCA has been involved in eco-recovery work after forest fires, hurricanes, floods, and oil spills. It also partners with The Nature Conservancy, as well as with corporations to provide conservation opportunities for employees and in communities. Local and state government agencies have also increasingly become partners.

SCA recruits through a national network of more than 10,000 schools, colleges, and universities. Internships range from 12 weeks to one year. Summer crews enlist youth 15-19 years old. National crews serve on projects around the country and community crews

are urban-based and enlist under-served teenagers. SCA also has had a Green Cities Corps for professionals and a Veterans Fire Corps for young vets.

In 2019, SCA engaged 2,444 regular members and almost 2,000 others in one-day volunteer events.

- [Maryland Conservation Corps](#) (MCC)

This corps was created by the governor in 1984 after the Chesapeake Bay Agreement was signed by three states and the District of Columbia. This agreement was designed to elicit collaboration among state and local agencies, civic associations, schools and universities, as well as private farmers inland whose agricultural practices had a major impact on the 64,000 square miles that are part of the Bay’s watershed, including hundreds of rivers and streams. The state’s Department of Natural Resources and its Park Service manages corps programs, in collaboration with other local, state, and federal agencies.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also developed a Chesapeake Bay Program that has provided funds for restoration work, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has provided robust advocacy, as well as opportunities for environmental education and hands-on restoration. The Corps added an important ingredient to this institutional ecology.

Begun as a summer residential program, MCC became a year-round non-residential program in 1992 and became eligible for AmeriCorps funding in 1994. Crews receive environmental education, including specialized knowledge for projects in disease and pest control in forests, soil erosion, and fish habitat. They, in turn, provide environmental education to some 10,000 students per year, as well as interpretation at state parks.

- [California Conservation Corps](#) (CCC)

Created in 1976 by Governor Jerry Brown, the CCC became a permanent state department in 1983. It has emergency response teams across a broad range of flood, wildfire, earthquake and other crises, as well as statewide trails and invasive species work. Approximate 3,000 Corpsmembers enroll each year.

The California Conservation Corps also has a variety of “targeted conservation programs,” among which are:

- *watershed stewards*: this partnership of state agencies and AmeriCorps engages corps members in stream, riparian, and upslope surveys, watershed restoration projects, environmental education, and enlisting students and community members in hands-on restoration projects. Stewards work with scientists, who serve as mentors.

The Wonders of Watersheds (WOW) program brings watershed education into K-8 schools, with a special emphasis on Title 1 low-income schools. Such education includes classrooms, field trips, service learning, after-school clubs, and games.

- *veterans corps fisheries program*: partnership with the NOAA Fisheries, U.S. Forest Service, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife; it engages veterans in habitat restoration for salmon and steelhead recovery, with goal of skill and career development.
- *backcountry trails program*: an intensive five-month program of trail maintenance and construction where members live and work in the wilderness.
- *forest health*: created in July 2019, specially trained crew members remove overgrown and dead vegetation posing a fire risk. Forestry Corps members reduce the risk of wildfire by removing hazardous fire fuels, plant trees and seedlings, collect cones and seeds, fell hazard and dying trees, receive arborist training and certifications.
- *energy corps*: provides trained labor for public agency and non-profit energy-efficiency and renewables projects.

- [YouthBuild](#)

YouthBuild began as a grassroots effort led by Dorothy Stoneman to rebuild local housing units in East Harlem in 1978 and then across other neighborhoods in New York City.

In 1990, YouthBuild USA was formed to spread the model. Several major foundations backed the effort, especially the Ford and Charles Stewart Mott foundations, and in 1994 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) developed a competitive program for local initiatives. Many other corporations and foundations have since joined in support. YouthBuild USA has become YouthBuild Global.

YouthBuild programs engage low-income young people to learn construction skills through building affordable housing for homeless and low-income people in their neighborhoods and other community assets such as schools, playgrounds, community centers, water systems, and other infrastructure. In some cases, they also help rebuilding in response to disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy.

Increasingly such training includes environmental leadership and green building certification through partnerships with the [U.S. Green Building Council](#) (USGBC), as well as with other business and labor institutes. YouthBuild's Green Initiative provides affiliates with green building, weatherization, green business, and green collar career development.

YouthBuild places emphasis on empowering youth and liberating their positive energy for long-term community engagement to help rebuild communities and develop their assets. Leadership development is central to its mission, as is a strong work ethic and teamwork.

YouthBuild USA built a network of 252 urban and rural YouthBuild programs in 46 states. They are sponsored and managed by local nonprofits, community colleges, and public agencies. It provides training and technical assistance, leadership development, funding for innovative program enhancements, and advocacy for these programs.

