



Recommendations to Create a 21st Century Civilian Climate Corps



The Corps Network

Expanding the Modern Corps Movement to Engage Hundreds of Thousands of Young Americans in Community Improvement, Conservation and Resilience Projects

The Need

Our country urgently needs to transition to more sustainable infrastructure, respond to decades of deferred maintenance on public lands and waters, restore critical ecosystems, and make our communities more resilient to climate change.

Our country also has millions of young people facing unemployment and barriers to opportunity, both of which have been exacerbated by COVID-19. These challenges disproportionately affect young people of color. Young adults of color are currently experiencing unemployment rates roughly double the national average. Interventions are needed to ensure young Americans stay on track during these uncertain times.

The Opportunity

Through his Build Back Better plan, President-elect Biden has proposed a \$2 trillion investment to build a more resilient, sustainable economy that is supported by a diverse, equitable, and highly skilled workforce. Our country has a network of local and state "Service and Conservation Corps" that prepare diverse young adults for careers in resource management, sustainable infrastructure, and related fields. These programs are ready to expand to meet the needs of a new economy and labor market.

Proposal: 21st Century "Civilian Climate Corps" (21CCC)

Scale the existing network of Service and Conservation Corps to engage 500,000 young people and recent veterans over the next five years to complete conservation, clean energy, resilience, and sustainable infrastructure projects.



Like the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the New Deal Era, a 21CCC would:

- Complete important conservation projects in communities across the country.
- Provide hands-on work experience and a source of income for unemployed young Americans.

Unlike the CCC of the 1930s, a 21CCC would:

- Be based on public-private partnerships operated through existing and new community-based programs (Corps) that are responsive to the needs of the local community, young people, and labor market.
- Be equitable and diverse, intentionally recruiting from, enrolling, and supporting women, young people of color, urban and rural youth, and others from historically disenfranchised communities.

21CCC Objectives

- Transition to a clean, sustainable economy
- Develop a diverse, equitable, skilled workforce
- Provide training for and access to union jobs
- Complete thousands of community improvement, conservation, and resilience projects across the country

Corps Today

The most efficient and effective way to launch a 21CCC initiative is to build on the existing network of more than 130 Service and Conservation Corps across the country. These Corps, most of which are nonprofits, annually provide education, workforce development, and support services to approximately 25,000 young adults and post-9/11 veterans. Corps participants – or “Corpsmembers” – complete thousands of community improvement, resilience, and resource conservation projects every year.

Corpsmembers typically serve on crews alongside other young adults, or in “individual placement” or internship positions that provide additional capacity to federal, state, and local resource management agencies. Corpsmembers receive compensation and can earn industry-recognized certifications related to their work. Corpsmembers also develop leadership skills, an ethic of community service, and an understanding of environmental stewardship.



Corps have longstanding partnerships with federal, state, and local community development and resource management agencies to engage Corpsmembers in meaningful and necessary projects across the country. Corps projects:

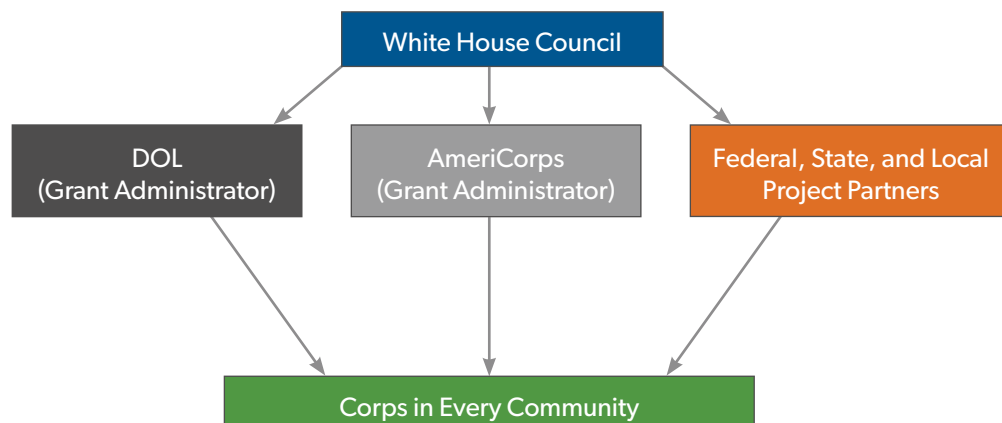
- Preserve and protect public lands, shorelines, waterways, habitat, and wildlife
- Preserve historic structures
- Provide access to and enhance recreation on public lands and waters
- Enhance neighborhoods and community public spaces, including urban gardens
- Enhance resilience to climate change and natural disasters
- Mitigate, respond to, and recover from natural disasters, including hurricanes and wildfire
- Improve energy efficiency and resource conservation
- Build and maintain alternative transportation and sustainable infrastructure

Corps have effectively adapted project work and implemented safety protocols to continue to work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Corps Tomorrow/The 21st Century Civilian Climate Corps (21CCC)

To develop a 21CCC, we recommend the following structural elements.

See following page for descriptions of each element.



■ Corps Programs

Corps will administer the program in communities across the country. There is a need to invest in existing Corps and establish new programs to ensure the presence of Corps in every community. Existing Corps can provide expertise to assist with establishing new programs. Each Corps can recruit locally, provide workforce development programming appropriate for local labor market needs, and partner with local resource management agencies to complete projects identified as important by the community. Corps will partner with community-based agencies and organizations to provide a range of supportive services to ensure equitable access and success to all 21CCC participants (Corpsmembers). Corps will also partner with local employers and unions to ensure Corps alumni have a pipeline to good jobs.

■ Project Partners

The Project Partners will identify and fund projects. Federal (DOE, DOI, DOT, EPA, FEMA, HUD, USDA/USFS), state, and local land and resource management agencies, and other entities responsible for community development and climate adaptation, will identify, fund, and oversee the implementation of priority projects based on the needs of individual communities. Each department and agency will be given goals around funding, project work, and participant engagement/outcomes. Preference will be given to projects that serve communities historically impacted by under-investment or environmental injustice and/or projects that engage young people from historically disenfranchised populations.

■ 21CCC Workforce Grant Administrator

DOL will establish and manage a competitive grant program to provide Corps with the funding, resources, and support to administer comprehensive youth and workforce development programs for the 21CCC participants. Grants will support the development and implementation of curricula and training, including pre-apprentice and apprenticeship programs. Corps will develop programming in partnership with employers and unions to meet local labor market needs.

■ National and Community Service Grant Administrator

AmeriCorps will administer a grant program to enable the enrollment of 21CCC participants in AmeriCorps, thus giving 21CCC participants the opportunity to develop an ethic of community service and environmental stewardship, gain leadership skills, and earn an Education Award to help pay for college or additional training.

■ White House Council

The White House will establish a position or office to coordinate the Council, which will include representatives from all the departments and agencies above, and oversee the effective implementation of the initiative, including data collection and reporting.

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Established in 1985, The Corps Network (TCN) is the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps. TCN supports Corps through advocacy, providing access to funding and projects, and offering expertise in Corps operations.

