



# USDA Forest Service Job Corps

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- The U.S. Forest Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in partnership with the Department of Labor, operates 25 Job Corps centers across the nation.
- USDA Forest Service is the only public land management agency that operates Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers. In addition to supporting attainment of high school diplomas, GEDs, and traditional vocational trades, USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers focus on natural resource trades, skills, and public service.
- USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers offer training in 30 industries, such as renewable resources and energy, fire management, carpentry, information technology, advanced manufacturing, finance and business, and more.
- All 25 USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center students and staff support USDA Forest Service mission-critical work on behalf of Americans.
- USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers allow students to connect with nature. Outdoor experiences promote physical, mental, and spiritual health; enhance community identity and sense of place; help bond family and friends; and foster stewardship of the Nation's forests and grasslands.

## Essential Role of USDA Forest Service Civilian Conversation Centers

- USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers are the only centers authorized through the 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to conserve, develop, or manage public natural resources and public recreation areas; develop community projects in the public interest; and respond to natural disasters.
- USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center students are trained and qualified as wildland firefighters to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of national disasters, such as wildfires, floods, hurricanes, and tornados.
- USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center students serve as wildland firefighters, support dispatch centers, fire caches, airtanker bases, and lookout towers.
- In 2017, over 1,200 USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center students supported over 300 wildfires, contributing over 450,000 hours of support. In addition, students responded to Hurricane Harvey recovery efforts, providing another 5,000 hours of support.
  - Students earned nearly \$8 million on fire assignments, a pathway to prosperity and workforce placement.
  - Students provide a “surge” capability that can be used to boost wildfire suppression efforts when other resources are committed or not readily available.
  - Only USDA Forest Service operated Civilian Conversation Centers have wildland fire programs and provide disaster response; If USDA Forest Service operated Job Corps Centers ceased to exist, this valuable national emergency response support would no longer be available.
- In 2017, students contributed 14,000 hours treating 35,000 acres of hazardous fuels with prescribed fire, 10,000 hours of forest restoration work, and over \$2 million in community service projects.
  - Eleven prescribed fire modules were mobilized to two of the nine USDA Forest Service Regions – the Southern Region (8) and Eastern Region (9). The 8-person modules consist of four students with four supervisory personnel.
  - This year, 18 modules have been mobilized to date.
- USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers provide cost-effective means to complete essential conservation work, and address deferred maintenance projects on national forests and grasslands that otherwise would not be possible, contributing over \$2 million worth of assistance. Work includes building maintenance and repair, campsite upgrades, gate manufacturing, etc.





- USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center students provide significant services to rural America (e.g., students pick up trash, build and refurbish buildings, build signs and trails, coach community youth organizations, and volunteer for community festivals and events).
- USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers are a government-wide entry-level recruitment source and provides opportunities for underserved, American youth to pursue natural resource-related careers and other jobs in rural America.

### Barriers

- Since 2012, the USDA Forest Service Job Corps budget has declined by approximately 29%. These budget reductions along with the 2013 suspension of enrollment had an initial effect on the overall performance of all USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers.

### Ongoing Improvements and Opportunities

- USDA Forest Service Job Corps Acting National Director Diana Trujillo has initiated a strategic process to transform USDA Forest Service Job Corps.
  - Internal and external stakeholders are in the process of creating a breakthrough-future and developing a path to get there.
  - Transforming USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers will require immediate, committed action in five transformational areas:
    1. Work Environment Improvements
    2. Hiring, Safety, and Security
    3. On-Board Strength (OBS)
    4. Outcome Measurement System/Performance
    5. Relevancy
- USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers are making constant improvements in center performance.
  - Since 2014, USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers have gone from 19 underperforming centers to 5 underperforming centers as of January 2018. The powerful shift shows the resiliency of USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center employees and the pride and commitment they have for service and stewardship.
  - USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers represent 20% of all Job Corps centers nationally. A review of performance for the past few program years shows USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers are generally on par with contract centers—both high-performing and low-performing centers.
  - As of April 2018, four of the nation's top 10 centers are USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers. Fifty percent of USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers are in the top 50 and 92% are in the top three quartiles. Only two USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers remain in the bottom quartile.

