

Agency Purpose

Conservation Corps Minnesota provides hands-on environmental stewardship and service-learning opportunities to youth and young adults while completing valuable conservation and natural-resource management projects, as well as emergency response work, throughout our region.

Our goals are to help young people become more connected to the environment, engaged in natural-resource conservation, involved in the community and prepared for 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.*

At a Glance

Young Adult Programs, (ages 18-25)

- Corpsmembers complete natural resource, renewable energy and emergency response work, such as maintaining state parks and trails, restoring habitat and improving home-energy efficiency.
- Roughly 150 annually in non-residential field work, 30 in conservation apprenticeships, 20 in home energy squads, 40 in seasonal trail work and 38 in youth leadership positions.

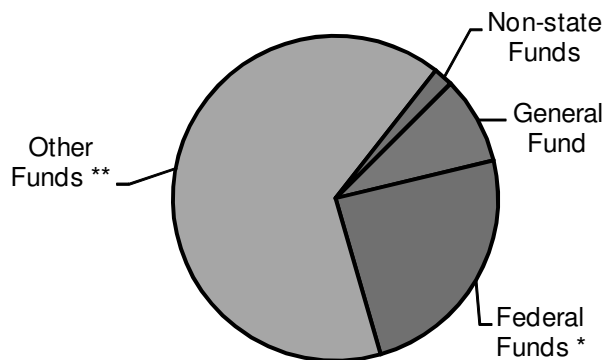
Summer Youth Corps, (ages 15-18)

- Eight-week residential service-learning program unplugs teenagers from modern intrusions to live, learn and work outdoors.
- In 2010, 85 youth participated. About 15 percent of participants each year are deaf or hard-of-hearing; equal numbers of male/female and rural/urban youth are enrolled.

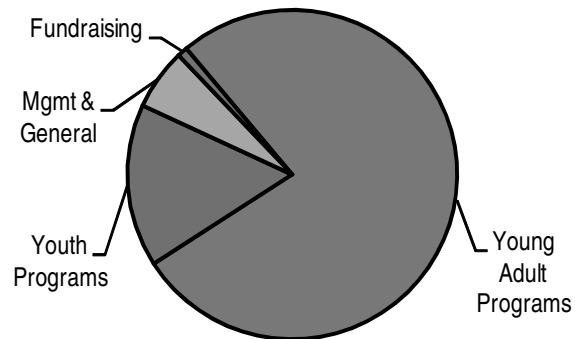
Youth Outdoors, (ages 15-18)

- Provides stipends to disadvantaged urban teens in out-of-school educational activities and service-learning projects and engages them in improving their neighborhoods.
- In 2011, 84 youth will revitalize their neighborhoods, restore environmental resources, and lead volunteers through this program.

Est. FY 2010-11 Expenditures by Fund



Est. FY 2010-11 Expenditures by Program



* 50% of federal are short term ARRA grants ** Primarily fee-for-service from agencies like DNR & BWSR

Strategies

Restoring resources

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

- **Habitat Restoration:** Corpsmembers restore habitat on public lands throughout Minnesota by removing non-native invasive species, conducting prescribed burns and planting native species.
- **Improving Outdoor Recreational Facilities:** Corpsmembers build and maintain motorized and non-motorized trails, boardwalks, campsites, park facilities and other recreational structures.
- **Energy Conservation:** Corpsmembers install energy-saving measures in Twin Cities homes and will install solar heat systems in low-income homes throughout the state.

Changing Lives

Conservation Corps Minnesota builds life skills for more than 400 young people each year with personal development, technical and work-skills training and education.

- **Youth educational curriculum:** focuses on science and technology and job-search skills. More than 20% of program time is devoted to education and skills training. N of youth participants report in post-program surveys that their work skills have improved.
- **Skills training for young adults:** includes hands-on training in habitat restoration, energy conservation, leadership, communication and other skills. Field crew members receive professional certifications in wildfire suppression, chain-saw safety and first aid.

Career preparation: results show that within six months of completing their term, 51% of young adult Corps members will secure a permanent job (35% in natural resource fields), 38% will enroll in continuing education, and 10% will enroll in another AmeriCorps service term.

Operations

- **Non-residential Field Crews** – 26 crews, with four to five members each, conduct natural resource, renewable energy and emergency response work from February to December.
- **Seasonal Trail Crews** – Eight crews work in the Superior National Forests from May through August, spike camping for eight-day stretches while improving recreational trails.
- **Home Energy Squads** – Corpsmembers based at the Neighborhood Energy Connection in Saint Paul work with energy specialists to install conservation measures in homes such as weather-stripping and programmable thermostats.
- **Summer Youth Corps** – Youth begin at the St. Croix State Park base camp, then spike camp throughout the region, working in crews of six youth and two AmeriCorps leaders each as they restore natural resources for eight weeks during the summer.
- **Youth Outdoors** – Diverse urban teens from disadvantaged neighborhoods engage in out-of-school educational activities and service-learning projects and earn a stipend during 12-week fall and spring school semesters and a four-week summer session.

