

# FOIA MARKER

**This is not a textual record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.**

---

**Collection/Record Group:** Clinton Presidential Records

**Subgroup/Office of Origin:** National Service

**Series/Staff Member:** Rick Allen

**Subseries:**

---

**OA/ID Number:** 2148

**FolderID:**

---

**Folder Title:**

House Committee on Natural Resources [1]

**Stack:**

**S**

**Row:**

**66**

**Section:**

**2**

**Shelf:**

**2**

**Position:**

**1**

STATEMENT OF  
LARRY P. FONNEST, DIRECTOR  
MINNESOTA CONSERVATION CORPS  
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
BEFORE THE  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
SUB-COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS  
FEBRUARY 18, 1993

STATEMENT OF  
LARRY P. FONNEST, DIRECTOR  
MINNESOTA CONSERVATION CORPS  
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
BEFORE THE  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
SUB-COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FOREST AND PUBLIC LANDS  
FEBRUARY 18, 1993

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the sub-committee today in support of the conservation corps movement. I am Larry P. Fonnest, the director of the Minnesota Conservation Corps, a program of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The conceptual beginnings of today's conservation corps movement can be traced to William James' 1910 essay "The Moral Equivalent of War" and his call for a peacetime service force which would unite Americans in a common effort to preserve the natural environment.

Franklin Roosevelt's volunteer, "Tree Army", better known as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), answered that call during the Great Depression. In proving James' theory sound, the CCC employed, trained, and educated some 3,240,000 disadvantaged young

men and, in the process, rebuilt the infrastructure of the nation. In addition to providing an opportunity to corps members and their families for a new lease on life, a sampling of the accomplishments of those young men underscores the tremendous contributions of the CCC:

- 63,246 buildings constructed
- 800 state parks established
- 3,900 historic structures restored
- 95,592 acres of trees planted in logged out areas
- 2,757,419 acres of forest treated for diseased trees
- 7622 impounding dams build
- 28,087 miles of foot/horse trails cleared

The list could go on!

With the onset of World War II, the CCC program was dismantled but, not forgotten. Twenty-eight years later, in 1970, the Federal Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) was established. It was a summer work program for 15 to 18 year old youth. The Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) followed in 1977 and was a year-round program for 16 to 23 year old men and women. Administered by the U.S. Departments of Interior and Agriculture and in cooperation with state governments, YACC emphasized enrolling disadvantaged youth while YCC, a much smaller and more middle-class program, did not.

The true value of these programs was not well known, due to limited public awareness. According to Thomas N. Bethell's 1984 essay, "Crippling the American Conservation Corps," the corps lacked a champion. "No one...in the Carter administration's (leadership) seemed to be directly in charge, nor did anyone seem (inclined) to tell its success stories to the public, the press, or influential members of Congress. Responsibility for projects was spread so haphazardly among so many federal and state agencies that no coherent evaluation ever took place."

The YCC/YACC programs employed 700,000 young Americans between 1970 and their demise in 1982. Careful evaluation of the programs shows a cost-effectiveness ratio of \$1.25 in value of work accomplished for every tax dollar invested. That fact coupled with the personal growth of participants and the sense of self-confidence, team pride and accomplishment they received for having performed "real work" (as opposed to "make work" projects which had characterized other youth employment programs) demonstrated the tangible worth of the Corps.

The YCC/YACC fell victim in 1982 to the budget cutting of the Reagan administration. YACC was completely eliminated while the YCC continues today as a mere shadow of its former self.

Refusing to let a good idea die however, several state and local

governments, private individuals, and citizen groups mustered a groundswell of support behind the conservation corps ideal. Today, 58 state and local corps operate year-round and summer conservation/service programs. Like their predecessors, today's corps place heavy emphasis on: 1) cost-effectively performing needed natural resource work; 2) instilling in participants the skills and attitudes necessary for a successful employment transition and, 3) developing personal character and a sense of citizenship. Many also provide remedial education opportunities and post-corps tuition vouchers to encourage continued schooling.

The Minnesota Conservation Corps (MCC) was established in 1981 and is one of four longest serving corps in the nation. In its twelve year history, thousands of young Minnesotans have had the opportunity to SERVE-LEARN-EARN as they worked to conserve the state's natural heritage.

MCC has a dual mission of providing productive natural resources work experience and meaningful service-learning opportunities to its corps members. At the heart of the program's mission is the fast-held belief that young people are resources to be developed and not problems to be solved.

MCC operates a residential summer component for youth ages 15 to 18 and a year-round component for young adults ages 18 to 26. Entry level corps members are paid a stipend equal to the federal minimum

wage, and are not eligible for benefits other than worker's compensation .

While the Corps is open to all of the state's young people, preference is give to disadvantaged youth, youth of color, females and those who otherwise fall within Minnesota's forgotten half. The latter were identified in a legislative task force report, Minnesota's Forgotten Half: A Human Resource Agenda, March 1991, as those youth 16 to 24 years old who are unlikely to attend college and that are "... left behind in comparison to Minnesota's remembered half."

One of MCC's important recruitment and programming initiatives centers on hearing impaired teens. For the past decade, crews of hearing impaired youths and their adult interpreters have been quietly at work in Minnesota State Parks. Their presence has enriched camp life, with hearing and hearing impaired youth and staff learning about and from each other. The initiative was honored at the 1993 National Association of Service and Conservation Corps Conference for exemplary programming and as a model for the corps community. The initiative helps to underscore the unique adaptability of the corps model in meeting new challenges and its ability to embrace diversity.

MCC affords corps members the experience of success providing a nurturing and meaningful work/service placement under competent

supervision. Utilizing on-the-job and informal/formal classroom sessions, corps members are provided training opportunities with an aim to developing their basic work behaviors, self-management, marketable skills, self-esteem, reasoning and decision making skills, appreciation for the environment and service ethic/sense of civic duty. Young adult corps members lacking a high school diploma are required to pursue a G.E.D.

Corps members also have advancement potential within MCC. Many crew leader positions are filled by participants who have risen through the ranks. All candidates attend the MCC's Leadership Development Program in preparation for their new assignments.

The Minnesota Conservation Corps is a program in process. It was established in 1981 on a financial shoestring and has grown in fits and starts and not without budget cuts. In 1992, the program was considered for elimination by the Department of Natural Resources as part of an emergency budget cutting strategy. Thanks to Governor Arne Carlson's leadership and strong commitment to youth programs, bi-partisan support in the state legislature and a vocal public, the MCC survived but, not without sustaining a \$100,000 budget reduction. The MCC's F.Y. 1993 budget of \$1.7 million, is again facing potential reduction as Minnesota struggles with a revenue shortfall. The MCC receives no direct federal funding.

MCC's budget experience is not uncommon in the corps community.

Four corps were eliminated in the last two years due to state budget shortfalls. Funding is often times tenuous and energy better spent on corps members development is diverted to fund raising.

The work accomplishment of the corps is formidable. It's estimated that for every \$1.00 invested in the program, a \$1.46 is returned in public service. In state fiscal year 1992, 307 MCC corps members worked 177,749 service hours realizing accomplishments valued at \$2.55 million.

To underscore the scope of MCC work, I want to share with you the accomplishments of two of our signature projects. The first is the Superior Hiking Trail which follows the ridgeling along the north shore of Lake Superior. MCC is the primary work force on the Trail and has constructed approximately 100 miles of treadway and bridging. When completed, the trail will stretch 250 miles from the Canadian border to the City of Duluth. Spur trails are also being constructed to connect local resorts and communities to the main trail corridor. The Superior Hiking Trails is already contributing significantly to the tourism economy of northeastern Minnesota.

The second signature project involves the MCC's river clean up campaign. Beginning in 1987, crews engaged in surveying waterways for illegal dumpsites within 300 feet of river and stream banks. Todate, over 2000 river miles have been surveyed and some 1400 tons

of dump materials have been properly disposed of. Items removed have included everything from toilets to tires to chemical drums. Over a third of the materials collected have been recycled. With 93,000 miles of Minnesota rivers and streams to survey, MCC expects to be occupied with river cleanup for the foreseeable future.

In addition to working for the various division of the Minnesota DNR, the MCC also has established working relations with several federal agencies including the Forest Service, the National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service. Using summer youth and young adult crews, MCC projects have ranged from stabilizing buildings at the historic Rabideau Civilian Conservation Corps Camp in the Chippewa National Forest, to site restoration and rehabilitation of erosion sites on the St. Croix Scenic Riverway, to timber stand improvement and Superior Hiking Trail construction in the Superior National Forest.

The Corps is also piloting an award winning program in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Minnesota Valley, Sherburne, Rice and Tamarac refuges. The Youth In Natural Resources (YINR) program is a spin-off of the MCC and is designed to interest youth of color, ages 15 to 18, in career and educational opportunities in natural resource management.

Participants learn about numerous professional career options and

corresponding educational requirements from DNR/USFWS field staff. The youth then perform work projects associated with the profession. In any given week, a YINR participant may be introduced to fish biology, perform a fish shocking project identifying and measuring specimens and then, visit the College of Natural Resources, University of Minnesota, to learn about campus life and preparatory source work.

In summer 1992, 76 youth and staff of color representing the Native American, Hispanic, African American and Asian communities participated. The program operated in the Twin Cities of St. Paul/Minneapolis and, the Mille Lacs and Leech Lake Reservations.

The MCC's recent grant application to the Commission on National and Community Service would also have involved the Forest Service. The application had as its primary objective, the establishment of a residential training academy at the Forest Service's vacated Isabella Ranger Station. The academy would have served as an intake and training center for all incoming young adult corps members. In exchange, three six-person crews were to be permanently stationed there to assist federal agents with projects in the Superior National Forest and nearby Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

Having worked in other youth employment/development agencies and, having worked my way up the MCC ranks from summer crew leader to camp director to regional supervisor to the post I now hold, I can

attest to the real value of the corps experience. I am thoroughly convinced the state and local corps have the potential for conserving the natural and human resources of the nation. The single most limiting factor is the lack of stable and sufficient funding. What can make the difference is a federal partner with a long-term vision and commitment to our natural resources and conservation corps.

I can envision a much closer working relationship between federal land management agencies and state and local corps. That relationship, whether contractual or in full partnership, represents a win/win formula for our natural resources and our youth.

Hundreds of thousands of service hours of important natural resource work is going unattended to while vast numbers of our nations's youth wait. Wait for an opportunity to learn how to work, to be contributing members of their communities, to be called. I urge the Congress to issue that call to service and engage our young people in rebuilding and reinvigorating the nation.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear here today.

Testimony by

Douglas P. Wheeler  
Secretary, Resources Agency  
State of California

House Natural Resources Committee  
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands  
February 18, 1993

Mr. Chairman, thank you for providing me with the opportunity to testify before the subcommittee today regarding the State of California's youth conservation corps program and the valuable work performed on federal, state and local lands. I am Douglas Wheeler, Secretary for the Resources Agency in California, with the responsibility for overseeing the administration of the California Conservation Corps, along with the departments of Forestry & Fire Protection, Parks, Conservation, Fish & Game, Water Resources and Boating & Waterways.

The California Conservation Corps--the CCC--is the oldest and largest of all conservation corps across the nation. Modeled after the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s, California's program was started in 1976 to bring together the state's most valuable resources: its youth and its environment. The CCC's mission is to develop youth through work, service and education. Its motto is "Hard Work, Low Pay, Miserable Conditions...and More!"

Since the program started 16 years ago, the CCC has accomplished over 35 million hours of resource conservation and enhancement projects in California. These hours represent a broad range of activities for federal, state, and local agencies, as well as a statewide emergency response workforce for fire fighting, floods, earthquakes, pest infestations, oil and toxic spills, and more.

The CCC is open to all young women and men between the ages of 18 and 23, who are willing to work, are California residents, and who are not on probation or parole. They voluntarily join for one year; however, they may leave or be fired at any

time. They receive minimum wage--\$4.25 per hour--while paying for a portion of the cost for their room and board. About 70 percent of the operation is residential where corpsmembers are housed in CCC facilities, and 30 percent is non-residential for those who live at home and report to work each day. These operations are in both rural and urban locations throughout the state.