The primary funding source for local programs since 2006 has been the US Department of Labor (DOL) through the authorized federal YouthBuild program administered by the Employment and Training Administration at DOL. AmeriCorps also provides funding.

- [Green City Force](#)

Green City Force is a partnership with the New York City Housing Authority, AmeriCorps, and the Corps Network, as well as other nonprofits, city agencies, unions, and employers. As an independent nonprofit, it roots its work in a vision of a sustainable and resilient “green city” based on social, economic, and environmental justice. Green City Force engages young people ages 18-24 who live in public housing to develop collaborative leadership and career skills as they retrofit buildings to be energy and water efficient, develop urban farms, implement recycling and composting, and steward a range of other healthy community and green infrastructure projects.

GCF’s Service Corps builds and maintains urban farms in all five boroughs that serve as horticulture, agriculture and green infrastructure training grounds and grow organic produce for local residents.

- [PowerCorpsPHL](#)

PowerCorpsPHL is an AmeriCorps partnership with Philadelphia city agencies, especially the Water Department and Parks and Recreation. It recruits underemployed young people 18-30 years old with a high school diploma or GED. In addition, it offers part-time and other avenues of recruitment and training for returning or court-involved young people. Full-time Corps members may serve up to 24 months, during which they work on a range of green water systems, solar installation and sales, urban farming and forestry, youth development, and trades such as masonry, with a union pathway to employment. All programs are employer-aligned and co-designed, including with private engineering firms, and often include training in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Corps members also receive academic supports for post-secondary education, as well as training through industry academies.

Recent Initiatives: Civilian Climate Corps, American Climate Corps

As the *2022-2026 AmeriCorps Strategic Plan* put it, we seek to “empower an entire ecosystem” or organizations seeking to better communities across the nation. The Trump administration has removed this plan from the AmeriCorps website.

Consistent with this strategic plan were several attempts to expand conservation corps considerably and to focus increasing attention on climate change.

The Corps Network developed a set of proposals for a Civilian Climate Corps early in the Biden administration that was fiscally and administratively feasible. It proposed expanding the existing network of service and conservation corps to 250,000 over five years and to work within the existing structure of AmeriCorps, Public Lands Corps, and FEMA Corps, yet also developing programs appropriate to the U.S. departments of Housing and Urban Development, Energy, Labor, Transportation, and others.

The Corps Network, [*Recommendations for the Civilian Climate Corps: Based on Decades of Experience*](#) (June 2021).

Sensible grant formulas were also contained in Senate Bill 1244, introduced by Ed Markey, Bernie Sanders, and several others. It would have reserved a 30% allotment to states and tribes through a formula based largely on population (with 5% reserved for tribes), and 70% distributed through competitive grants. The latter could go to public and nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher learning, and labor organizations, as well as to states, tribes, and territories.

To enable a manageable roll out, the Markey bill would have provided 50,000 slots to the CCC in its first year, and then increase this stepwise over the following four years to 100,000, 175,000, 275,000, and 400,000, with emphasis on serving in communities of origin.

[Civilian Climate Corps for Jobs and Justice Act](#) (to amend the National and Community Service Act of 1990), S. 1244, 117th Congress, 1st Session, also referred to as the Markey bill.

Neither of these approaches made it into the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, due to a mix of concerns about cost, an already very tight labor market, and potential administrative overreach.

However, through executive order, President Biden announced the creation of an American Climate Corps on September 20, 2023, to further boost by 20,000 the young adults and veterans serving through existing corps, while also establishing new ones and partnering with states that have already begun to create their own climate corps. Following Biden’s action, the Markey bill was also reintroduced in the Senate.

[American Climate Corps Memorandum of Understanding](#) (December 2023), signed by 7 federal agencies and the Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps).

This is appended in full below, in case it is also removed from federal websites.

Moving Forward

The potential of national service to become a central component of sustainable and resilient communities and ecosystems in the face of climate crisis is enormous.

National service has become institutionalized far more soundly in the period since 1994 than it had in previous periods of innovation. It has managed to work effectively with a broad range of nonprofit and public agencies in a more complex institutional environment, mainly through partnerships.

AmeriCorps has yielded positive gains across an array of important measures of civic engagement, personal growth, social capital, and public work, though not consistently on all of them. Studies of benefit-cost ratios, even on narrowly monetized value of work products, are generally very positive.

Most importantly, many local groups, public agencies, national associations, and other civic capacity building organizations could benefit considerably by an expansion of funding and partnerships for conservation and climate corps.

