



AmeriCorps



2023 IMPACT REPORT

OUR MISSION

Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa cultivates a community of emerging leaders in service to people and the planet.

OUR CORE VALUES

- › Safety
- › Justice
- › Stewardship
- › Community
- › Leadership

Our mission and values were updated in June 2024.

“[The best thing about Youth Outdoors is] getting to work outdoors to better our environment, parks, and communities.”

– Alura, Youth Outdoors
Youth Member

Dear friends,

Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) is in the change business. We have been changing lives by equipping youth and young adults with the skills they need to pursue careers in conservation for over 20 years. Along the way, it turns out, we have been equipping accountants, lawyers, welders, artists, doctors, engineers, and mechanics...because building leadership skills and confidence doesn't just prepare a person for conservation careers. They prepare young people to succeed in life, no matter what path they choose.

While that story alone is compelling, it doesn't end there. The trail through which we provide these skills runs through State Parks, recreation areas, and nature preserves. The skills CCMI Corpsmembers practice during their term of service actually improve and protect the very places millions of Midwesterners have been relying on to regenerate their spirits and restore their souls. CCMI's impact changes far more lives than the numbers show.

From the severe drought of last summer/winter to the storms and flooding of this spring, the only constant in our world is change. The need for CCMI's programs grows because there is more need than ever for people equipped and ready to respond to incremental and catastrophic change. As you'll see in this report, our AmeriCorps members spent over 11,500 hours in 2023 responding to natural disasters. CCMI does not budget for disaster response, but when it happens we respond. That unpredictable excess revenue can “change” the bottom line dramatically and depending on timing, we may be unable to turn that around to support the program in the same year as it is earned. In 2024 we are putting that excess to use expanding the systems needed to support our Corpsmembers and partners throughout the service year.

As we look beyond 2024, some things remain constant: CCMI's unwavering commitment to cultivating a community of emerging leaders in service to people and the planet; and our deep appreciation for the individuals, businesses, and governmental agencies that support our work. Our impact couldn't happen without it.

Sincerely,

Nalani McCutcheon
Interim Executive Director



101 YOUTH
served **8,682** hours

81
project
partners

31 FELLOWS
participated in the
Increasing Diversity in
Environmental Careers
(IDEC) program

320 AMERICORPS
members served **223,057** hours



OUR CORE PROGRAMS

Field Crews

Field Crews serve outdoors restoring habitat, managing natural resources, and occasionally responding to natural disasters or community needs. The **Veterans Corps** and **Iowa Monarch Habitat Project** are part of the Field Crew program.

Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers (IDEC)

The IDEC program utilizes fellowship, mentorship, and internship opportunities to support underrepresented college students pursuing degrees in STEM/natural resources. IDEC is a partnership between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Individual Placements

Individual Placement members serve directly with nonprofit or government agencies focused on natural resource management, water quality, community outreach, and more.

Summer Youth Corps

Youth participants connect with the outdoors through paid hands-on conservation work during this summer residential program. AmeriCorps members spend the summer living outdoors while leading and supervising the youth. Summer Youth Corps is dedicated to accessibility for the Deaf/ Hard of Hearing community and runs ASL crews.

Youth Outdoors

Twin Cities youth connect with the outdoors through paid hands-on conservation work and community improvement projects. AmeriCorps members lead the youth in educational and service-learning activities and serve as Field Crews when not leading youth. The **I Can! Outdoor Skills Program** is a seasonal AmeriCorps opportunity within the Youth Outdoors program.

Minnesota Energy Climate Corps

Climate Fellows audit energy efficiency in public buildings and increase awareness of options for lowering energy costs and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Fellows get paid to gain the skills and experience needed to be successful in a clean energy career.



231,739
total service hours



85%

of AmeriCorps members
reported being better
prepared for their next job

28,869 ACRES
improved and restored



624 MILES

of trail constructed or maintained,
including water trail improvement



94%

of AmeriCorps members reported
stronger sense of on-the-job safety

94%



of AmeriCorps members are more
knowledgeable about the environment



101,049

trees/shrubs/forbs planted



96%

of AmeriCorps members gained/
improved technical skills

92%



of AmeriCorps members developed workforce
readiness skills (work better on teams)

41,280 EDUCATION HOURS

including personal development training, technical skills
training, and professional networking



OUR COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION (JEDI)

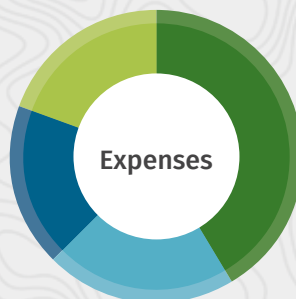
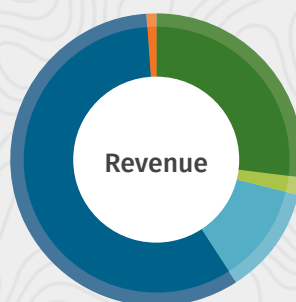
Our JEDI statement and full progress report can be found at conservationcorps.org/about/jedi/. Highlights from our progress toward our JEDI goals:

- » All new staff take a Racial Equity Certification course facilitated by the Soul Focused Group and Workforce 180.
- » CCMI is finalizing and implementing a JEDI workplan created in partnership with the Avarna Group to improve our organization's capacity to serve underrepresented communities and Corpsmembers.
- » Staff created resources for our project hosts on working with our Summer Youth Corps American Sign Language (ASL) crews so they can be better prepared, more knowledgeable, and more inclusive when interacting with our ASL crews.