In addition to the CCC's operation, California is also fortunate to have nine local, nonprofit conservation corps. The majority of these programs are located in urban areas and all are non-residential. Local corps serve their communities in human service projects, as well as environmental projects. Combined, the CCC and the local conservation corps currently provide 2500 annualized corpsmember positions for California's youth. The state and local corps have a combined budget of \$70 million--\$50 million state corps and \$20 million local corps.

Because of the CCC's history, expertise and technical knowledge, Governor Wilson designated it as the lead department for preparing and implementing the state's comprehensive CalServe proposal to the Commission on National and Community Service. In this capacity, the CCC and a widely diverse group of statewide representatives of youth programs, education providers, volunteer organizations, senior organizations and private enterprise, cooperatively met and worked together for over a year to form a comprehensive state plan to address the needs of California's youth. With the Commission funding, California is implementing a \$3.5 million expansion of its existing programs and infrastructure, and has resubmitted a proposal for over \$10 million to the Commission for an even stronger and broader network for 1993/94.

The American Conservation Corps, Subtitle C of the National and Community Service Act, will build upon California's programs in both urban and rural areas. Numerous partnerships have begun. This means new conservation corps programs, expanding existing corps in new creative and innovative ways, and supporting programs of regional or statewide significance.

It is with the CCC's comprehensive residential and nonresidential corps models that the needs of youth are being met in California, along with a diversity of

environmental and human service work projects. The CCC helps equip young adults to transition into the working world through its unique residential program.

Prospective corpsmembers submit their application and go where the program needs are throughout the state. It is an amazing discovery for an African-American male from the inner streets of Los Angeles, after having worked and lived in the Sierras, to say to his supervisors that he wants more for his life than the streets of L. A. This is an everyday occurrence in the CCC and emphasizes the importance of the residential operation--to take youth out of an often hostile and unproductive environment and let them learn for themselves their individual value and the contribution they can make to their communities. The residential environment provides an opportunity for youth to learn, live, and work with a representative spectrum of California's youth.

The non-residential component also allows youth, who are not able to leave the local community, the opportunity to do meaningful work. In both components, the success of the program has been the experiential training received through the combination of work and education the CCC calls "work/learn." Corpsmembers who were once dropping out of school are turned on to learning again after joining the program. The work is varied, meaningful, and productive. Crews are widely used for statewide emergencies, responding to fires, floods, earthquakes, and other disasters that might occur. And, the education is provided at the appropriate learning level for each individual corpsmember.

One of the CCC's premier opportunities for corpsmembers is its Backcountry Program, which occurs on federal lands. For the last 13 years, CCC crews have performed valuable trail construction and maintenance, meadow restoration and other important environmentally sensitive projects. The corpsmembers live and work in the backcountry for six months (April through September) in tent camps, often miles from the nearest road, and hike miles each day to their work site in California's national parks and forests. The CCC provides the labor force and supervision for the program, while the federal sponsor provides the needed materials, technical supervisors, tools, and supplies to support the work and the crews.

The CCC has enjoyed this long-standing partnership with its Backcountry Program sponsors. The in-kind support provided by the National Park Service (NPS) and the U. S. Forest Service (USFS) in past years is greatly appreciated, and has helped sustain a valuable program benefitting NPS, USFS, as well as corpsmembers.

Considering California's fiscal situation, however, the CCC has increasingly relied upon sponsor labor reimbursements to continue carrying out the program's mission. In regard to the Backcountry Program, the CCC commits about \$600,000 to support the program and made a concerted effort to receive labor reimbursements from NPS and USFS for the 1992 season. The department was able to receive \$100,000 from USFS, but the NPS was not able to reimburse the CCC. The CCC is concerned about the continuation of the program if additional reimbursement commitments are not available.

This same scenario is playing out with all of the federal agencies requesting CCC crews. The CCC's state General Fund share is shrinking and must rely upon its sponsors in 1993 for 47 percent of its funding.

As we enter the new era of reinventing government with less subsidy from the state General Fund, the CCC must become more entrepreneurial and more self sufficient. In short, the CCC must start to charge for the services they previously provided for free or minimum cost. For example, two years ago 70 percent of the CCC's \$56 million budget came from the state General Fund. This year, only 53 percent of the \$50 million is General Fund. That means that \$.47 cents of every dollar is now earned for services provided to public agencies. Over the last five years, the CCC has carried out 6,334 projects; over 1,000 of these projects were for federal agencies. For a typical year, this equates to over \$4 million in services provided, but only \$115,000 has been received in reimbursements. It is essential that the CCC be able to recover nearly 50 percent or \$2 million in the future if it is to sustain the valuable services that it has been providing on federal lands.

The principal agencies served by the CCC include the NPS, USFS, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Reclamation. The major categories of work include trail construction and maintenance, stream

clearance and rehabilitation, emergency fire fighting, tree planting and maintenance, and fish and wildlife habitat improvement. Considering the large percentage of land that is federally managed in California, the CCC is a cost effective partner for federal agencies. In a past study on the value of work performed by corpsmembers, for \$1.00 invested in the program, a \$1.77 is returned in benefits. With this rate of return, federal agencies nationwide should use the services of corps programs to the greatest extent in carrying out their resource protection needs.

Thank you very much. I am available to answer any questions you may have.

CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION CORPS  
 CADCARS - Project Database System  
 Federal Project Summary  
 1987 - 1992

February 1993

SPONSOR NAME	TOTAL HOURS	PERCENT OF TOTAL	
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT	45,325	3.1 %	
Sample Project : Alpine County Thinning & Tree Planting			6,000 hrs
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION	272	0.0 %	
NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE	359,034	24.5 %	
Sample : Rehab & Reconstruction of Joshua Tree Nat'l Monument			28,000 hrs
Projects : Renovation of Theater Building			12,000 hrs
: Monarch Divide Trail Project			11,000 hrs
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS	53,326	3.6 %	
Sample : Campground Rehab			6,000 hrs
Projects : Fresno River Channel Clearance			3,700 hrs
US FOREST SERVICE	978,993	66.8 %	
Sample : Pinridge Ranger District Hand Piling Project			20,000 hrs
Projects : El Dorado Fire Hazard Reduction			12,000 hrs
: Fire Fighter Internship			11,000 hrs
US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE	11,266	0.8 %	
Sample Project : Humboldt Bay Wildlife Refuge Development			6,200 hrs
US MILITARY DEPTS -	16,957	1.2 %	
Sample Project : Oakland Site Hazard Reduction			5,000 hrs
US DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR	72	0.0 %	
USDA-SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE	38	0.0 %	
TOTAL FEDERAL HOURS :		1,465,281	
(six years)			

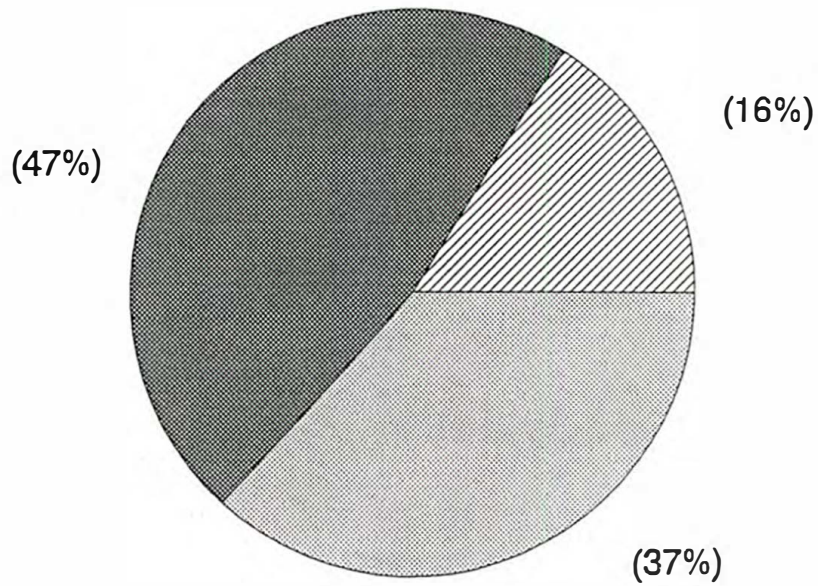
---

Major Categories of Federal Work

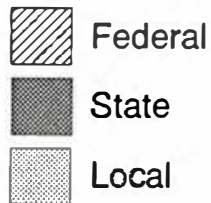
- Trail Construction and Maintenance
- Stream Clearance and Rehabilitation
- Emergency Fire Fighting
- Tree Planting and Maintenance
- Preventative Emergency Work (Fireline cutting, Control burns, Slide stabilization, Snow removal, & Site hazard reduction)
- Fish & Wildlife Habitat Improvement

# CCC Project Hours

1990 - 1992



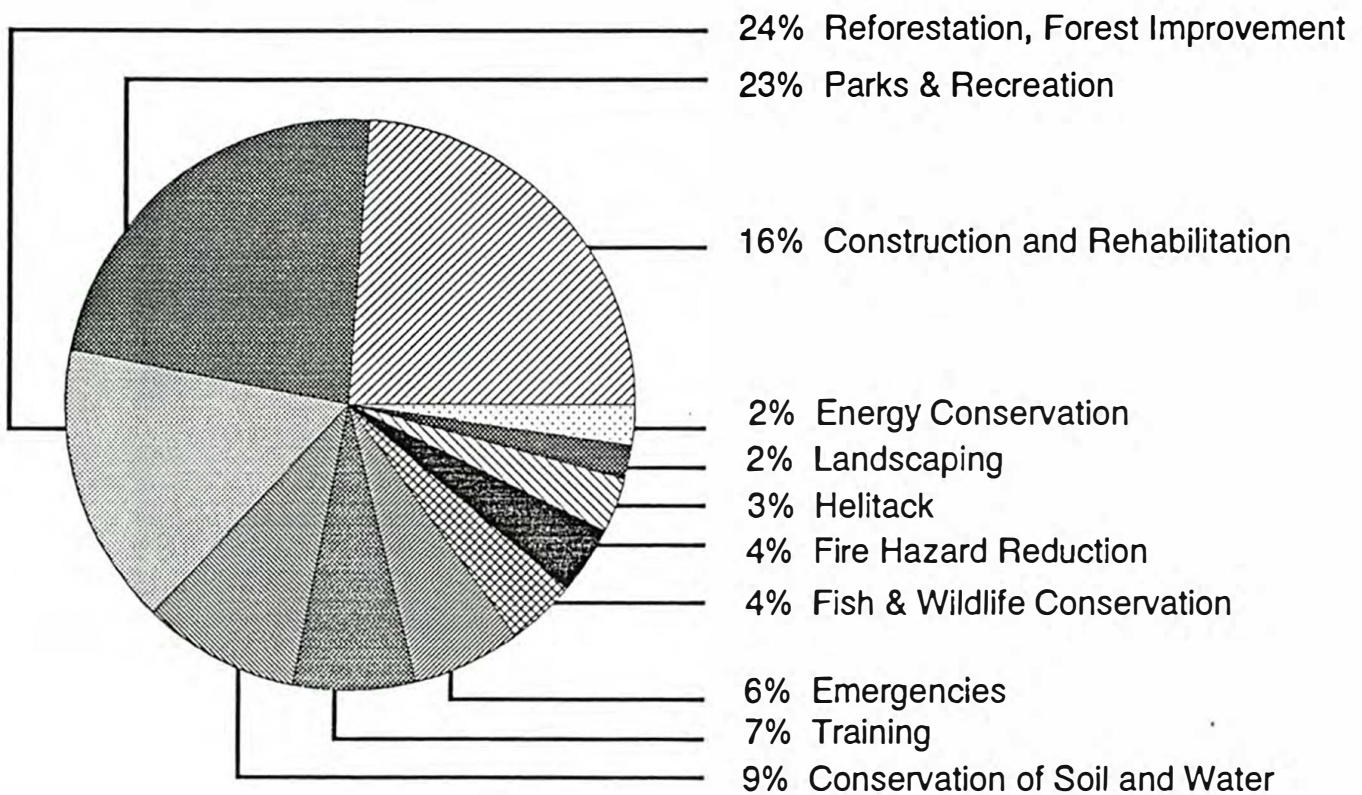
## Legend



# CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION CORPS

## Public Service Conservation Work Hours by Major Resource Category

2.5-3 Million Work Hours Annually



(Total work hours exclude in-center work)



East Bay  
Conservation  
Corps

1021 Third St.  
Oakland  
California  
94607

Tel: 510.891.3900  
Fax: 510.272.9001

Board of Directors

Chairman  
John A. Nejedly

Vice-Chair  
Robert G. Scroul, III

Secretary/Treasurer  
Robert Emmet Doyle

Henry Izumizaki  
Sylvia C. McLaughlin  
William Penn Mott, Jr.  
Ellen Maldonado  
David E. Pesonen  
Harry L. Vincent  
Clinton Wayne White

Executive Director  
Joanna L. Lennon

**NARRATIVE OF TESTIMONY**

presented to

**THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES:  
SUB-COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS**

by

**JOANNA LENNON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**EAST BAY CONSERVATION CORPS**

February 16, 1993

It is my pleasure to present to the Committee my perspective on partnership options between urban conservation corps and the federal government. My presentation will focus on the East Bay Conservation Corps and its relationship with city, county, state, and federal agencies. This presentation will conclude with recommendations for creating a cost-effective linkage between existing federal programs and local conservation corps.