Last updated: 2/4/25

We welcome suggestions and comments to help update and improve this entry:
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Appendix A

AMERICAN CLIMATE CORPS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
AMONG THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE [AMERICORPS]

This memorandum of understanding (MOU) governing the Biden-Harris Administration’s American Climate Corps Initiative (ACC) is entered into by the United States Departments of Commerce, the Interior, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, and the Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps), hereinafter collectively referred to as “the Parties.”

I. BACKGROUND

The Biden Harris Administration’s American Climate Corps Initiative (ACC) draws inspiration from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s Civilian Conservation Corps, a popular New Deal program that put millions of young men to work addressing the twin environmental and economic crises of the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression. Decades later, the Obama-Biden Administration established the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC), a public-private partnership which provided a blueprint for a new generation of Americans to enter careers in conservation, while working to make America’s public lands and waters and the wildlife that depend on them more resilient to the effects of climate change. The 21CSC engaged hundreds of partners and thousands of youth, veterans, and individuals experiencing barriers to employment, including those from disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution, to work on projects safeguarding public lands and waters from the impacts of climate change. The ACC will build on these foundational efforts while putting at least 20,000 young people in the initiative’s first year on career pathways aligned with high-quality employment opportunities in industry sectors or occupations, including apprenticeship readiness and Registered Apprenticeship Programs, in the growing fields of climate resilience and clean energy in both the public and private sectors.

The ACC will work under existing authorities and in coordination with existing programs administered by or with Federal agencies, Tribes, state and local governments, territorial governments, labor unions, and nonprofit organizations – and with new community partners and stakeholders from a variety of sectors – to advance climate resilience, tackle climate change and to further the goals in this MOU. The ACC will improve the lives of individuals and communities throughout the nation and its territories while helping the United States face

intersecting challenges, including the catastrophic and disproportionate impacts of climate change and unequal access to training, higher education, and high-quality careers.

To meet these intersecting challenges, the ACC shall be guided by and seek to further the following principles:

a. *Reflect a comprehensive approach to tackling climate change*, including by focusing on areas such as natural and cultural resource and ecosystem restoration and conservation, conservation and recovery of protected species and their habitats, urban agriculture, reforestation, protection and restoration of waterways, recycling and waste recovery, energy conservation, a wide range of clean energy deployment, energy efficiency, weatherization, coastal and climate resilience, economic development support for energy communities, heat island cooling, disaster preparedness and recovery, fire resilience, preparedness and response, equitable outdoor access and resilient recreation infrastructure, and environmental education, research, and outreach.

b. and *Build upon and expand existing partnerships and initiate new partnerships* to implement cross-sector and cross-industry collaboration that engage Federal, Tribal, territorial, state, and local governments, labor unions, nonprofit entities, the private sector, and philanthropic organizations to leverage Federal investments and maximize community and participant engagement and impact.

c. *Compensate ACC members* by aiming to ensure that ACC members are provided financial compensation and benefits sufficient to meet their basic needs, so that participation and success in the initiative is accessible to people of any socio-economic background, and inclusive of ACC members that serve in existing national service programs like AmeriCorps and the Public Lands Corps. To the extent permitted by law, ACC programs will offer a range of compensation and benefits such as housing, transportation, health care, child care, educational credit, scholarships and student loan forgiveness, stipends, non-financial services and benefits that address barriers to employment and job retention, and other benefits as determined by specific program and participant needs.

d. *Provide a pathway to high-quality employment* through execution of proven training strategies for broad-based, industry-valued skills and expansion of workforce development pathways that are aligned with high-quality employment opportunities in industry sectors or occupations in the growing fields of climate resilience and clean energy. Through partnerships with labor organizations, apprenticeship readiness and Registered Apprenticeship Programs, educational institutions, service partners, and other organizations, and to the extent permitted by law, the ACC will build the base of talented, skilled, certified, and apprentice-ready workers eligible for high-quality, family-sustaining careers with mobility potential in public or private sectors.

e. *Look like America* by expanding workforce pathways in and led by disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution with the aim of leveraging the talents of all members of our society, including Black, Latino, and

Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; persons exiting incarceration or involved in the criminal legal system; persons otherwise adversely affected by poverty or economic barriers to employment; veterans; and young Americans seeking vocational and educational opportunities, including opportunity youth.

f. *Serve all of America's communities* by improving climate resilience, public health, energy security and by creating high-road economic opportunity in urban, rural, and suburban communities and wilderness remote areas through partnerships with Tribal, territorial, state, and local governments, labor unions, and community-based organizations. The ACC will prioritize locally identified projects and projects that help meet the Biden-Harris Administration's Justice40 goal of ensuring that 40 percent of the overall benefits of Federal investments in addressing climate change flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, overburdened by pollution, and experiencing disproportionate impacts of climate change.

