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Conservation Corps Minnesota

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<https://www.conservationcorps.org/>

AT A GLANCE

Conservation Corps Minnesota, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, provides youth (ages 15-18) and young adults (ages 18 to 25), with hands-on service-learning opportunities that improve access to outdoor recreation, restore habitat, protect trails and waterways, and respond to natural disasters.

In 2021, 205 Young Adult participants received education awards after completing service:

- 129 field crew participants working in natural resource management.
- 21 individuals serving with various natural resource agencies and non-profits.
- 55 participants serving as youth leaders for summer and afterschool youth programs.

79 Youth participants earned wages or a stipend restoring resources and gaining job skills:

- 32 youth serving as part of the rural residential Summer Youth Corps
- 147 youth serving in an afterschool program providing job training, science education, and outdoor service-learning for participants from low-income urban communities.

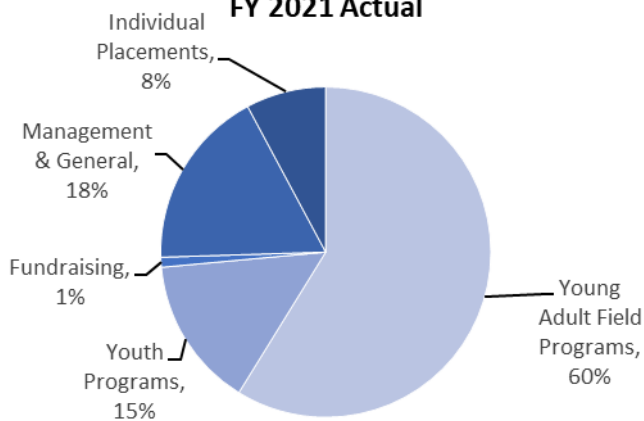
PURPOSE

Conservation Corps Minnesota’s purpose is to help young people from diverse backgrounds become more connected to natural resources and the environment, promote their equitable access to nature, equip them to succeed in career and life, and empower them to make a difference in conserving natural resources.

Conservation Corps Minnesota’s mission is to engage youth and young adults in meaningful service, leadership development, and environmental stewardship. The organization provides training to members in natural resource management, technical skills, and job readiness and helps develop personal responsibility and a strong work ethic.

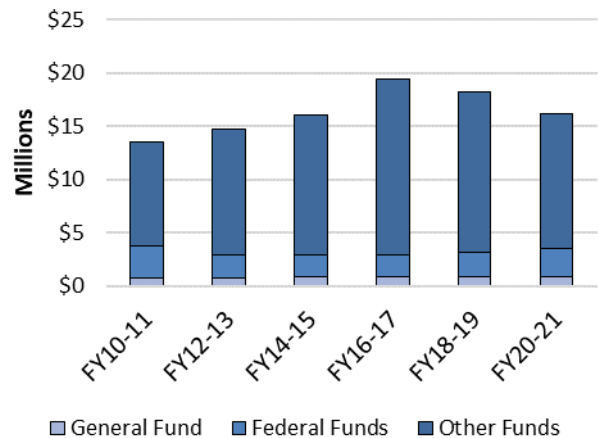
BUDGET

**Spending by Program
FY 2021 Actual**



Source: Conservation Corps’ Audited Financial Statements

Historical Spending



Source: Conservation Corps’ Audited Financial Statements

Despite a diverse funding base, fee-for-service revenue supports more than 73 percent of Conservation Corps’ expenses and serve as the primary funding source for the young adult service programs in combination with

federal funding. Youth programs also derive revenue from fee-for-service contracts but rely more heavily on individual giving, private foundations, corporate contributions, and government grants. Fee-for-service partners include federal, state, local and nonprofit partners. General funds include state appropriations. Federal funds include grants awarded through AmeriCorps and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). Other funding also includes various state and local grants and funding, private foundation, corporate and individual giving, and miscellaneous.

STRATEGIES

Throughout Conservation Corps' five program areas, young people are involved in hands-on, service-learning activities that protect, enhance natural resources, and promote workforce skills and readiness.