**Summary: EBCC on the Cutting Edge of a National Movement**

The East Bay Conservation Corps (EBCC) was in 1983 one of the first urban conservation corps to be established and has since served as a model for the Urban Corps Expansion Project. There are now over 70 urban conservation corps either in operation or being established in cities throughout the country. Ironically, EBCC in some ways has gone beyond the mold it set for other urban conservation corps. EBCC's strong emphasis on service-learning, community service and comprehensive education goes far beyond the employment & training focus of most conservation corps today. The National and Community Service Act of 1990 reflects the values held by EBCC from its inception—that community service is an effective mechanism for promoting youth development and addressing many of the social and environmental problems that confront our cities, states, and the nation.

EBCC's experience with service-learning and community service, linked with its close relationship with local, regional, state and national parks, places the Corps in a strong position with regard to the national conservation corps initiative. It is our belief that all issues, regardless of their scope, are local issues and that they are best resolved by engaging local youth. EBCC has demonstrated its capacity to address multiple priorities in comprehensive, innovative and cost-effective ways. The Corps welcomes the opportunity to work in partnership with federal agencies to enhance our natural resources, particularly youth.

**Agency Overview**

The East Bay Conservation Corps (EBCC) promotes youth development through community service and service-learning. By actively engaging young people in their education while addressing environmental and social issues, EBCC enhances participants' academic, leadership and life survival skills, self-esteem, civic responsibility, and environmental awareness. Participants, ages 12 to 24, work on projects that define the environment in a social and community context as well as in the performance of conservation work in urban and wildland areas. EBCC project sponsors, groups served and sites include public schools, community-based agencies, park districts, water districts, and public works departments in the East San Francisco Bay counties of Alameda and Contra Costa. Over 90% of the EBCC's participants are people of color and live below standard poverty levels.

**Model Program**

EBCC presents a compelling model for urban areas throughout the nation and has

tremendous replicability to the Urban Corps Expansion Project—a collaborative effort of Public/Private Ventures (Philadelphia) and the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (NASCC) based in Washington, D.C.. This Project is developing a five-year strategy to establish new urban corps and to build broad consensus in support of youth conservation and service corps as a national solution to serious social problems. As one of the nation's first and most successful urban corps, EBCC is providing critical leadership to this project. EBCC's Executive Director is a past president and a board member of NASCC and is an acknowledged leader in the national youth corps field.

EBCC has demonstrated that the corps model is an effective intervention strategy for today's alienated youth and young adult population and is a successful way to meet community service needs. EBCC has earned a national reputation for its outstanding education program and in 1985 was named a National Service and Learning Demonstration Site by the Remediation and Training Institute in Washington, D.C. In March of 1989, our Learning Center won recognition for being in the top ten percent of centers nationwide for best overall performance. Recently, the Corps won the "Take Pride in California" award (co-sponsored by the California Department of Parks & Recreation and American Express) and was presented a "Certificate of Special Commendation" by the Department of Parks and Recreation for outstanding achievements over the years. The Corps is currently a nominee to receive a "Take Pride in America" award.

In addition, the Corps has won national recognition as an excellent educational reform model and was one of six programs chosen by the Management Institute for Environment and Business as one of the best examples of a public/private partnership in the environmental field.

#### **Youth Service: A Natural Resource**

EBCC believes that young people are a precious natural resource. Our service-learning model actively engages youth in addressing many of the social and environmental problems facing their communities; in the process, they also improve their own academic, life and leadership skills.

To nurture and develop the skills, talents, and social values of our youth, EBCC has designed one of the most comprehensive education, training, environmental improvement and community service programs in the country. Our program and service components are as follows:

#### **Comprehensive Education & Corpsmember Development Program**

To meet corpsmembers' needs for a diverse range of educational skills, EBCC operates a comprehensive corpsmember development program. This program includes academic skills training, career education, lifeskills training, and counseling support.

To meet the needs of our underprepared youth and young adults, we established the Learning

Center, the cornerstone of our education program. Using state-of-the-art methods to administer individualized curricula, the Learning Center provides educational strategies to improve students' academic skills from grade levels one to twelve. Students begin based on their individual specific skill levels as determined by precise assessment tests. They progress at their own pace with guidance and support from trained Learning Center staff and certified teachers. This past year, Learning Center students gained over two and one-half (2.5) grades per every fifty hours of study--more than four times the national average. Our students' objectives are to pass the GED exam and to attain a 12.9 grade-level proficiency.

Reflecting the demographic shift in California, a growing number of our corpsmembers have limited English proficiency. To meet their needs, we offer English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) classes facilitated by trained staff. The Corps' ESL program is being integrated into our highly effective Learning Center system for streamlined delivery of services.

In addition to attending basic education or ESL classes, corpsmembers must complete a "core curriculum" of lifeskills workshops which include First Aid, Money Management, Time Management, Communication and Conflict Resolution and Goal Setting. Other workshops and education options offered include leadership training, men's and women's studies, carpentry, outdoor adventure, and job-holding sessions to promote retention.

One of the Corps' primary objectives is to prepare participants for gainful employment as adults. As part of our expanding career development program, EBCC coordinates over twenty paid internships designed to expose corpsmembers to a variety of work environments and careers and to provide them with hands-on job training. Intern positions include semi-skilled labor, office administration and education. In addition to serving the EBCC's 120 corpsmembers, the Career Development staff coordinates an employment and training program for another forty-six out-of-school youth annually. This program, called the "Business Club," provides the seventeen to twenty-one year-old participants with basic education classes, vocational skills training, case management, and job placement assistance. The EBCC provides all participants with goal setting workshops, career counseling, and pre-employment skills training.

Counseling addresses crisis situations and other corpsmember concerns such as domestic violence, neglect and health-related issues. A large portion of the Counselor's referrals to numerous community resources are related to corpsmembers' increasing needs for emergency food and shelter. The Counselor also facilitates a significant amount of staff training. To further increase corpsmember retention, Counseling services are beginning to address corpsmember health needs such as vision care and comprehensive health examinations.

### **Project YES**

Project YES is a comprehensive service-learning and community service program that operates in the Oakland Unified School District. Using a "cascading leadership" model, Project YES participants strengthen academic skills while discovering a sense of pride and

personal responsibility for their neighborhoods and cities through service-learning curriculum, recycling clubs, community service projects and educational field trips. Project YES clubs are involved in a wide range of activities including setting up school recycling centers, painting neighborhood murals, participating in city graffiti and litter abatement programs, building and maintaining park trails and planting community gardens. Project YES also runs an extensive summer program, employing college and high school-aged young adults to lead and mentor between 200 and 300 middle school youth.

Project YES works with the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) at five junior high and middle school sites: Carter, Claremont, Frick, Roosevelt and Westlake. YES receives support from and collaborates with a wide range of public and private sponsors including: the City of Oakland Department of Graffiti Abatement, Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Community Development, Office of Economic Development and Employment and Office of the Mayor; California Adopt-a-Beach Program; Candlestick Point State Recreation Area; East Bay Regional Park District; Museum of Children's Art; Stanford University Volunteer Center; University of California, Berkeley; Wells Fargo Corporate Community Development Group; and Youth In Action of the San Francisco Conservation Corps.

#### **Environmental Improvement & Community Service Work Program**

Much of a corpsmember's experience in EBCC is centered on the work program. Corpsmembers work thirty-two hours per week on various environmental and community improvement projects. Work is accomplished by a crew of six to twelve corpsmembers who are supervised by a trained site supervisor. Our projects improve natural resources, promote community services, increase public access, assist with disaster relief efforts, and beautify neighborhoods and recreational lands in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

On the worksite, corpsmembers learn basic work maturity skills such as punctuality, dependability, cooperation, quality of work, acceptance of supervision, initiative and motivation. In addition, they learn transferable job skills such as tool usage, occupational safety, record keeping, and supervision as well as a range of technical skills including trailbuilding, fencing, carpentry, construction, masonry, painting, and landscaping.

#### **Emergency Responsiveness**

In addition to the ongoing environmental and community improvement work performed by our corpsmembers, the EBCC has proved its capacity to respond to disasters following the Loma Prieta earthquake and the East Bay Hills firestorm. In 1989, the Corps renovated a number of abandoned hotels and buildings and helped to convert them into emergency shelters and day care facilities for earthquake victims. EBCC corpsmembers also patrolled the Marina neighborhood in San Francisco to prevent looting. In 1991, the EBCC evacuated fire victims and worked with the Red Cross to set up emergency shelters and to assess the damage. Less than a week after the fire, EBCC crews began erecting erosion control structures in the burn area to prevent further damage caused by debris and silt runoff. Since

then, the EBCC has been working with various government and land management agencies, schools and homeowners associations to restore the fire-scarred hills and reduce the potential for future infernos.

#### **Unique Entrepreneurial Focus**

Unlike most non-profit, community-based agencies, EBCC not only develops programs for national replication, but also operates like a business. More than half of EBCC's annual budget of over \$4,000,000 is generated through fee-for-service contracts. Among the Corps' sponsors are many of the cities and special districts in the East Bay area. Year-round and short-term EBCC crew sponsors view the Corps to be a highly effective and cost-effective resource for maintaining and preserving our precious resources as well as for mitigating damage caused by natural and human forces.

EBCC's entrepreneurial approach is also reflected in the Education and Youth Development aspects of our operation. Our state-of-the-art Learning Center, which costs roughly \$300,000 to operate annually, generates over \$200,000 in fee-for-service revenue. We recently initiated a contract with the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) to train candidates for jobs with contractors that will help rebuild the Cypress (I-880) Freeway that collapsed as a result of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. EBCC's involvement as an education service provider for the Cypress Reconstruction Project underscores the Corps' unique position as an education reform program.

#### **Special Relationship with Park Districts and Services**

EBCC has developed a particularly strong partnership with the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD). The Park District sponsors an EBCC crew year-round to perform a variety of work at each of its fifty-one parks throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties. EBRPD sponsors additional EBCC crews to perform seasonal work and special tasks, such as the urban inter-face fuel break project as part of the District's fire prevention effort. EBRPD also supports other aspects of the Corps' program such as by providing land for EBCC's challenge ropes course and by funding the production of five murals in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

EBCC performs extensive work for most of the parks and public works departments of East Bay cities and counties. As municipalities and counties confront severe budget reductions, EBCC work crews offer a cost-effective way of accomplishing needed park maintenance, community improvement, and fire prevention work. In particular, EBCC works extensively with the Alameda and Contra Costa counties Public Works Departments and the cities of Oakland, Berkeley, Hayward, Union City, El Cerrito, Walnut Creek, and Richmond.

