

Founded in 1985, The Corps Network is the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps. We represent more than 150 Corps programs across the country. These organizations annually engage upwards of 22,000 diverse young adults in workforce development and service projects that address conservation and community needs. Every year, about half of the positions at Corps are supported by AmeriCorps.

The United States House of Representatives is considering an appropriations bill that would eliminate funding for AmeriCorps. Passage of this bill would be devastating to Service and Conservation Corps and the people who depend on their work. Without AmeriCorps, essential maintenance projects at our local and national parks and forests would go unaddressed; countless communities would not receive disaster preparedness or response assistance; thousands of families could lose access to affordable fresh food; and we would lose a talent pipeline that directs trained, motivated young workers into in-demand jobs in infrastructure and resource management.

In 2023 alone, young people enrolled in member organizations of The Corps Network restored over 500,000 acres of habitat, grew and harvested 272,000 pounds of produce for people in need, and built or improved more than 15,000 miles of trails on our public lands. They also treated more than 67,000 acres of hazardous fire fuels, prepared and placed nearly 300,000 sandbags, and responded to almost 400 disasters, where they helped actively fight fires, manage volunteers, gut water-damaged homes, remove fallen trees, and more. AmeriCorps members were critical to achieving these outcomes for America's lands and communities.

Without AmeriCorps, not only would important work not get done, but thousands of young people would miss out on opportunities they might otherwise not have to gain invaluable work experience and advance their education. For example, The Corps Network's Opportunity Youth Service Initiative (OYSI) is an AmeriCorps program that connects education and service opportunities to young adults facing economic challenges and other barriers to work and school. AmeriCorps makes it possible for nearly 1,000 OYSI members every year to gain hands-on work experience, earn credentials to build their résumé, and earn AmeriCorps Education Awards they can put towards their futures.

Service and Conservation Corps that are supported by AmeriCorps have an impressive return on investment. Several AmeriCorps programs in The Corps Network's membership recently underwent independent assessments; for every federal dollar invested in these programs, the returns were up to \$126.05 in benefits to the public and environment. Without AmeriCorps, our country loses an extremely efficient tool for completing necessary work and addressing community challenges.

Last year, Corps received more than 80,000 applications: nearly four times the number of slots available. There is a high level of interest among today's young adults to engage in the job training and service opportunities that Service and Conservation Corps offer. Without AmeriCorps we fail to invest in this enthusiasm to do good work for our country.