Key Activity Goals & Measures

In 2011, Conservation Corps Minnesota will engage over 400 youth and young adults in hands-on conservation service that will support the achievement of strategic goals presented in Minnesota Milestone's. For example:

Minnesota Milestone: Minnesotans will improve the quality of the air, water and earth.

Conservation Corps 2011 measures:

1. Provide erosion control on 26,000 square feet of lakeshore.
2. Install and maintain more than 23,000 square feet of rain gardens to minimize run-off.
3. Collect 45,000 water samples to test contamination levels in Minnesota water bodies.

Minnesota Milestone: Minnesotans will restore and maintain healthy ecosystems that support diverse plants and wildlife.

Conservation Corps 2011 measures:

1. Remove 12,000 acres of invasive species

2. Plant more than 80,000 native trees, shrubs, grasses and plants to restore habitat.
3. Conduct prescribed burns on more than 6,000 acres of prairie to encourage native plant growth.

Minnesota Milestone: Minnesotans will have opportunities to enjoy the state's natural resources.

Conservation Corps 2011 measures:

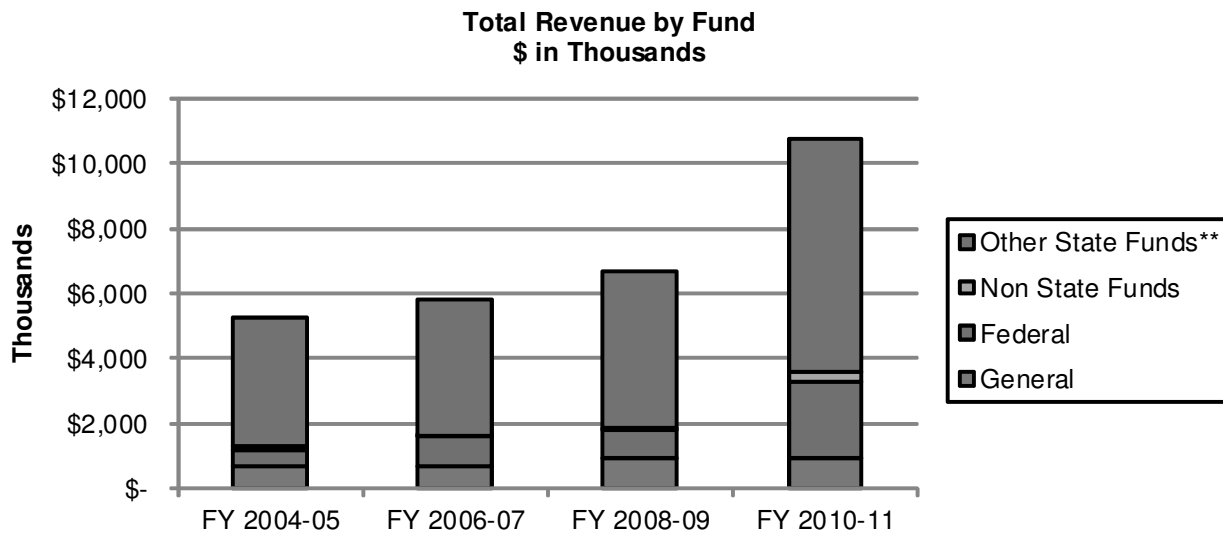
1. Construct or maintain 1,350 miles of trails.
2. Install more than 32,800 feet of bridges and boardwalks.
3. Maintain 450 campsites.

Minnesota Milestone: Minnesotans will conserve natural resources to give future generations a healthy environment and a strong economy.

Conservation Corps 2011 measures:

1. Energy-saving measures will be installed in 4,000 homes – saving 28.55 billion BTUs
2. Solar air heat systems will be installed in 20 low-income homes – saving about 170 million BTUs annually

Budget Trends Section



Source: Conservation Corps Minnesota data **Primarily fee-for-service contracts with state agencies such as DNR and BWSR. 50% of FY 2010-11 federal funds are short-term ARRA grants

We are seeing youth increasingly disengaged from the outdoors, which can impact environmental stewardship. Conservation Corps Minnesota works to connect youth with nature and give them skills they need to find employment, particularly in the currently expanding “green job” sector.

Contact

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Dollars in Thousands

	Current		Forecast Base		Biennium
	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	2012-13
<u>Direct Appropriations by Fund</u>					
General					
Current Appropriation	455	455	455	455	910
Forecast Base	455	455	455	455	910
Change		0	0	0	0
% Biennial Change from 2010-11					0%
Natural Resources					
Current Appropriation	490	490	490	490	980
Forecast Base	490	490	490	490	980
Change		0	0	0	0
% Biennial Change from 2010-11					0%
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>					
Direct Appropriations					
General	455	455	455	455	910
Natural Resources	490	490	490	490	980
Total	945	945	945	945	1,890
<u>Expenditures by Category</u>					
Total Compensation	745	745	745	745	1,490
Other Operating Expenses	200	200	200	200	400
Total	945	945	945	945	1,890
<u>Expenditures by Program</u>					
Conservation Corps Mn	945	945	945	945	1,890
Total	945	945	945	945	1,890
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	185.0	185.0	185.0	185.0	