As a result of the East Bay Hills Firestorm, EBCC has developed particularly strong partnership with the cities and Oakland and Berkeley. Under the leadership of the Parks Manager for the City of Oakland, a Vegetation Management Consortium was formed to

coordinate fire prevention efforts. The Consortium members are the cities of Oakland and Berkeley, the East Bay Regional Park District, the East Bay Municipal Utilities District, the University of California, Berkeley, and the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratories. EBCC, with a \$350,000 grant from the State Office of Emergency Services (FEMA Hazard Mitigation Program) is the implementation arm of the Consortium and has been invited by the Consortium Chairman to consider becoming a partner in the Vegetation Management Plan development process. This model collaborative places EBCC in a influential position as an urban conservation corps to impact policy formation.

**Recommendations for Federal Partnerships with Local Corps**

To date, all of the accomplishments of local conservation corps has been achieved with a very limited and indirect amount of federal funding. In just ten years, the urban corps movement has created a dynamic network of agencies throughout the country with the capacity to improve the environment and local communities while promoting youth development. For the federal government, local corps are a resource in an of themselves that could prove even more effective with direct federal support.

There are a number of federally funded programs that can support the operations of local conservation corps. For example, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) is a source of funding for some local corps. Some aspects of the act, however, are very restrictive and limit the ability of local corps to serve JTPA participants without compromising their program structure. Perhaps a special title should be created that better enables local corps to administer JTPA contacts for at-risk youth. Other potential federal sources for urban conservation corps include public works funds, Department of Education grants, Pell Grants, Work Study funds, Department of Transportation grants, and grants from the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture.

Just as federal funding agencies utilize established universities to serve as a national research network, the government should turn to urban conservation corps to create a national conservation corps network. On our own, we have developed the capacity to make a tremendous impact at a local level. With added federal support, the impact of our operations will be felt throughout the country.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee.

Joanna Lennon  
Executive Director  
East Bay Conservation Corps

February 16, 1993

# BILL CLINTON

Answers Questions From  
Times Mirror Magazines' Readers

What do you consider your greatest accomplishments in natural resource conservation?

One of my greatest accomplishments is preserving Arkansas' outstanding natural heritage. Arkansas offers some of the best fishing streams and lakes in the country; world-record brown trout were taken from the White and Little Red Rivers. Arkansas' forests are home to large populations of deer, turkey and black bear.

I've fought to preserve Arkansas' wild lands and its reputation as the "Natural State." I've focused Arkansas' environmental funding on fish and wildlife programs. Since 1983, we've created nearly 40 new wildlife preserves and parks to protect our rivers, forests, wetlands, and prairies. I've implemented a "no net loss" program for forest land and established the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Trust Fund to protect natural areas and improve state park lands. In addition, my administration created the Arkansas Land Bank and the Arkansas Natural and Scenic Rivers Commission.

I've also cracked down on polluters by beefing up anti-pollution laws and by strengthening enforcement of these laws. If elected, by 1996 what will you have accomplished toward the conservation of natural resources?

Al Gore and I will fight to protect and conserve America's natural resources. To begin with, I will call upon all Americans to join me in a New Covenant for Environmental Progress—to protect and conserve our natural resources for our children. We will challenge every person, family, corporation, community and government agency to do more to protect our natural resources.

Specifically, I will acquire new parklands and recreation areas with funds now available in the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund to increase opportunities for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. And I will direct the federal agencies responsible for natural resources to adopt a true conservation ethic. I will also support a civilian conservation corps to raise environmental awareness among America's young people, to put young people to work on constructive projects, and to protect our natural resources.

What do you believe is the relationship between environmental protection and economic development? When it comes down to choosing between jobs and the environment, where do you stand?

You don't have to sacrifice environmental protection to get economic growth. The choice between jobs and environment

is a false one: we can have both. The administration believes we have to sacrifice the environment in favor of the economy.

In Arkansas, a clean environment means a strong economy. Last year, 16 million people visited Arkansas to take advantage of the abundant opportunities for outdoor sports and recreation. These visitors created thousands of jobs.

From a broader perspective, the market for goods and services related to the environment is approximately \$300 billion and growing at more than seven percent annually. We can create jobs by winning the competition for these rapidly expanding new markets. We must recognize the opportunities to promote environmentally sound economic growth.

Do you support the reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act? If so, what amendments should be made?

Yes, I support the reauthorization. I believe listing decisions for species under the Endangered Species Act should be based on science, not politics.

Do you believe the 1872 Mining Law needs updating? If so, what amendments do you recommend?

No Response.

In the upcoming reauthorization of the Clean Water Act, what changes do you think should be made to Section 404 for the purpose of improving wetlands conservation?

America's wetlands are one of our most treasured natural resources. Wetlands are critical spawning grounds and homes for both fish and other game. I strongly support "no net loss" of our wetlands and I strongly condemn the Bush administration's efforts to rewrite the definition of wetlands, a move which would lead to the destruction of large tracts of wetlands. I would work with scientific experts at the National Academy of Sciences to devise appropriate policies to protect our wetlands.

Under your budget for domestic discretionary spending, would you increase or decrease the amount spent on natural resource conservation? Please name at least five programs for which you would increase or decrease funding.

I would increase funding for several programs. I would add funds to support a civilian conservation corps, improve wildlife and fisheries management, develop renewable energy sources, and reinvigorate the Land and Water Conservation

## CLINTON

Fund to make more funds available for the acquisition of public outdoor open spaces. I would decrease funds for building logging roads on public lands.

A recent report on the status of marine fisheries shows that a majority of these stocks are overfished. How do you plan to implement the recovery of these fisheries?

America has the richest fishing grounds in the world. We must preserve and expand this critical renewable resource for both sport and commercial fishing. We need to improve the scientific and technical capabilities of the Regional Fishery Management Councils to make sure that they have the resources and technical wherewithal to develop scientifically sound management plans for our important commercial and recreational stocks. During the past 12 years, the administration has tried to slash funding for fisheries management. I will work with Congress to make sure that our marine and fresh water fishery programs and assistance to states are properly funded.

What programs will you implement to improve the infrastructure for recreation on public lands?

Our public lands are some of America's greatest natural assets. Because of misplaced priorities on the part of the administration, America's public land managers face a huge backlog of maintenance and repair—trails have eroded and camping facilities, picnic areas, and boat ramps have fallen into disrepair. I support a new civilian conservation corps, as a low-cost way to restore infrastructure on public lands, while inspiring civic pride and responsibility. I would also make funds available from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to help address critical infrastructure needs in state and local facilities. Finally, I would work to ensure appropriate access to public lands.

### DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM HIGHLIGHTS

- Will work to protect old growth forests, provide a genuine "no net loss" policy on wetlands and preserve critical habitats.
- Oppose Republican efforts to gut the Clean Air Act under the guise of competitiveness.
- Will create a civilian conservation corps for American youth.
- Oppose new offshore oil drilling and mineral exploration of environmentally critical areas.
- Would join European allies in agreeing to limit carbon dioxide emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000.
- Believe population growth must be controlled by working with other nations and organizations to fund greater family planning efforts.



Congressional Research Service  
The Library of Congress

Washington, D.C. 20540

AN ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO YOUTH PARTICIPANTS  
OF THE AMERICAN CONSERVATION CORPS ACT,  
BASED ON EXPERIENCE OF PRIOR COMPARABLE PROGRAMS

(Prepared in response to a request from the House Public Lands  
and National Parks Subcommittee)

By Karen Spar  
Specialist in Social Legislation  
Education and Public Welfare Division  
February 4, 1985

AN ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO YOUTH PARTICIPANTS OF THE AMERICAN  
CONSERVATION CORPS ACT, BASED ON EXPERIENCE OF PRIOR COMPARABLE PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

The American Conservation Corps Act, passed by the 98th Congress and vetoed by President Reagan, has been reintroduced in the 99th Congress as H.R. 99. The dual-purpose bill would create jobs for teenagers and young adults in conservation projects on public lands. This legislation traces its roots to the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s, which also had the twin goals of employment and conservation.

As reintroduced on Jan. 3, 1985, H.R. 99 would operate through two components: year-round employment for 16-25-year-olds, and a summer program for participants aged 15-21. All unemployed individuals meeting the age requirements would be eligible for participation, although special efforts would be made to recruit and enroll economically disadvantaged youth. In addition to paid employment, Corps members could receive education and training assistance. Participants without a high school diploma would have priority in receiving educational assistance.

This report attempts to assess the potential value of the proposed American Conservation Act (ACC) by examining the experiences under previous programs, primarily the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Youth Conservation Corps, the Young Adult Conservation Corps, California Conservation Corps, and Job Corps. Based on the research conducted on these programs, it is impossible to develop a single figure that would represent the social value of a program such as the

ACC. Instead, this report puts together in one document whatever anecdotal and other data are available that might provide some insight into the possible benefits of the proposed program.

However, it should be pointed out at the outset that few evaluations are available on the social impacts of these programs and some of the information cited in this report is from sources with a positive bias toward the programs (e.g., information on the Civilian Conservation Corps contained in the final report of the program's director). In addition, there have been criticisms of the programs, including criticisms of the management of some programs discussed in this report (particularly Job Corps) which are not addressed here because they do not directly relate to the main topic (i.e., the programs' benefits to youth participants).

Further, it should be noted that this report does not discuss alternative approaches to youth unemployment that might also yield positive social impacts. There may be other programs that could also produce positive social benefits at lower cost. However, the purpose of this report was not to compare the proposed legislation with all other youth employment programs, but rather to discuss the proposal's potential benefits, based on the experience of similar efforts.

#### EXPERIENCE OF PAST PROGRAMS

The earliest predecessor of the American Conservation Corps Act is the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s. In addition, a Youth Conservation Corps and Young Adult Conservation Corps operated during the 1970s. The Job Corps, while not primarily a conservation program, is a training program for disadvantaged youth and also provides some basis for analysis of the proposed legislation. Job Corps began in the mid-1960s as part of the War on Poverty and today is authorized under the Job Training Partnership Act.

Further, a number of States, either with or without Federal funding, have operated youth conservation corps programs.

Benefits of participation in such employment programs are not easy to quantify. In addition to the wages received while enrolled, potential benefits include greater long-term employability, education, improvements in health and nutrition, self-esteem, reduced dependence on public support programs, and reduction in criminal activity. While anecdotal data provide some information on these long-term benefits, few formal program evaluations are available which analyze all these issues.

Civilian Conservation Corps. During its more than nine years of existence between 1933 and 1942, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) served almost 3 million men, mostly between the ages of 17 and 23. The average cost per enrollee during those years was about \$1,000 (in 1942 dollars). Although some analysts have said that the value of the conservation work performed alone outweighed this cost, few observers have been able to quantify the value to the individual Corps member. Nonetheless, this value appears to have been significant. "The role of the CCC as a conservor of human beings can in no way be measured economically, yet its importance in this field was seminal," wrote one observer. 1/

Of all CCC enrollees, 90 percent participated in formal classroom training or education, in addition to their job-related training. More than 100,000 Corps members who entered the program illiterate were taught to read and write. More than 25,000 enrollees received eighth grade diplomas, more than 5,000 received high school diplomas, and 270 received college degrees. The general health of Corps members also improved during enrollment in the program. At the time of entry into the Corps, 70 percent of enrollees had been substandard in

---

1/ John Salmond, *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study*, Duke University Press, Durham, N.C., 1967, p. 129.

weight, compared with 40 percent of enrollees at the time of their discharge. Although data are not available on the long-term employment of enrollees, the director of the CCC testified in 1939, "Many employers are regularly applying to the Civilian Conservation Corps camps for unskilled or semiskilled employees. Some of the largest corporations in the country are writing to those in authority in the Civilian Conservation Corps camps asking for recommendations for boys from the camps for such employment as they are able to furnish. There is an increasing number of small employers who are taking boys from the Civilian Conservation Corps camps." 2/

The final report of the director of the CCC described a variety of intangible ways in which he felt the Corps had improved the lives of young participants: development of character, of social attitudes, of skills and self-reliance, wider social horizons, regular and wholesome habits and attitudes, responsibility and discipline. "The Corps . . . sent a stream of fresh, young, eager and desirable trained manpower into the social and industrial life of the Nation. . . . From nearly every social standpoint, the operations of the CCC have paid very practical tangible (as well as intangible) dividends to the United States." 3/

Youth Conservation Corps. A more recent predecessor of the American Conservation Corps Act is the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), operated throughout the 1970s and still operated on a very small scale through the Agriculture and Interior Departments. During most of its existence, YCC operated through both residential and nonresidential centers, employing youths at the minimum

---

2/ Legislative Reference Service, Civilian Conservation Corps, printed as Senate Document No. 216, 77th Congress, 2nd Session, 1942, pp. 69-98.

