

[conservationcorps.org/](http://conservationcorps.org/)

**AT A GLANCE**

*Young adult programs, ages 18-25:* all participants are enrolled in AmeriCorps and receive education awards after completing service

- 213 young adults serve in field crews across the state, completing natural resource work – restoring and protecting water quality, maintaining state parks, improving trails and restoring habitat.
- 51 serve in single placement positions with natural resource agencies and nonprofits, and conservation apprenticeships at Soil and Water Conservation Districts.
- 54 young adults serve as youth leaders for summer and afterschool programs.
- Youth programs, ages 15-18: all participants earn a stipend while restoring resources and gaining job and career-planning skills
- 135 youth unplug from modern intrusions to live, learn and work outdoors as part of the rural residential Summer Youth Corps. About 15 percent are deaf or hard-of-hearing.
- 131 youth take part in the afterschool Youth Outdoors program, which engages diverse urban high school students from low-income homes in job training, science education and outdoor service-learning. About 90 percent are people of color.

**PURPOSE**

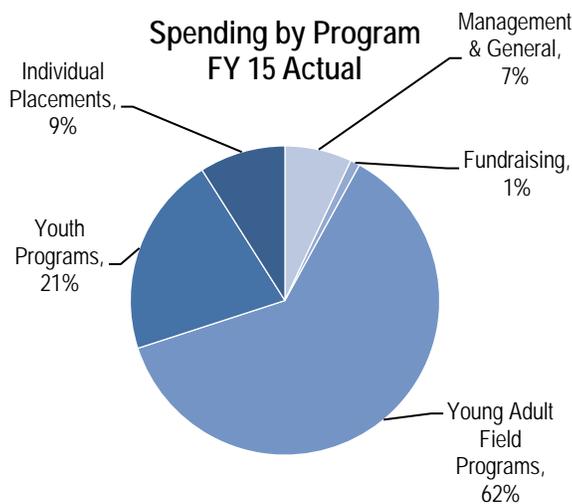
Conservation Corps Minnesota’s mission is to provide hands-on environmental stewardship and service-learning opportunities to youth and young adults while accomplishing conservation, natural-resource management and emergency response work.

Our goals are to help young people from diverse backgrounds become more connected to the environment, engaged in conservation, involved in the community, and prepared for further education and future employment. We integrate young people from various socio-economic backgrounds and cultural communities, as well as deaf youth, into our programs and live up to our motto: Resources Restored. Lives Changed.

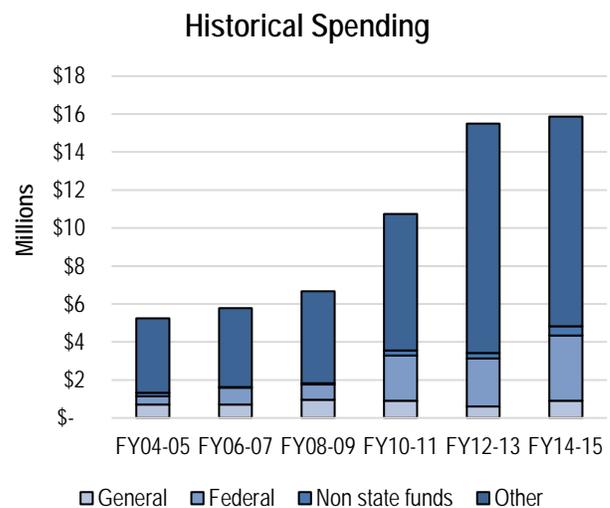
Our mission and goals support the statewide priorities:

- Investing in Kids, Families, and Communities
- Building an Economy that Works for All Minnesotans
- Clean, Affordable Water for All Minnesotans

**BUDGET**



Source: Conservation Corps’ Audited Financial Statements



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Conservation Corps Minnesota has a diverse funding base. Fee-for-service funds more than 55 percent of program costs and is the primary revenue source in the young adult programs, along with government grants. Youth programs also derive revenue from fee-for-service, but rely more heavily on private and government grants. Fee-for-service partners include federal, state, local and nonprofit partners and related service activities. Clean Water, Land and Legacy funds support nearly 20 percent of program costs through partnerships with different agencies.

## STRATEGIES

### Restoring resources

Throughout our programs, young people are involved in hands-on, service-learning activities that protect and enhance natural resources.

1. **Restoring and Protecting Water Quality:** Corps members restore and protect water ways and shorelines that are vital to the region's water supply by stabilizing shorelines, installing buffers and rain gardens, and removing debris and other pollutants.
2. **Habitat Restoration:** Corps members restore habitat on public lands throughout Minnesota by removing non-native invasive species, conducting prescribed burns and planting native trees and plants.
3. **Improving Access to Outdoor Recreation:** Corps members build and maintain motorized and non-motorized trails, boardwalks, campsites, park facilities and other recreational structures.
4. **Energy Conservation:** Corps members install energy-saving measures in Twin Cities homes and provide education and outreach on renewable energy technologies.

### Changing Lives

Conservation Corps Minnesota prepares nearly 650 young people for further education and future employment each year with personal development, technical and work-skills training and education.

1. **Educational curriculum for youth (ages 15-18):** focuses on science and technology and job-search skills. More than 20% of program time is devoted to education and skills training. Eighty-five percent of youth participants report in post-program surveys that their work skills have improved.
  - **Summer Youth Corps** – Youth begin at a St. Croix State Park base camp, then spike camp throughout the region, working in crews of eight youth and two AmeriCorps leaders each as they restore natural resources and lead volunteers during two summer sessions, each four weeks long.
  - **Youth Outdoors** – Diverse urban teens from low-income neighborhoods engage in out-of-school environmental science education, civic leadership and outdoor service-learning as they complete neighborhood improvement projects and lead volunteers during 11-week fall and spring school semesters and an eight-week summer session.
2. **Skills training for young adults (ages 18-25):** includes hands-on training in habitat restoration, trail building, prescribed burning, energy conservation, leadership, communication and other skills. Field crew members receive professional certifications in wildfire suppression, chain-saw safety and first aid.
  - **Non-residential Field Crews** – Young adults, working in five-member crews, conduct natural resource, conservation and emergency response work from February to December.
  - **Seasonal crews** – Young adults from diverse ethnic communities, working in six-member crews, receive intensive job training in natural resource management and work in the Superior National Forest "Faces of Tomorrow" initiative from May through August.
  - **Single placements** – Individual corps members are based at the Department of Natural Resources, Neighborhood Energy Connection in Saint Paul and other agencies and nonprofits. During the summer, apprentices serve in soil and water conservation districts throughout Minnesota.

## RESULTS

<i>Type</i>	<i>Performance Measures</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2015</i>
Quantity	Number of youth and young adults engaged in job skills training, education and natural resource and conservation work.	596	584
Result	Percent of young adult participants who gained or improved technical skills.	98%	98%
Result	Percent of youth participants who are better prepared for their next job	96%	97%
Quantity	Acres of habitat restored or improved	37,353	60,116
Quantity	Hours of work on recreational access improvements (trails, park facilities, campsites, docks, piers, etc.)	88,747	80,391

*\*Performance measures follow the calendar year in alignment with our program schedule and fiscal year*

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The legal authority for the Minnesota Conservation Corps is found in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 84, Section 991 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=84.991>).