1. **AmeriCorps Field Crew program** for young adults, ages 18-25, includes non-residential crews throughout Minnesota that engage young adults in natural resource management and disaster response work from February to December. Crew members receive a monthly stipend, health insurance, and an education award for college expenses. Beside career and work-skills training, members receive certifications in wildfire suppression, defensive driving, chainsaw safety, and first aid.
2. **AmeriCorps Individual Placement program** for young adults, ages 18-25, provides positions in natural resources management and community outreach at a variety of agencies and nonprofit organizations, from January to December. Individual Placement members receive a monthly stipend, health insurance, and an education award for college expenses. In addition to skill development, these members benefit from mentorship relationships and collaborative community partnerships.
3. The **Youth Outdoors program** connects Twin Cities youth, ages 15-18, to the natural environment through conservation and community improvement projects while they gain job experience and college/career skills for the future. Youth participate during the school year, meeting two days a week after school and on Saturdays to explore science and the environment and complete projects with their crew while earning an hourly training-wage. Youth in this program, 90 percent of whom are people of color, are predominantly from low-income households in the Twin Cities. Young adult AmeriCorps members serve as Youth Leaders in the program, receiving a monthly stipend, health insurance, and an education award for college expenses.
4. **Summer Youth Corps** residential program serves youth, (ages 15-18), and engages young adult AmeriCorps members (18-24) as youth leaders, in environmental restoration field crew-oriented work in national and state forests for two summer sessions. Participants, —about 10 percent of whom are deaf or hard of hearing— receive a living stipend as well as room and board. Young adult AmeriCorps members serve as Youth Leaders at the residential program, receiving a monthly stipend, health insurance, and an education award for college expenses.
5. **Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers (IDEC)** engages college students pursuing STEM degrees who are interested in a career in natural resources. Established in 2018 and initiated in 2019, through partnership between the Conservation Corps, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, students participate in fellowships, mentorships, and paid internships. The program targets students from backgrounds typically underrepresented in natural resource careers, including women, people of color, and individuals with disabilities. Participants receive a fellowship payment to support academic expenses for the school year.

RESULTS

Type	Performance Measures	2020	2021
Output (quantity)	Number of youth and young adults engaged in job skills training, education and natural resource and conservation work	283	369
Output (quantity)	Hours of education/training provided to young people	27,726	28,737
Output (quantity)	Acres of habitat restored	16,870	66,696
Output (quantity)	Miles of trail restored	781	852
Outcome (result)	Percent of young people who gained workforce readiness skills including self-confidence, teamwork, and problem solving	86%	90%
Outcome (result)	Percent of young people who gained an appreciation for nature and protecting the environment	90%	94%
Outcome (result)	Number of college-age participants, from underrepresented communities, provided fellowships, mentorships, and paid internships served through IDEC program	35	44

Performance measures follow the calendar year in alignment with Conservation Corps' program schedule and fiscal year. COVID-19 caused a significant reduction in programming for 2020 and early 2021.

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>).

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base FY24 FY25		Governor's Recommendation FY24 FY25	
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>								
1000 - General	455	455	455	455	455	455	455	455
2100 - Water Recreation	25	25	35	35	35	35	35	35
2101 - Snowmobile	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75
2102 - All-Terrain Vehicle	50	50	20	20	20	20	20	20
2103 - Off-Highway Motorcycle	10	10	5	5	5	5	5	5
2104 - Off-Road Vehicle	30	30						
2106 - State Park	125	125	150	150	150	150	150	150
2107 - State Pks & Trls Lott In Lieu	50	50	75	75	75	75	75	75
2112 - Invasive Species	40	40	25	25	25	25	25	25
2113 - Forest Management Investment	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
2116 - Cross Country Ski	15	15	10	10	10	10	10	10
2117 - Natural Resource Misc Statutory	10	10	35	35	35	35	35	35
Total	945	945	945	945	945	945	945	945
Biennial Change				0		0		0
Biennial % Change				0		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0
<u>Expenditures by Program</u>								
Conservation Corps Mn	945	945	945	945	945	945	945	945
Total	945	945	945	945	945	945	945	945
<u>Expenditures by Category</u>								
Grants, Aids and Subsidies	945	945	945	945	945	945	945	945
Total	945	945	945	945	945	945	945	945

Conservation Corps Minnesota

Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
					FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25
1000 - General								
Direct Appropriation	455	455	455	455	455	455	455	455
Expenditures	455	455	455	455	455	455	455	455
Biennial Change in Expenditures				0		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				0		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2100 - Water Recreation