3/ Federal Security Agency, Final Report of the Director of the Civilian Conservation Corps, April 1933 through June 30, 1942, pp. 62-65.

wage for 30 hours per week in conservation projects and providing environmental education for 10 unpaid hours a week. Enrollment in the program peaked in 1978 at 46,000 participants with Federal appropriations of \$60 million. Participants are between the ages of 15 and 18 and spend between four and eight weeks during the summer in the program.

Estimates of the cost per youth of participation in YCC during FY 1981 vary between \$1,542 and \$2,260, depending on whether the camp was run by the Interior Department, Agriculture Department, or States. As with the Civilian Conservation Corps, studies have found that the value of the conservation work performed nearly equals or exceeds the costs of the program; however, the program's benefits to the individual youth participants have not been quantified. Again, as with the CCC, these benefits are generally felt to be substantial.

Research on the possible long-term benefits of YCC participation was conducted between 1978 and 1983 by the Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station of the U.S. Forest Service and Colorado State University. Questionnaires were mailed to a sample of enrollees in the 1979 program and to a sample of parents of enrollees in the 1979 program. In addition, control groups of young people who had applied for YCC but had not been chosen in the random selection process and a group of parents of such applicants, also were surveyed, as well as youngsters and parents of youngsters who had been accepted for the program but did not attend.

Six months after participation in the summer 1979 program, YCC enrollees reported higher scores, which were statistically significant, on a number of areas which researchers attributed to participation in YCC. These included increased interest in environmental problems, personal conservation actions, understanding of conservation, work efficiency, ability to find jobs, tool skills and safety, willingness to help at school, acceptance of other races,

and natural resource knowledge. Parents of participants reported higher scores for their children than the control groups of parents in these areas, as well as in personal honesty. When surveyed again 26 months after the 1979 summer program ended, the enrollee group continued to report higher scores than the control group in the following areas: increased interest in environmental problems, personal conservation actions, understanding of conservation, tool skills and safety, ability to work with others, acceptance of other races, satisfaction with plans for the future, and healthy diet. Parents of the enrollee group reported higher scores than parents of the control groups on the following additional benefits: increased natural resource ethic, planning and organizing work, work efficiency, achievement motivation, willingness to help at school, and personal honesty.

The researchers concluded that 26 months after participating in the 1979 summer program, YCC enrollees and their parents were perceiving benefits not perceived by their counterparts who had not participated in YCC. The persistence of these benefits is particularly impressive given the short-term nature of YCC participation, according to the researchers. Researchers further found that benefits were greatest among youth who participated in residential YCC camps, compared with participants in non-residential programs. 4/

Young Adult Conservation Corps. The Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) operated for four years between 1978 and 1981 under title VIII of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). YACC was a year-round program of minimum wage employment for young adults, aged 16 through 23, who were unemployed and out-of-school. Overall Federal responsibility for YACC rested with the Department of Labor, which contracted with the Departments of Interior and

---

4/ Final Report of the Five-Year Program of Research to Evaluate the Long-Term Benefits of the Youth Conservation Corps, Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station and Colorado State University, December 1982.

Agriculture to administer both Federal centers and State grants. About 25 percent of enrollees were in residential centers, and the remainder participated in nonresidential programs. Participants could not remain in the program longer than 12 months (which did not have to be consecutive) and the average duration in the program was four months.

About \$900 million was appropriated for the YACC during its four years of existence and it served about 269,000 participants. Average cost of a year's service in YACC (during which as many as three individuals may have been enrolled) fluctuated between approximately \$10,000 and \$12,000 during the program's four years. A portion of this relatively high cost, as compared with other youth employment programs, was due to the substantial costs of equipment and machinery and the fact that 25 percent of the enrollees were in residential programs. As with CCC and YCC, estimates of the value of the conservation work performed equal or exceed the costs of the program. Once again, however, no formal evaluations have been done to quantify the program's value to individual participants.

Anecdotal data indicates that YACC had substantial benefits for enrollees, similar to those of CCC and YCC. Rekindling the work ethic, teaching positive attitudes toward work, developing self-confidence and pride in one's work were among the most frequently cited accomplishments of YACC in a 1981 Youth Policy Institute study. Corps members interviewed for the study also said they liked participating in a program which was not specifically targeted on the economically disadvantaged and therefore did not have the stigma of other youth programs then funded under CETA. <sup>5/</sup> The Department of Labor reported that in FY 1979, a total of 71 percent of YACC enrollees either entered unsubsidized employment after participation in the program (4 percent) or had another form of positive

---

<sup>5/</sup> Youth Policy Institute, Youth Service and Conservation: Meeting National Needs in the Eighties, a Report on the Young Adult Conservation Corps, May 1981.

termination, such as returning to school, entrance into the military or another type of training program (63 percent). 6/ This positive termination rate is only slightly lower than title IV-A of CETA, which authorized comprehensive employment training services for youth (74 percent positive termination rate in FY 1981) and is higher than the positive termination rate for youth during the first nine months of program operations under the new Job Training Partnership Act (63 percent positive termination rate from Oct. 1, 1983 to June 30, 1984). However, no data are available on long-term employment and earnings gains of YACC participants.

California Conservation Corps. The State of California has operated a youth conservation corps program since 1971, using primarily nonfederal funds. Originally established as the California Ecology Corps by then-Governor Ronald Reagan in 1971, the program was re-established as the California Conservation Corps in 1976. The program is open to unemployed 18-23-year-olds and operates primarily through residential centers. The average length of stay in the program, which boasts the motto, "Hard Work, Low Pay, and Miserable Conditions," is about six months.

An evaluation of the California Conservation Corps conducted in fiscal 1979 by Public Interest Economics-West concluded that Corps members had increased earnings, after participation in the program, of approximately \$1,671 per year per member, compared with a control group of non-participants. Researchers pointed out that this increase in earnings is in addition to other benefits not easily measured, such as lower welfare and unemployment costs, reduced demands on police, courts, and prisons, greater leadership abilities, and improved health. 7/

---

6/ Employment and Training Report of the President, U.S. Department of Labor, 1980.

7/ Public Interest Economics-West, Final Report of Economic Impact of California Conservation Corps, San Francisco, California, January 1980.

Job Corps. Job Corps differs from programs previously discussed in this report in two significant ways: it is specifically targeted on disadvantaged youth, and it is not a conservation program, although the Interior Department and Forest Service do operate a number of Job Corps conservation centers. However, although Job Corps does not bear dividends on the Federal investment in the form of conservation work, evaluations of the program's economic impact have found its benefits to participants and society at large exceed its costs.

Job Corps began in the mid-1960s as part of the War on Poverty. It was incorporated as a separate section of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act in 1973, and today is authorized as a section of the Job Training Partnership Act (title IV-B). FY 1985 appropriations are \$617 million and the program serves approximately 60,000 youth yearly with an average enrollment level throughout the year of 40,000. Eligible youth must be economically, socially and educationally disadvantaged, and between the ages of 16 and 21. Average costs for a year of service in Job Corps were \$13,000 in FY 1983. The average length of stay in the program was about eight months during FY 1983. The program is primarily residential and participants receive intensive remedial education, job training and supportive services.

Job Corps reported a positive termination rate in FY 1983 of 75.3 percent. Almost 51 percent of youths who terminated from the program in that year went into unsubsidized employment, while another 24.5 percent returned to education or enrolled in another training program or entered the military. Excluding those who terminated from the program but were not available for placement because they were ill or women fulfilling full-time family responsibilities, these positive termination rates go even higher: 52.8 percent entered employment, 26.8 percent went to another education or training program, and 2.8

percent entered the military, for a total positive termination rate of 82.4 percent. 8/

A long-term evaluation of Job Corps, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., found that in the first four years after participation in Job Corps, former enrollees earned an average of 15 percent (\$600) more per year than a control group who had not participated in Job Corps, and worked an average of three weeks more per year. Job Corps participants also obtained more high school diplomas (27 percent) than the control group, were more likely to attend vocational or technical school or college, and were more likely to enter military service. Former Job Corps enrollees had fewer health problems, were less dependent on welfare (two weeks less per year), and less dependent on unemployment insurance (nearly one week per year), than their non-Job Corps counterparts. The longer an individual remained in Job Corps, the greater were the benefits gained. Women without children showed the largest gains in earnings, education, health and reduction in welfare; males had larger gains in likelihood of joining the military and reduction in unemployment benefits. Gains persisted throughout the four-year period.

Mathematica calculated that the benefit of Job Corps to society was approximately \$7,400 per participant, compared to a program cost of \$5,000 per participant (costs per participant are less than cost per service-year), in 1977 dollars. Therefore, Mathematica concluded that Job Corps yielded a 46 percent return to society. The researchers stated that the social investment in Job Corps is paid back about three years after the individual completes the program. 9/

---

8/ Job Corps in Brief, FY 1983, Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor.

9/ Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., Evaluation of the Economic Impact of the Job Corps, Third Follow-Up Report, Princeton, N.J., September 1982.

A 1978 study of the non-economic benefits of Job Corps, conducted by Abt Associates, also found the impact of Job Corps on enrollees is substantial, especially for youths who remain in the program at least three months. Specifically, Abt reported that Job Corps enrollees had less criminal justice system involvement than comparable youths not enrolled in Job Corps, particularly among women enrollees. Both men and women with previous criminal records improved significantly in several skill areas—job seeking skills, job knowledge, and nutrition—while in Job Corps. During the period of their enrollment, Job Corps participants received a great deal more medical and dental care than they would have without Job Corps enrollment, including detection of previously untreated conditions among 14 percent of the enrollees. Health education and nutrition counseling is provided in Job Corps, which resulted in behavioral changes among Job Corps enrollees apparent after termination. Youths who had participated in Job Corps at least three months chose more nutritious foods than those who had dropped out early or never participated, especially among females with children. After participation in Job Corps, youths were more likely to be employed full-time than those who had dropped out of Job Corps or never enrolled, especially female enrollees.

Abt researchers concluded: "Job Corps has provided substantial noneconomic benefits to its participants and to the larger society. . . . Youth who enrolled in Job Corps and stayed at least three months improved in all areas of study, from eating habits to staying out of trouble; from self-esteem to dental care. . . . These impacts make Job Corps participants more employable and benefit the larger society in many ways." 10/

CETA Youth Employment and Training Programs. Under the Comprehensive

---

10/ Abt Associates, the Noneconomic Impacts of Job Corps, published by U.S. Department of Labor, 1978.

Employment and Training Act, substantial sums of money were spent on youth employment and training programs, in an attempt to determine what programs work best for unemployed young people. A great deal of money and effort also was devoted to evaluation of these programs. Because of the diversity of programming offered under CETA, it is difficult to generalize about the program's overall effectiveness. However, analysts generally concluded that the success of youth in the labor market is closely tied to basic writing, communication, and computational abilities. When basic or remedial education is offered in combination with well-structured work experience and training, substantial gains in employability can be achieved for disadvantaged youth. Work experience can be an effective way not only to provide income to youngsters while enrolled in a program, but also to serve as strong motivation for youth to pursue other forms of education or training.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR AMERICAN CONSERVATION CORPS ACT

Although it is difficult to place a number on the value of a program such as the proposed American Conservation Corps (ACC) to youth participants, it appears that some tangible and intangible benefits would likely result. Job Corps is one of the only programs where evaluators have attempted to estimate a percentage return on the investment of Federal funds. The return calculated by researchers for Job Corps is substantial (46 percent), although it cannot be assumed that the American Conservation Corps would yield the same return given the differences between the two programs. Job Corps is strictly targeted on the disadvantaged and places great emphasis on intensive remedial education,

training and supportive services. Nonetheless, there are enough similarities between the two programs to warrant consideration of the Job Corps research.