II. PURPOSE

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes an American Climate Corps Executive Committee ("Executive Committee") to provide leadership and consultation, working in coordination with an American Climate Corps Interagency Working Group ("Working Group") to carry out the charge of the Executive Committee across the Federal Government. Other Federal agencies may participate in this MOU at any time while it is in effect.

a. Membership.

i. The Executive Committee will consist of the following parties:

- (1) Assistant to the President and National Climate Advisor.
- (2) CEO of AmeriCorps.
- (3) Secretary of Commerce.
- (4) Secretary of the Interior.
- (5) Secretary of Agriculture.
- (6) Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
- (7) Secretary of Labor.
- (8) Secretary of Energy.
- (9) Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
- (10) Other agencies and departments as determined by the Executive Committee.

ii. Membership in the Working Group includes each of the agencies, as appropriate, that are a party to this MOU and is open to all other Federal agencies relevant to the ACC or critical to its success.

b. Mission and Work.

- i. The Executive Committee will convene representatives of Federal agencies from across the Federal Government, as determined by the Executive Committee, to inform implementation of the ACC.
- ii. The Executive Committee and Working Group will coordinate and expand participating Federal corps programs and partnerships under a common ACC framework to ensure a new generation of workers are given the training and tools to enter high-quality careers in the clean energy and climate resilience economies, including through AmeriCorps, other national service, conservation and workforce development and training programs, and apprenticeship readiness programs that articulate to Registered Apprenticeship Programs.
- iii. Within 30 days of signing this MOU, the Executive Committee will convene.
- iv. The Working Group will implement the following actions, and others, as needed to achieve ACC goals:
 - (1) Convene listening sessions with key stakeholders, including but not limited to potential applicants; current corps partners; workforce development organizations; labor unions; Tribal, territorial, state, and local governments; nonprofit and philanthropic organizations; educational institutions; and relevant Federal Advisory Committee Act committees across the Federal Government to understand current interests, assess capacities, and explore opportunities.
 - (2) Finalize a set of standards for all Federal ACC programs to coordinate and align ACC efforts across Federal programs to achieve high-quality job opportunities, informed by Department of Labor's Good Jobs Principles and framework, and equitable workforce development, including but not limited to compensation guidelines, minimum term of service, benefits, and other services, including non-financial services and benefits that address barriers to employment and job retention.
 - (3) Collaborate with partners to expand and develop outreach, recruitment, and retention strategies and partnerships to effectively engage underserved, disadvantaged, and underrepresented communities.
 - (4) Launch a centralized ACC website and associated recruitment platform to promote ACC opportunities.
 - (5) Explore opportunities for further workforce and professional development certifications, e.g., coordinate training and professional development opportunities, connect ACC programs to apprenticeship readiness programs, Registered Apprenticeship Programs, and other proven training models,

enhance the use of specialized hiring authorities, and collaborate with the private sector on high-quality employment pathways and opportunities.

(6) Undertake a Federal Government-wide review of Federal statutes and hiring authorities, and align those authorities across Federal agencies to remove barriers and expand corps opportunities nationwide.

(7) Explore interagency and public-private cooperation to streamline systems, reporting mechanisms, programs, and contract and grants administration, and to improve accessibility in those areas across the Federal Government.

(8) Establish performance goals and objectives, reporting metrics, evaluation criteria, and resource requirements to assess ACC accomplishments.

(9) Ensure tracking of ACC participant hours and project accomplishments through a common reporting portal to support career pathways into Federal service.

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(10) Collaborate to increase awareness of Federal funding and partnership opportunities, including multi-agency funding opportunities where appropriate.

c. Administration.

i. The Executive Committee may be supported by an ACC (Hub) at AmeriCorps, subject to the availability of dedicated capacity for the Hub to advance the ACC.

ii. Executive Committee agencies may seek additional staff capacity in their own agencies to work in coordination with the Hub.

III. AUTHORITIES

Authorities for the respective Parties to execute and implement activities carried out as part of this MOU include:

Section 192A(g)(10)(B) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended

(42 U.S.C. §12651b(g)(10)(B)).

Section 4 of the Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 460d).

Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. § 4601).

Section 313 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. § 2320).

Section 225 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992, (33 U.S.C. § 2328).

Section 213 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (33 U.S.C. §

2339). National Forest System Lands, Organic Administration Act (16 U.S.C. § 551).