FINANCIALS

For the year ended December 31, 2023

Support and Revenue	Total
Federal Grants	\$ 3,137,613
Contributions	\$ 215,181
State Grants and Appropriations	\$ 1,380,377
Partner Support and Earned Revenue	\$ 6,676,158
Investment and Miscellaneous	\$ 136,460
Total Support and Revenue	\$ 11,545,789
Expenses	Total
Participant Stipend & Benefits	\$ 4,409,516
Program Supplies, Equipment & Fleet	\$ 2,261,041
Personnel	\$ 1,958,660
General, Management, and Fundraising	\$ 2,088,383
Total Expenses	\$ 10,717,600
Organizational Totals	Total
Change in Net Assets	\$ 828,189
Beginning Net Assets	\$ 5,778,899
Ending Net Assets	\$ 6,607,088



- 27% – Federal Grants
- 2% – Contributions
- 12% – State Grants and Appropriations
- 58% – Partner Support & Earned Revenue
- 1% – Investment & Misc.
- 41% – Participant Stipend & Benefits
- 21% – Program Supplies, Equipment, & Fleet
- 18% – Personnel
- 19% – General, Management, & Fundraising

View our latest audited financial report and 990 at conservationcorps.org/about/impact/



AMPLIFYING OUR IMPACT

Our impact is amplified through collaborations with government entities, nonprofit organizations, individuals, and other key partners. Thank you to our 2023 project partners! conservationcorps.org/our-partners/

Donors help leave a lasting impact on our Corpsmembers' lives, the communities we serve, and our public lands. Thank you to all of our supporters! conservationcorps.org/our-donors/



Please consider making a gift today or joining our community of recurring Evergreen Circle donors with a monthly gift.

conservationcorps.org/donate

LAUNCHING CLIMATE CAREERS

Climate resilience continues to be crucial for our communities and ecosystems to survive and thrive in the future. Our Corpsmembers dedicate their time and energy to improving the Midwest's resilience to climate change and mitigating its impact. With the rollout of the American Climate Corps nationally, we continue to look for more opportunities to build upon these vital efforts.

In the fall of 2023, we launched the Minnesota Energy Climate Corps (MECC) in partnership with ServeMinnesota. MECC is a new sustainability initiative to mitigate climate change by cutting greenhouse gas emissions while training the next generation for energy-related careers. These new Climate Fellows audit energy efficiency and renewable energy measures in public buildings while earning green job credentials and gaining on-the-job experience.



RESPONDING TO NATURAL DISASTERS

As we continue to see natural disasters ravage communities across the United States and beyond, our AmeriCorps members are ready to respond. While deployed, our members serve as part of the AmeriCorps Disaster Response Team with members from multiple organizations across the country.

In 2023 CCMI crews participated in **over 6,000 hours of disaster response training**. During the year members responded to 13 fire deployments in Minnesota, putting in nearly 1,500 hours. A crew of 8 members from our Iowa program deployed to support communities in Guam to clear debris after Typhoon Mawar. Then in the fall, 25 members were sent on two deployments to Hawai'i to coordinate supply donations to residents recovering from the wildfire in Maui. Overall, our members served a total of **11,597 hours** in 2023 on **emergency response and preparedness** assignments.



“My time as an Individual Placement member gave me more useful career experience than I’d ever imagined it would!”

– Liberty Mason, Individual Placement AmeriCorps Member



Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa
60 Plato Blvd E, Ste 210
Saint Paul, MN 55107



Headquarters
60 Plato Blvd E, Ste 210
Saint Paul, MN 55107
651.209.9900
conservationcorps.org
@conservcorps

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

During Calendar Year 2023

Erin Anderson , Chair	Leila Keita	Nick Sannito , Secretary
Eric Chien , Vice Chair	Elizabeth McAllister	Yordanose Solomon
Robert W. Craggs	Camille Morse Nicholson	Stephanie Stein
Brett Emmons	Janet Newberg , Treasurer	Jennifer Stoffel
Vern Fish	Shirley Nordrum (In Memoriam)	Justin Tomljanovic
Bailey Hadnott	Michael Rojas	Dr. Michael G. Wulf
Mary Hilfiker	Troy Rosenbrook	
Emily Johnston		

STAFF LEADERSHIP TEAM

During Calendar Year 2023

Kelsi Klaers Youth Programs Director	Brian Miller Field Crew Programs Director	Michele Rohricht Finance Director
Carolyn Llorens Human Resources Director	Mark Murphy Executive Director (retired October 2023)	Nicole Zyvoloski Operations & Impact Administrator
Nalani McCutcheon Interim Executive Director		

REGIONAL OFFICES

During Calendar Year 2023

Bemidji, MN	Mankato, MN	Granger, IA
Duluth, MN	Rochester, MN	Waterloo, IA