For example, it is reasonable to assume that a significant portion of ACC enrollees would be disadvantaged, based on the experience of past programs. One of the criticisms of YCC and YACC was that these programs were not targeted on the disadvantaged and did not serve a substantial number of disadvantaged youth. National statistics, based on enrollee's self-declarations, report that almost 30 percent of YCC and almost 40 percent of YACC participants were economically disadvantaged. However, more scientific studies by individual centers and States indicate that the portion of economically disadvantaged enrollees in these programs may actually have been much higher. Further, YACC served a large percentage of educationally disadvantaged youth; almost 40 percent of enrollees were high school dropouts. By contrast, the Job Training Partnership Act, which is highly targeted on high school dropouts and disadvantaged youth, enrolled only 24 percent high school dropouts during its first nine months of operations.

The proposed ACC also contains provisions specifically dealing with training and education for enrollees. While these services would not be provided as intensively as in Job Corps, they could nonetheless boost the program's long-term value to youth participants, especially those without high school diplomas. In addition, this combination of training or education and highly structured work experience, plus job guidance and placement which also would be provided under ACC, is the general formula which youth employment researchers have found to be highly effective in the past.

As noted earlier, the California Conservation Corps, which is very similar to the proposed ACC, has been found to yield a \$1,671 annual increase in earnings for participants, as compared with a similar group of non-participants. It is

reasonable to assume that some increase in subsequent earnings could also result from participation in the ACC.

In conclusion, while it is impossible to state numerically the amount of social benefits resulting from a program such as the ACC, research on similar labor-intensive programs suggests that these social benefits are substantial. In addition to increased employability and earnings, these benefits could include certain direct savings to society through reduced welfare and unemployment insurance costs and lower crime rates. Further, less tangible but equally significant benefits could include greater appreciation for the work ethic, enhanced self-esteem, a sense of responsibility and discipline, the ability to work well with others, better health, development of positive social attitudes, and a sense of purpose.

At the same time, it should be pointed out that there may be other approaches to the problems of youth unemployment that could also yield positive results with a smaller investment of funds on a per-person basis. However, the purpose of this paper was not to compare the proposed American Conservation Corps with all other youth employment and training programs, but rather to determine its potential benefits, based on the experience of similar efforts.



Washington, D.C. 20540

Congressional Research Service  
The Library of Congress

ANALYSIS OF THE CONSERVATION BENEFITS AND COSTS OF  
PAST YOUTH CONSERVATION PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR SIMILAR WORK IN FEDERAL AGENCIES

Prepared at the Request of  
Honorable John Seiberling

Ross W. Corte  
Analyst  
and  
George H. Siehl  
Specialist  
Environment and Natural Resources Policy Division

January 31, 1985

INTRODUCTION

The most direct method of examining the potential conservation costs and benefits of a youth conservation program is to examine similar past programs. The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) and the Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) are two such programs which have been used for conservation work on Federal and other lands in the past decade. The YCC is a summer employment program for men and women, age 15 through 18, while YACC provided year-round conservation work to persons 16 to 23 who were unemployed and out of school; YACC was terminated at the end of 1981, but the YCC program is still operating, although at reduced levels. Each of these programs will be examined to the extent that published information is available. This report provides a description of the costs and conservation benefits of these two programs, followed by a discussion of opportunities identified for Federal land management agencies to obtain resource-related benefits in conjunction with work which could be accomplished by the proposed American Conservation Corps. This report does not include any analysis of social benefits, such as reduced unemployment and new skills for the participants, which could result from a youth conservation program.

## YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS (YCC) AND YOUNG ADULT CONSERVATION CORPS (YACC)

EXPENDITURES AND UNIT COSTS

The YCC, established in 1970, provided funds to the U.S. Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture and to the National Park Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management in the Department of the Interior for resource conservation work on Federal lands. The program was expanded in 1974, providing money to States for conservation projects. The funding and accomplishments of the YCC grew rapidly through 1978, and then essentially leveled off. Funding to the Federal agencies for this program was cut more than 75 percent in 1981, and has remained at relatively low levels. Funding to the States for YCC programs was ended in 1982. Table 1 shows the Federal expenditures on the YCC program from 1979 through 1983.

TABLE 1. Federal YCC Expenditures

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Forest Service</u>	<u>U.S. Department of the Interior</u>	<u>Grants to States 1/</u>	<u>Total Funding</u>
1979	\$ 21,900,000	\$ 21,385,729	\$ 16,156,834	\$ 59,442,563
1980	19,180,000	19,264,566	14,476,296	52,920,862
1981	4,000,000	4,019,713	16,192,684	24,212,397
1982	1,600,000	2,293,809	0	3,893,809
1983 2/	3,100,000	6,700,000	0	10,000,000

1/ State contributions to the YCC program were \$4,922,416 in 1979, \$4,647,447 in 1980, and \$4,781,577 in 1981.

2/ Funds as appropriated; Public Law 97-394.

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture. YCC at Work: The 1979 Program Year. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980. 38 p. [annual series, 1979-1982]

The enrollment period for the YCC program averaged about seven weeks per enrollee, including dropouts. Specific data on weekly or monthly costs per enrollee are unavailable, but at seven weeks per enrollee, the \$1,666 cost per enrollee averages \$238 per week. Table 2 shows the average cost per enrollee and the average cost per week computed on the basis of seven weeks per enrollee for 1979 through 1982.

TABLE 2. Average YCC Cost per Enrollee and per Week

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Total 1/ Expenditures</u>	<u>Enrollees</u>	<u>Cost per Enrollee</u>	<u>Cost per Week</u>
<u>1979</u>				
Federal	\$ 43,285,729	24,860	\$ 1,741	\$ 248.71
State	21,079,270	14,635	1,440	205.71
YCC Total	\$ 64,364,999	39,495	\$ 1,630	\$ 232.86
<u>1980</u>				
Federal	\$ 38,444,566	21,107	\$ 1,821	\$ 260.14
State	19,123,743	12,793	1,495	213.57
YCC Total	\$ 57,568,309	33,900	\$ 1,698	\$ 242.57
<u>1981</u>				
Federal	\$ 8,019,713	3,649	\$ 2,198	\$ 314.00
State	20,974,261	13,719	1,529	218.43
YCC Total	\$ 28,993,974	17,368	\$ 1,669	\$ 238.43
<u>1982</u>				
Federal	\$ 3,893,809	2,154	\$ 1,808	258.29
State	0	0	-	-

1/ Includes State contributions to the YCC program of \$4,922,416 in 1979, \$4,647,447 in 1980, and \$4,781,577 in 1981.

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture. YCC at Work: The 1979 Program Year.

The YACC program, established in 1977, was administered jointly by the Departments of Labor, of Agriculture, and of the Interior, with 30 percent of the funds distributed to the States. The program expired at the end of 1981, although some funds were deferred until 1982. Data on the YACC is less

available than for the YCC because no annual reports were prepared on the YACC program. However, data on the Agriculture Department portion were included in the annual Report of the Forest Service. These data are sufficient for a general comparison with the YCC data presented above. Forest Service expenditures on the YACC program are shown in table 3. The table also shows the average cost

TABLE 3. Average Forest Service YACC Cost per Enrollee and per Week

Fiscal Year	Expenditures	Enrollees	Cost per Enrollee	Cost per Week
1978	\$ 81.6 million	n/a	n/a	n/a
1979	80.4 million	28,310	\$ 2,840	\$ 236.67
1980	75.7 million	24,865	3,044	253.67
1981	60.5 million	18,617	3,250	270.83
1982	20.3 million	8,555	2,373	197.75

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. Report of the Forest Service: Fiscal Year 1979. Washington, 1980. 209 p. [annual series, 1979-1982]

per enrollee was nearly \$3,000 from 1979 through 1982. Average enrollment in the Forest Service portion of the YACC program was three months, compared to seven weeks for the YCC program. At three months per enrollee, the average weekly cost per person for the YACC program was \$245, slightly higher than the average weekly cost of the YCC program at \$238.

#### TYPES OF PROJECTS AND APPRAISED VALUE OF WORK ACCOMPLISHED

The YCC program was used for many types of projects on Federal and other lands. Table 4 shows the outputs for several types of projects on Federal lands from 1971 through 1981. The annual reports on the YCC program included estimates of the appraised value of work accomplished; <sup>1/</sup> major categories and

<sup>1/</sup> Value of work accomplished is appraised by estimating the cost of doing the same work under contract or with Federal employees.

TABLE 4. Major YCC Outputs on Federal Lands, 1971-1981 Total

Timber Stand Improvement	91,436 acres
Tree Planting	60,788 acres
Visitor Assistance	3,649,825 visitors
Range Revegetation	47,063 acres
Fish and Wildlife Habitat Improvement	439,176 acres
Trail Maintenance	15,393 miles
Erosion Control	115,191 acres

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture. Youth Conservation Corps: Tenth Anniversary Report, 1980 Program Year. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1982. 49 p. [annual series, 1980-1981]

examples of the activities included are shown in table 5, while table 6 displays the value of work accomplished for the major categories. In the eleven years from 1971 through 1981, the appraised value of YCC accomplishments totaled more than \$300 million. The appraised value of YCC work is compared to the total YCC expenditures in table 7. For the four years shown, the expenditures exceed the value of work accomplished by \$3.7 million, about two percent of the total expenditures.

The appraised value of work accomplished by YACC enrollees in the Forest Service is presented in table 8, together with a comparison to the program costs. Overall, the value of work done exceeds the expenditures, even including the start-up costs in 1978; the difference for the five years that the YACC existed is \$12.3 million. One limitation of this data is that the Forest Service annual reports provide no disaggregation of work by categories.

Since the value of work accomplished by the YCC and YACC provided on these tables represents agency estimates of the cost to complete the work if it were done under contract or by Federal employees, these values do not represent dollar values of physical resources per se. Therefore, comparisons of expenditures with the value of work accomplished are simply estimates of the money saved by using

TABLE 5. Major Accomplishment Categories and Examples of Activities

A. Timber Management	
- Planting trees	
- Improving timber stands and sites	
- Controlling insect and disease pests	
- Disposing of debris and logging slash	
B. Recreation Development and Maintenance	
- Building and maintaining campgrounds, picnic facilities, recreation shelters, water recreation facilities, and decorative fences	
- Clearing overlooks and vistas	
- Picking up litter	
C. Visitor Services	
- Building and maintaining visitor information centers	
- Assisting visitors with information and guides	
- Restoring historical dwellings, monuments, and artifacts	
- Landscaping and site rehabilitation	
D. Range Management	
- Building and maintaining piping, fences, and cattleguards	
- Replanting rangelands	
- Controlling weeds	
- Developing wildlife springs and catchment basins	
E. Wildlife	
- Surveying waterfowl, fish, and wildlife populations	
- Improving waterfowl, fish, and wildlife habitats	
- Building and maintaining waterfowl nesting sites and fish raceways	
- Developing wildlife springs and catchment basins	
F. Engineering and Construction	
- Assisting topographic, engineering, cadastral/land line, and corner search surveys	
- Building and maintaining trails, general use and fire roads, telegraph and electric lines, and foot, bike, and horse bridges	
G. Water and Soil Conservation	
- Controlling erosion and protecting watersheds	
- Building and maintaining drift fences and drainage and irrigation ditches	
- Improving stream channels and water quality	
- Working on flood control and water supply projects	
H. Other YCC Programs	
- Building and maintaining signs, camps, and facilities for YCC	
- Training in first aid	

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior. YCC Program Report 1982: Youth Conservation Corps. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1984. 32 p.

