

21st Century Conservation Corps Act

The impacts of COVID-19 on our health and economy, combined with high levels of drought and wildfire risk throughout the West, are creating unique challenges for rural families and economies. In particular, the COVID-19 crisis quickly brought the outdoor economy to a halt – and with it lost jobs – as Americans are limiting travel. The 21st Century Conservation Corps Act aims to address these challenges directly by investing in job training and jobs in the woods to support conservation programs and reforestation efforts to restore our public lands, improve access to clean drinking water, and mitigate the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

The bill will establish the civilian workforce necessary to support President Joe Biden’s climate and economic agendas. As Congress considers COVID-related stimulus legislation, it must include federal support for job creation measures for rural economies. In a time when our health is at risk and unemployment has skyrocketed, America’s rural areas cannot be left behind.

The 21st Century Civilian Conservation Corps Act:

- Establishes a \$9 billion fund for qualified land and conservation corps to increase job training and hiring specifically for jobs in the woods, helping to restore public lands and provide jobs in a time of need.
- Provides an additional \$3.5 billion for the U.S. Forest Service and \$2 billion for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to support science-based projects aimed at improving forest health and reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire.
- Establishes a \$2 billion fund to provide economic relief for outfitters and guides holding U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Department of the Interior special use permits.
- Provides an additional \$500 million for Tribal drinking water infrastructure repairs, prioritizing Tribal communities that have decrepit and underfunded drinking water systems causing health and safety emergencies.
- Provides \$2 billion for the National Fire Capacity program, which helps the Forest Service implement FireWise, to prevent, mitigate, and respond to wildfire around homes and businesses on private land.
- Provides \$2 billion for the FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program to improve resiliency for communities impacted by wildfire.
- Provides \$6 billion for U.S. Forest Service, \$6 billion for the National Park Service, and \$2 billion for the Bureau of Land Management maintenance accounts to create jobs, reduce the maintenance backlog, and expand access to recreation.
- Provides \$3.5 billion for reforestation projects on a combination of federal, state, local, tribal and NGO lands, with over one hundred million trees to be planted in urban areas across America by 2030.
- Increases access to public lands through expanding and investing in programs like Every Kid Outdoors and the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership.
- Supports voluntary climate stewardship practices on over 100 million acres of farmland by providing supplemental funding for USDA working lands conservation programs.
- Helps restore and improve rangeland health by providing an additional \$150 million for the North American Waterfowl Management and Joint Ventures program and \$150 million for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Partners for Fish and Wildlife.