Direct Appropriation	25	25	35	35	35	35	35	35
Expenditures	25	25	35	35	35	35	35	35
Biennial Change in Expenditures				20		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				40		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2101 - Snowmobile

Direct Appropriation	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75
Expenditures	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75
Biennial Change in Expenditures				0		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				0		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2102 - All-Terrain Vehicle

Direct Appropriation	50	50	20	20	20	20	20	20
Expenditures	50	50	20	20	20	20	20	20
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(60)		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(60)		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2103 - Off-Highway Motorcycle

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Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual	Actual	Actual	Estimate	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25
Direct Appropriation	10	10	5	5	5	5	5	5
Expenditures	10	10	5	5	5	5	5	5
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(10)		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(50)		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2104 - Off-Road Vehicle

Direct Appropriation	30	30						
Expenditures	30	30						
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(60)		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(100)				0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2106 - State Park

Direct Appropriation	125	125	150	150	150	150	150	150
Expenditures	125	125	150	150	150	150	150	150
Biennial Change in Expenditures				50		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				20		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2107 - State Pks & Trls Lott In Lieu

Direct Appropriation	50	50	75	75	75	75	75	75
Expenditures	50	50	75	75	75	75	75	75
Biennial Change in Expenditures				50		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				50		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2112 - Invasive Species

Direct Appropriation	40	40	25	25	25	25	25	25
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(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual	Actual	Actual	Estimate	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25
Expenditures	40	40	25	25	25	25	25	25
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(30)		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(38)		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2113 - Forest Management Investment

Direct Appropriation	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Expenditures	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Biennial Change in Expenditures				0		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				0		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2116 - Cross Country Ski

Direct Appropriation	15	15	10	10	10	10	10	10
Expenditures	15	15	10	10	10	10	10	10
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(10)		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(33)		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2117 - Natural Resource Misc Statutory

Direct Appropriation	10	10	35	35	35	35	35	35
Expenditures	10	10	35	35	35	35	35	35
Biennial Change in Expenditures				50		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				250		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY23	FY24	FY25	Biennium 2024-25
Direct				
Fund: 1000 - General				
FY2023 Appropriations	455	455	455	910
Forecast Base	455	455	455	910
Total Governor's Recommendations	455	455	455	910
Fund: 2100 - Water Recreation				
FY2023 Appropriations	35	35	35	70
Forecast Base	35	35	35	70
Total Governor's Recommendations	35	35	35	70
Fund: 2101 - Snowmobile				
FY2023 Appropriations	75	75	75	150
Forecast Base	75	75	75	150
Total Governor's Recommendations	75	75	75	150
Fund: 2102 - All-Terrain Vehicle				
FY2023 Appropriations	20	20	20	40
Forecast Base	20	20	20	40
Total Governor's Recommendations	20	20	20	40
Fund: 2103 - Off-Highway Motorcycle				
FY2023 Appropriations	5	5	5	10
Forecast Base	5	5	5	10
Total Governor's Recommendations	5	5	5	10
Fund: 2106 - State Park				
FY2023 Appropriations	150	150	150	300
Forecast Base	150	150	150	300
Total Governor's Recommendations	150	150	150	300
Fund: 2107 - State Pks & Trls Lott In Lieu				
FY2023 Appropriations	75	75	75	150
Forecast Base	75	75	75	150
Total Governor's Recommendations	75	75	75	150
Fund: 2112 - Invasive Species				
FY2023 Appropriations	25	25	25	50
Forecast Base	25	25	25	50
Total Governor's Recommendations	25	25	25	50

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY23	FY24	FY25	Biennium 2024-25
Fund: 2113 - Forest Management Investment				
FY2023 Appropriations	60	60	60	120
Forecast Base	60	60	60	120
Total Governor's Recommendations	60	60	60	120
Fund: 2116 - Cross Country Ski				
FY2023 Appropriations	10	10	10	20
Forecast Base	10	10	10	20
Total Governor's Recommendations	10	10	10	20
Fund: 2117 - Natural Resource Misc Statutory				
FY2023 Appropriations	35	35	35	70
Forecast Base	35	35	35	70
Total Governor's Recommendations	35	35	35	70