TABLE 6. Appraised Value of Work Accomplished by YCC (in million dollars) FY 1971-1981

Category	Fiscal Year					
	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Timber Mgmt.	\$ 0.3	\$ 0.2	\$ 0.2	\$ 0.3	\$ 1.2	\$ 2.1
Recreation	0.9	0.6	1.7	2.4	4.8	9.1
Visitor Serv.	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.5	1.4	2.5
Range Mgmt.	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.9	1.6
Wildlife	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	1.0	1.8
Engineering	0.0	0.5	0.2	0.2	1.6	3.3
Water & Soil	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.4	1.1	2.4
Other	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.1	4.0
Total	\$ 1.8	\$ 2.7	\$ 3.6	\$ 8.7 <sup>1/</sup>	\$13.9	\$26.9

Category	Fiscal Year					1971-81 Total
	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	
Timber Mgmt.	\$ 3.5	\$ 4.4	\$ 3.9	\$ 4.2	\$ 2.3	\$ 22.6 ( 7.3%)
Recreation	15.8	19.5	21.2	21.0	9.3	106.3 (34.2%)
Visitor Serv.	3.8	5.4	4.6	4.2	3.3	26.1 ( 8.4%)
Range Mgmt.	3.2	4.6	4.3	4.0	1.1	20.5 ( 6.6%)
Wildlife	3.0	4.4	3.9	3.8	1.7	20.6 ( 6.6%)
Engineering	6.6	10.5	7.5	7.9	7.5	45.9 (14.8%)
Water & Soil	4.4	5.7	4.7	4.4	2.6	26.3 ( 8.5%)
Other	6.9	8.3	8.0	7.5	3.6	42.3 (13.6%)
Total	\$47.2	\$62.8	\$58.0	\$57.0	\$31.3	\$313.9 <sup>2/</sup>

<sup>1/</sup> Includes \$3.3 million of work accomplished by State grants program, not disaggregated by category.

<sup>2/</sup> Columns and rows may not add to totals due to rounding error. Precise data is available in the source cited below.

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture. Youth Conservation Corps. 1980 Program Year.

TABLE 7. Total YCC Expenditures and Value of Work Accomplished

Fiscal Year	Total 1/ Expenditures	Value of Work Accomplished	Difference
<u>1979</u>			
Federal	\$ 43,285,729	\$ 36,857,110	-\$ 6,428,619
State	21,079,270	21,124,845	+ 45,575
YCC Total	\$ 64,364,999	\$ 57,981,955	-\$ 6,383,044
<u>1980</u>			
Federal	\$ 38,444,566	\$ 34,569,735	-\$ 3,874,831
State	19,123,743	22,447,754	+ 3,324,011
YCC Total	\$ 57,568,309	\$ 57,017,489	-\$ 550,820
<u>1981</u>			
Federal	\$ 8,019,713	\$ 5,585,153	-\$ 2,434,560
State	20,974,261	25,759,077	+ 4,784,816
YCC Total	\$ 28,993,974	\$ 31,344,230	+\$ 2,350,250
<u>1982</u>			
Federal	\$ 3,893,809	\$ 4,770,805	+\$ 876,996
State	0	-	-

1/ Includes State contribution to the YCC program of \$4,922,416 in 1979, \$4,647,447 in 1980, and \$4,781,577 in 1981.

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture. YCC at Work: The 1979 Program Year.

TABLE 8. Forest Service YACC Expenditures and Value of Work Accomplished

Fiscal Year	Expenditures	Value of Work Accomplished	Difference
1978	\$ 81.6 million	\$ 61.2 million	-\$ 20.4 million
1979	80.4 million	89.4 million	+ 9.0 million
1980	75.7 million	83.0 million	+ 7.3 million
1981	60.5 million	72.0 million	+ 11.5 million
1982	20.3 million	25.2 million	+ 4.9 million

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. Report of the Forest Service: Fiscal Year 1978. Washington, 1979. [annual series, 1978-1982]

YCC or YACC labor instead of contracting or doing the work in-house. This does not imply that contractors or Federal employees were replaced by the youth conservation programs. Much of the work that was done, particularly the maintenance-type projects, would simply not have been done.

The fact that work done by the YCC and YACC would have been deferred without those programs is often cited as evidence that those programs generally did low priority work. In 1981, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior Richard Hite made this argument: <sup>2/</sup>

. . . other higher priority conservation and development work may not be funded because budget totals are increased by youth employment programs funding lower priority work indirectly.

Contrary to the low-priority argument is the reported deterioration of national park and national forest facilities due to deferred maintenance that has also been frequently noted. In 1980, the General Accounting Office reported that many Federal facilities did not meet health and safety standards, and estimated that \$1.6 billion was needed to correct these deficiencies. <sup>3/</sup> In response to this problem, then-Secretary of the Interior James Watt proposed diverting Land and Water Conservation Fund monies from land acquisition to maintaining Federal facilities. Watt stated: <sup>4/</sup>

<sup>2/</sup> Richard Hite, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Budget and Administration, Department of the Interior. Statement Concerning H.R. 4861 Before the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and National Parks [Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs]. December 8, 1981.

<sup>3/</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office. Report by the Comptroller General of the United States: Facilities in Many National Parks and Forests Do Not Meet Health and Safety Standards. CED-80-115. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., October 10, 1980. 153 p.

<sup>4/</sup> James G. Watt, Secretary, Department of the Interior. Statement Before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Public Lands. May 7, 1981.

In the midst of all this acquisition, there has been a failure even to begin to adequately maintain what we have, to the point where the GAO stated in October of last year that the Park Service and its concessionaires are sitting on a health and safety maintenance backlog far in excess of \$1 billion. If you just look at the gross numbers, Mr. Chairman, I think you can clearly see where our priorities must be. The health and safety backlog simply has to be addressed. The Department of the Interior has a statutory responsibility to protect the health and safety of the public as well as to maintain and restore deteriorated facilities.

As noted earlier, much of the work accomplished by the YCC and YACC programs was maintenance-type work. And, as shown above, the cost of these programs is roughly comparable to contracting costs or the cost of using Federal employees. Much of the work accomplished by these programs would have been deferred, allowing additional deterioration in the national parks and national forests. Richard Pardo of the American Forestry Association summarized the attitude of many national conservation organizations when he was quoted as saying: <sup>5/</sup>

Our view is that things will not get done without the YACC. The future of the program is a matter of investing in and using public lands. The parks depend on the YACC. They are short of manpower now. Without repair and maintenance, natural resources and parks will deteriorate.

#### RESOURCE VALUE OF WORK ACCOMPLISHED

As noted above, the appraised value of YCC and YACC accomplishments is obtained by estimating costs of the project if contractors or Federal employees were used. This appraised value has nothing to do with the value of the outputs produced by these programs. For example, in 1982, it cost approximately \$707 to plant trees on 6 acres in a National Park System unit; the appraised

<sup>5/</sup> Youth Policy Institute. Youth Service and Conservation: Meeting National Needs in the Eighties. A Report on the Young Adult Conservation Corps. Washington, May 1981. p. 32.

value of the planting was \$700, suggesting that the YCC effort cost \$7 more than a contract would have cost. <sup>6/</sup> However, the timber value of the 6 acres of planting may range from as low as \$1,000 to more than \$70,000 when the trees are mature, depending on numerous factors such as the species planted, the productivity of the site, and the age of maturity. The \$700 appraised value bears no direct relationship with the discounted present net worth of the future timber value of the planting.

There have been attempts to estimate the resource values which result from reforestation work by conservation programs. The most common approach is to compare the estimated value of the mature timber with the planting costs. One calculation in Washington State shows a timber value at maturity (using 1981 prices) of \$8.7 million for 1,245 acres planted by the YCC at a cost of \$104,125 <sup>7/</sup>; this implies a 7.6-percent annual rate of return on the YCC investment if timber maturity is reached in 60 years, a common rotation age for private timberlands in the State. A recent report on National Service cited 90,000 acres of reforestation in Washington and Oregon by the Civilian Conservation Corps between 1934 and 1939; the approximate cost was \$270,000, while the current market value of the timber is \$63 million. <sup>8/</sup> This increase in value implies an average rate of return exceeding 12 percent per year for the CCC reforestation investment.

<sup>6/</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior. YCC Program Report 1982. p. 24.

<sup>7/</sup> David H. Reynaud, YCC State Program Agent, State of Washington. The YCC Program in Washington. Testimony Before the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and National Parks [Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs]. May 5, 1981.

<sup>8/</sup> Jonathan Foley, Meryl Maneker, and Jeffrey Lee Schwartz. National Service and America's Future. Special Report. Washington, Youth Policy Institute, January 1984. 21 p.

It is difficult to estimate benefits of conservation programs even for marketable commodities such as timber. The variability in site conditions makes benefit calculations that are not site-specific very crude estimates, at best; for example, the average price in 1983 for Douglas-fir in Arizona and New Mexico was only \$7 per thousand board feet, while in the national forests of western Washington and Oregon the price averaged more than \$160 per thousand board feet in 1983. <sup>9/</sup> The uncertainty resulting from the long time frame (50 years or more) for forestry investments reduces the likelihood of accurate estimates for even the site-specific estimates. It may be possible to estimate such benefits when specific areas are treated, but general estimates of reforestation benefits based solely on the number of acres treated are not feasible.

It is far more difficult to estimate benefits of conservation projects for non-marketed outputs, such as recreation and wildlife. There is an extensive body of literature debating the relative merits of various valuation techniques. Several different methods could be used, but as with forestry investments, the variability in site conditions and difficulty in estimating changes resulting from the conservation efforts makes a general benefit calculation infeasible. To properly evaluate the benefits of conservation programs, the activities and outputs should be calculated for each project.

An example from the YACC will further demonstrate the distinction between the appraised values and the value of the outputs produced, and will help to illustrate the difficulty in calculating the latter values. Work began on

<sup>9/</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. Volume and Value of Sawtimber Stumpage Sold from National Forests by Selected Species and Region: Calendar Year 1983. Unpublished quarterly report. 3 p.

building artificial reefs near Panama City, Florida, in 1978. <sup>10/</sup> The YACC costs in one reported quarter were \$29,000, compared to an estimated contracting cost of \$64,831. However, the real benefits of the project are the fish attracted to the artificial reef that are attracting more tourists and sport fishermen; it was reported that 60 percent of the charter fishing was being done on the artificial reefs. The difficulty in assessing these dollar benefits is how to measure the value of the artificial reefs to the fishermen and to the local economy through increased tourism. In any case, these benefits are not reflected at all in the value of accomplishments reported by the agencies.

#### AGENCY-BY-AGENCY REVIEW

The previous analysis briefly reviewed the operation of the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) and the Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) as a basis for estimating costs and benefits for the proposed American Conservation Corps. Information is provided below on how these programs are incorporated into the work of the principal participating Federal agencies as a means of furthering resource conservation. What follows was obtained from a review of agency and other documents dealing with the YCC and the YACC and from conversations with agency personnel who are closely involved with the operation of the youth conservation programs.

The YCC and YACC were established with the dual goals of employing young people and completing work relevant to the conservation of natural resources. These two goals coincide with the Federal land managing agencies' tasks for the protection and use of natural resources, tasks which are often extensive and very labor intensive.

<sup>10/</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Youth Programs. News Clippings, Articles and Views on YACC, YCC, and Job Corps. Washington, March 1981. p. 18.

When the YCC and YACC programs were funded as separate line items in the budget, achievement of both goals of youth employment and reduction of the backlog of conservation work could be examined. The agency spokespersons interviewed have indicated, however, that in order to support the required level of the YCC program in 1985 (not less than \$10 million under requirements of the 1985 Continuing Appropriations Act, P.L. 98-473) it will be necessary to reprogram funds from other operations of their agencies; YACC funding ended after FY-1981. No separate funding for YCC was contained in the FY-1985 appropriation. Under the current situation, the youth employment goal may be realized, but it is questionable if there will be any increase in the amount of resource management work that will be accomplished over that which would be done by regular employees if reprogramming were not necessary.

In the following agency-by-agency summaries, information is presented on 1) the backlog of projects which could be undertaken in youth conservation work programs; 2) examples of the kinds of tasks performed by the YCC; and 3) the anticipated YCC program effort in the summer of 1985. The agencies for which this information is provided are the National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service in the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture. The Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, is not currently participating in the YCC program and is not reviewed here even though it has utilized YCC and YACC youth in previous years.