Public Lands, Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 U.S.C. § 1701 et seq.).

National Park Service Organic Act (16 U.S.C. Chapter 1).

Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. § 1721 et seq.) as amended by John D. Dingell,

Jr. Conservation, Management and Recreation Act (Pub. L. No. 116-9, 133 Stat. 580).

Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (Pub. L. No. 117-58, 135 Stat. 429).

Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (Pub. L. No. 117-169, 136 Stat. 1818).

John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (Pub. L. No. 116-9, 133 Stat. 580).

Youth Conservation Corps Act of 1970 (16 U.S.C. § 1701 et seq.).

Take Pride in America Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 4601-4608).

National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (16 U.S.C. § 668dd).

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. § 1801 et seq.).

Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. § 1361 et seq.).

National Marine Sanctuaries Act (16 U.S.C. § 1431 et seq.).

Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.).

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. § 661 et seq.).

Fish and Wildlife Act (16 U.S.C. § 742a et seq.).

Coral Reef Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. § 6401 et seq.).

Coast and Geodetic Survey Act (33 U.S.C. § 883a et seq.).

Hydrographic Services Improvement Act (33 U.S.C. § 892 et seq.).

Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. § 1451 et seq.).

Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. § 3951 et seq.).

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 U.S.C. § 9601 et seq.).

Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (16 U.S.C. § 1451 note).

Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act of 2006 (33 U.S.C. § 1954).

Oil Pollution Act (33 U.S.C. § 2701 et seq.).

National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. § 1121 et seq.).

RESTORE Act (33 U.S.C. § 1321).

America COMPETES Act (33 U.S.C. § 893).

The National and Community Service Act (42 U.S.C. § 12501 et seq.).

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. §§ 3191-3212).

The National Apprenticeship Act (29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.).

Title XXVI of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (25 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3507).

Subtitle D of Title IV of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. § 17211 et seq.).

Section 1011 of the Energy Act of 2020 (Division Z of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021).

Sections 632-639 of EISA (42 U.S.C. §§ 17211-17218), as amended by Section 3001 of the Energy Act of 2020 (Division Z of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021).

Section 103 of the Clean Air Act (42 USC 7403).

Section 104 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1254).

Section 8001 of the Solid Waste and Disposal Act (42 USC 6981).

Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (12 U.S.C. § 1701u).

Sections 501 and 502 of the HUD Act of 1970 (12 U.S.C. §§ 1701z-1, 1701z-2).

Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301, et seq.).

Titles I through V of Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4101, et seq.).

Executive Order 13985, Advancing Race Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Throughout the Government.

Executive Order 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad.

Executive Order 14035, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility within the Federal Workforce.

Executive Order 14031, Advancing Equity, Justice, and Opportunity for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.

Executive Order 14041, White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity Excellence and Economic Opportunity Through Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Executive Order 14045, White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics.

VIII. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- a. This MOU is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligating document. Nothing in this MOU may be construed to obligate the Parties to any current or future expenditure of resources in advance of the availability of appropriations from Congress. Nor does this MOU obligate the Parties to spend funds on any project or purpose, even if funds are available. Any endeavor involving reimbursement, contribution of funds, or other transfer of anything of value among the Parties will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures, including those applicable to Federal Government procurement and printing. These endeavors will be addressed in separate MOUs or other appropriate interagency agreements that will be executed by representatives of the Parties and that will be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority. This MOU does not provide that authority.
- b. The Parties will handle their own activities and use their own resources, including the expenditure of their own funds, in pursuing the objectives enumerated in this MOU. In implementing this MOU, each Party will be operating under its own laws, regulations,

and policies and will be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

c. This MOU is not intended to, and does not create any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, that are enforceable at law or equity against the United States, its agencies, its officers, agents, and employees, or any other person.

d. No member of or delegate to Congress may benefit from this MOU either directly or indirectly.

e. This MOU in no way restricts any of the Parties from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.

IX. DURATION OF AGREEMENT, AMENDMENTS AND TERMINATION

This MOU supersedes the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps MOU signed December 19, 2012, and is effective immediately upon signature of all listed Parties and shall remain in effect until it is superseded or terminated, whichever occurs first. This MOU may be modified or terminated at any time by mutual written consent of the Parties. Modification or termination of this MOU must be in writing, and documentation of the modification or termination must be signed and dated by all Parties. Any Party may withdraw from this MOU by providing 60 days written notice to all other Parties. This MOU will remain in effect as to all other Parties until superseded or terminated in accordance with this paragraph.

XII. SIGNATORIES (see original document)