

Vermont Youth Conservation Corps'

Conservation Program

Every June, 150-200 young adults join VYCC for a summer filled with meaningful work, group learning, personal growth, and deep connections to the natural world. Crews of eight, led by two young adult Crew Leaders, live and work together on Vermont's public lands. While the work day is 9-5 with an hour for lunch and learning, Corps Members are immersed in learning throughout the day.

For most, this is their first paying job. They learn personal responsibility, community leadership, conservation ethic, and pre-employment skills including verbal communication, organizational skills, teamwork, and problem solving.

Youth Outcomes

Commitment to Service: Cultivate an appreciation for, and understanding of, conservation work by completing meaningful, challenging work projects on public lands that have a significant impact on the environment

Professional development: Gain skills in applying mathematics, basic engineering, and natural science through work projects

Personal development: A sense of empowerment and responsibility, increased confidence, leadership skills, real-world problem-solving skills, and a deeper connection to the natural world

I think what's been most interesting is the evolution of understanding I've gone through. I really thought it was going to be about skills. I thought I'd learn about sustainability and the environment and tools. I have. But much more than that, I've grown up. I've really come to understand the way that my actions influence others. Through living and working with this small crew, you learn how to live and work with other individuals. [I learned] how to deal with situations when you can't necessarily control all of the factors. The only thing you can control is how you respond.

— Emma



Program Delivery

The Conservation Program is modeled after the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's, which is credited with building a significant portion of our current national and state park facilities and hiking trails. In this widely respected program, small groups of young adults were employed to complete conservation projects.



Critical elements to the VYCC's Conservation Program model include:

- Paid work experiences
- Small, diverse crews
- High-priority conservation work projects
- Leadership and communication skill building
- Personalized education

Work Projects

Crews complete projects across Vermont, and beyond. Projects include watershed work and combating erosion, disaster recovery, park restoration, trail building, and habitat restoration.

Funding

Conservation projects are completed through fee-for-service agreements with state and federal agencies, local municipalities, and nonprofit organizations. Project sponsors cover approximately 80% of costs, which is supplemented by philanthropic support from corporate and foundation grants and individual donations.



Program Partners include, but are not limited to:

- AmeriCorps
- Conservation Trust for North Carolina
- Federal Highway Administration
- Green Mountain Club
- National Parks Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Forest Service
- Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
- Vermont Agency of Transportation

We offer 3 week, 7 week, and 6 month experiences. To learn more and apply, visit www.vycc.org/apply.