#### National Park Service (NPS)

The National Park Service has prepared no comprehensive inventory of tasks that might be performed by a youth conservation work program. While lacking a

formal inventory, there is evidence that considerable work exists that needs to be addressed. The previously cited GAO report on health and safety deficiencies in National Parks and Forests because of deferred maintenance, <sup>11/</sup> and the statement of Richard Pardo of American Forestry Association that park resources would deteriorate without proper maintenance, such as was provided by YACC, are indications of this need. <sup>12/</sup> The kind of work that has been done already in the National Parks by the YCC is described below. Since many of these management needs are of a recurring nature, there likely will be a continuing supply of work to be done.

The Interior Department's 1982 report on the Youth Conservation Corps <sup>13/</sup> provides a guide to the types of work the youth conservation programs could undertake. The report cited 71 different activities in eight categories which were carried out in National Park System units by YCC workers in 1982. The eight categories and the number of projects and hours worked in each were as follows:

TABLE 9. YCC Activities in 1982 in the National Park System

	No. of Projects	Hours Spent
Timber Management	18	5,443
Recreation Development/Maintenance	147	54,111
Visitor Services	114	36,665
Range Management	23	7,362
Wildlife	7	1,132
Engineering/Construction	118	51,716
Water/Soil Conservation	42	18,572
Other YCC Programs	152	35,677
NPS Total	628	210,678

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior. YCC Program Report 1982.

<sup>11/</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office. Facilities in Many National Parks and Forests Do Not Meet Health and Safety Standards.

<sup>12/</sup> Youth Policy Institute. Youth Service and Conservation.

<sup>13/</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior. YCC Program Report 1982.

Thus, the YCC activities contributed to the preservation of the natural and cultural resource base of the National Park System and served visitors to the System, as well.

The National Park Service YCC program for 1985 is expected to consist of an eight-week session which will employ approximately 2,000 young people at a cost of not less than \$3.4 million, as stipulated in the 1985 Continuing Appropriations Act (P.L. 98-473). <sup>14/</sup> As stipulated in that Act, the NPS will draw the funds from the budget for operation of the National Park System rather than from an additional amount appropriated for the YCC effort.

#### Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

FWS has not conducted a formal inventory of work to be performed by YCC personnel. The procedure for operating its YCC program has been to identify during the Spring the work to be done during the Summer YCC employment period. This work includes "just about everything FWS gets involved in" according to a FWS spokesman. <sup>15/</sup> Specific tasks are noted in the compilation below.

The previously cited Interior Department report on YCC activities in 1982 <sup>16/</sup> identifies 79 different activities for FWS under the same eight categories used for the National Park Service YCC program in that year. The number of projects and hours spent in each category for the FWS are as follows:

<sup>14/</sup> Personal communication with Grover Barham, National Park Service, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Washington, D.C. January 1985.

<sup>15/</sup> Personal communication with Don Boyd, Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Washington, D.C. January 1985.

<sup>16/</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior. YCC Program Report 1982.

TABLE 10. YCC Activities in 1982 Under the Fish and Wildlife Service

	No. of Projects	Hours Spent
Timber Management	26	2,116
Recreation Development/Maintenance	191	18,045
Visitor Services	98	14,803
Range Management	69	9,096
Wildlife	188	21,144
Engineering/Construction	100	16,566
Water/Soil Conservation	50	5,352
Other YCC Programs	<u>308</u>	<u>75,915</u>
FWS Total	1030	163,037

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior. YCC Program Report 1982.

The Fish and Wildlife Service YCC program in 1985 is expected to consist of an eight week work session for approximately 2,000 young people at a cost of not less than \$3.3 million, as stipulated in the 1985 appropriations Act (P.L. 98-473). <sup>17/</sup> The funds are to be drawn from the money appropriated for resource management by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

#### U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

The USFS estimates a backlog of projects on Forest Service lands which could be carried out by youth conservation work programs with an estimated benefit of these projects of \$1.25 billion over a five year period. <sup>18/</sup> Because many of these projects involve recurring tasks such as trail maintenance and timber management, it is further estimated that the available work could be set

<sup>17/</sup> Personal communication with Don Boyd.

<sup>18/</sup> Personal communication with Wayne Bell, Office of Human Resource Programs, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. January 1985.

at a value of \$2.5 billion over a ten year period. The Department of Agriculture expects that the Forest Service, with current capabilities, could administer an annual program in the amount of about \$210 million which could employ about 18,000 young people. <sup>19/</sup>

The USFS has not provided the same amount of detail as the Interior Department agencies in reporting on the work performed by the YCC. Nonetheless, work is likely to have been performed in each of the categories used in the Interior agency compilations, although different emphases would appear. Maintenance and development activities for recreation and timber, wildlife habitat improvement, and erosion control are among the activities mentioned by the Forest Service.

The 1985 YCC program in the Forest Service envisions employment of about 2,200 young people during the eight week summer work period. <sup>20/</sup> The 1985 Continuing Appropriations Act specified not less than \$3.3 million was to be spent on the program by USFS, the funds to be drawn from money appropriated for operation of the National Forest System.

<sup>19/</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20/</sup> Ibid.

#### OVERALL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSERVATION EMPLOYMENT

Opportunities for employing large numbers of youths in conservation projects have been demonstrated in the programs described above. In 1979, nearly 40,000 youths participated in the YCC program, and another 67,000 were employed in the YACC program. The tasks performed by these programs are similar to those proposed in section 4(c) of H.R. 99 for the American Conservation Corps:

- (1) wildlife habitat conservation, rehabilitation, and improvement;
- (2) rangeland conservation, rehabilitation, and improvement;
- (3) recreational area development, maintenance, and improvement;
- (4) urban revitalization;
- (5) historical and cultural site preservation and maintenance;
- (6) fish culture and habitat maintenance and improvement and other fishery assistance;
- (7) road and trail maintenance and improvement;
- (8) erosion, flood, drought, and storm damage assistance and control;
- (9) stream, lake, and waterfront harbor and port improvement, and pollution control;
- (10) insect, disease, rodent, and fire prevention and control;
- (11) improvement of abandoned railroad bed and right-of-way;
- (12) energy conservation projects and renewable resource enhancement;
- (13) recovery of biomass from public lands, particularly forestlands;
- (14) reclamation and improvement of strip-mined land; and
- (15) forestry, nursery, and silvicultural operations.

The Forest Service recently estimated that it has a backlog of \$1.25 billion in projects which could be undertaken by youth conservation program personnel. <sup>21/</sup> This concurs with an earlier Forest Service estimate of a \$1.2 billion backlog cited in 1982 testimony by Ellen O'Brien Saunders. <sup>22/</sup> At the proposed \$75 million annual authorization for the American Conservation Corps--

<sup>21/</sup> Personal communication with Wayne Bell. December 18, 1984. No disaggregation by type of project or location is available.

<sup>22/</sup> Ellen O'Brien Saunders, Executive Secretary, State of Wisconsin Work Projects Board, also representing the National Association of State Conservation Corps Program Agents. Statement on the American Conservation Corps Act of 1982 Before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Reserved Water. September 22, 1982.

assuming the value of the work is equal to the program cost -- this backlog alone could provide more than 16 years of work for the American Conservation Corps. In 1977, when addressing the YACC conservation work, the Forest Service estimated a need for 450,000 work-years of labor-intensive tasks, and cited a reforestation backlog of 3 million acres on the national forests. <sup>23/</sup> At an average cost of \$12,500 per work-year for a conservation employment program (\$250 per week, 50 work-weeks per year), the proposed \$75 million annual American Conservation Corps could be continued for 75 years before completing the 450,000 work-year backlog.

Although the relevant land management agencies in the Department of the Interior do not currently have an inventory of work that could be accomplished by a youth conservation program, the 1982 testimony mentioned above by Ms. Saunders cited a Department of the Interior estimate that the Department had a backlog of labor-intensive tasks of 460,000 work-years. <sup>24/</sup> In 1977, the Department of the Interior identified their labor-intensive work backlog as 370,000 work-years. <sup>25/</sup> At an average cost of \$12,500 per work-year for a conservation employment program (\$250 per week, 50 work-weeks per year), the proposed \$75 million annual American Conservation Corps program could be continued for 60 to 75 years before finishing the identified backlog.

In addition to these estimates of youth employment opportunities, there are compilations of tree planting and timber stand improvement needs. In 1980, the Forest Industries Council issued a report on profitable forestry investment

<sup>23/</sup> Youth Policy Institute. Youth Service and Conservation. p. 2.

<sup>24/</sup> Ellen O'Brien Saunders. Statement on American Conservation Corps Act of 1982.

<sup>25/</sup> Youth Policy Institute. Youth Service and Conservation. p. 2.

potential. <sup>26/</sup> The report stated that 16 million acres of timberland could be reforested and earn at least a 10 percent return on the investment -- including 1.5 million acres of the national forests, one million acres of other public lands, and nearly 10 million acres of private forestland whose owners do not own sawmills (such as farmers). A 10 percent return on investment could also be earned with timber stand improvements on 39 million acres of forestland; this includes two million acres of national forests, 1.5 million acres of other public lands, and more than 20 million acres of private, non-industry lands.

It is difficult to translate these numbers into precise employment opportunities. However, assuming that an inexperienced youth is half as productive as a professional, one youth could probably plant about a half acre of trees per day; this is likely to be highly variable, depending on terrain and other site conditions. <sup>27/</sup> Timber stand improvement is more variable because the time required also depends on the specific treatment being applied; the average time is probably about the same as for tree planting -- two days for an inexperienced youth to treat an acre of forestland. The assumptions imply that there are 32 million days of tree planting and 78 million days of stand improvement work available to employ youths, including seven million days on the national forests and five million days on other public lands, that could provide a 10 percent return on investment. This is more than 400,000 person-years of labor, and thus is close to the estimates for Interior Department and Forest Service work backlogs. It should be noted that this estimate is total

<sup>26/</sup> Forest Industries Council. Forest Productivity Report. Washington, National Forest Products Assn., 1980. 66 p.

<sup>27/</sup> Personal communication with Roscoe Caron, President, The Hoedads, Inc., Eugene, Oregon. June 3, 1983.

opportunities, not an annual figure, and that some of these opportunities are likely to have been included in the opportunities described in the previously-mentioned estimates.

Analysis of youth employment opportunities in recreation programs, fish and wildlife projects, and grazing improvements is more difficult than for timber projects. National assessments of needs that can be translated into employment estimates simply do not exist for these other resource uses. In the YCC program from 1971 through 1981, these non-timber activities accounted for 93 percent of the appraised value of work accomplished, suggesting that timber programs have been a small part of the total program. It is unknown whether these non-timber activities could be expanded on the same scale as the timber-related employment.

## SUMMARY

The benefits and costs of the proposed American Conservation Corps can be examined by observing other recent youth conservation programs, such as the Youth Conservation Corps and the Young Adult Conservation Corps. The weekly cost for the YCC program averaged \$238 per enrollee, while the Forest Service portion of the YACC program averaged \$245 per enrollee per week. These programs were used to plant trees and grass, to improve timber stands and fish and wildlife habitats, to control erosion, to assist visitors, to build and maintain structures and trails, and much more. On the whole, between 1979 and 1982, the program costs were less than the appraised value of the work accomplished. The appraised values are agency estimates of the cost to do the work under contract or with Federal employees, and are not related to the value of the outputs produced by these programs; no comprehensive estimates of the resource benefits produced by the YCC and YACC exist, although substantial benefits can be inferred by using various resource valuation techniques. In addition, potential social benefits to the participants could result from a youth conservation program, but such potential benefits are not examined in this report. At their peak in 1979, these programs employed more than 100,000 youths. While comprehensive compilations of youth employment opportunities in conservation programs do not exist, the estimates that do exist suggest that a \$75 million annual program such as the proposed American Conservation Corps could provide useful work for many years, assuming that the funds are available and that these programs merit the investment.