



AMERICORPS 20th ANNIVERSARY  
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## Environmental Stewardship Month Toolkit

### Table of Contents

- I. Overview
- II. AmeriCorps 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Key Messages
- III. Environmental Stewardship Talking Points
- IV. Environmental Stewardship Statistics
- V. Opportunities to Get Involved
- VI. Spreading the Word on Social Media
- VII. CNCS Environmental Online Resources

## Overview

Every day, in communities across America, AmeriCorps members are getting things done to protect and preserve our environment.

Whether improving parks and public lands, restoring waterways, increasing energy efficiency, or educating the public, AmeriCorps makes a positive and lasting impact on our planet.

Building on a long American tradition of conservation service, today's AmeriCorps is focused on 21<sup>st</sup> century environmental challenges – from pollution and habitat loss to forest fires and climate change. As AmeriCorps members improve the environment, they also advance economic opportunity – by reducing energy costs, promoting renewable energy, increasing tourism, and training young people and veterans for the green jobs of the future.

As part of the AmeriCorps 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Corporation for National and Community Service is observing April as Environmental Stewardship month. Together with our partners, members, and alums, we will highlight the many ways that AmeriCorps is making a difference for our planet.

This toolkit provides background on AmeriCorps environmental work, engagement ideas, stats, social media tips, and links for more information. Join us in celebrating the vital role of AmeriCorps in preserving our environment for future generations!

## AmeriCorps 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Key Messages

- **Service is a Solution:** More than 75,000 AmeriCorps members are improving the lives of millions of our most vulnerable citizens each year. AmeriCorps' impact is proven and measurable.
- **Preserving the Environment:** Whether improving parks and public lands, restoring waterways, increasing energy efficiency, or educating the public, AmeriCorps makes a positive and lasting impact on our environment.
- **Strengthening the Economy:** As AmeriCorps members improve the environment, they also advance economic opportunity – by reducing energy costs, preventing costly wildfires, promoting renewable energy, increasing tourism, and training young people and veterans for the green jobs of the future.

## AmeriCorps Environmental Stewardship Statistics

AmeriCorps programs address a wide variety of environmental needs. CNCS makes a significant investment in environmental stewardship through AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps NCCC, with more than 10,000 members engaged in environmental service activities each year.

In FY 2012, AmeriCorps State National programs reported the following accomplishments:

- **1,017,918** Acres of parks improved
- **14,339** Miles of trails or rivers improved and/or created
- **2,166** Housing units weatherized or retrofitted
- **2,388** Energy audits conducted
- **196,131** Individuals receiving education in energy efficiency
- **880** Tons of materials collected and recycled

In FY 2013, AmeriCorps NCCC team members devoted 328,285 hours to environmental stewardship. Among other accomplishments, AmeriCorps NCCC members:

- Suppressed or contained wildfires on **52,748 acres**, removed **2,600 acres** of brush or undergrowth to prevent fires, and performed prescribed burns on more than **2,200 acres** to prevent further wildfire spreading.
- Taught **15,800 people** in environmental classes/workshops.
- Planted **329,000** new trees.
- Weatherized or outfitted **175 homes** with energy-efficient modifications.

## AmeriCorps Environmental Stewardship Talking Points

- Every day in communities across America, AmeriCorps members are getting things done to preserve the environment.
- The Corporation for National and Community Service makes a significant investment in environmental stewardship through AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps NCCC, with **more than 10,000 members** engaged in environmental service activities each year.
- AmeriCorps is part of a **long American tradition of conservation service** that dates back to the Civilian Conservation Corps and builds on the large network of state and local conservation corps that have emerged over the past four decades.

- Today's AmeriCorps is **focused on 21st century environmental challenges** – from pollution and habitat loss to forest fires and climate change. Whether improving public lands, restoring waterways, increasing energy efficiency, or educating the public, AmeriCorps makes a positive and lasting impact on our planet.
- Through the President's **Task Force on Expanding National Service**, the Corporation for National and Community Service is working with the Department of Interior, the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other federal partners to **expand AmeriCorps service opportunities** to meet the nation's environmental and energy conservation needs.
- CNCS is working with other federal agencies and nonprofit partners to create a **21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Service Corps**, a national collaborative effort to put America's youth and returning veterans to work protecting, restoring and enhancing America's great outdoors.
- AmeriCorps members **improve parks, forests, and public lands**, helping preserve and protect America's precious natural places for future generations. AmeriCorps members serve with federal, state and local land management agencies, building and maintaining trails, restoring rivers and streams, preventing and fighting wildfires, and improving wildlife habitat.
- AmeriCorps members **conserve energy and reduce pollution and carbon emissions**, by weatherizing homes, performing energy audits, planting trees, promoting renewable energy, and educating citizens about energy efficiency and conservation.
- AmeriCorps members **improve urban environments**, by creating and maintaining city parks, promoting recycling, planting community gardens, and more.
- AmeriCorps members **build an ethic of environmental stewardship** in current and future generations through environmental education, youth service projects, and connecting Americans to the outdoors.
- As AmeriCorps members improve the environment, they also **advance economic opportunity for low-income individuals and communities** – by reducing energy costs, promoting renewable energy, preventing and fighting costly wildfires, increasing tourism, and training young people for the green jobs of the future.

## Opportunities to Get Involved

There will be many opportunities for you to engage throughout the month. Here are a few days you can mark on your calendars. Be sure to use the #AmeriCorps20 hashtag so we can hear what you're up to!

**April 4:** Put the "Earth A" badge on your website or Facebook page.

**April 7-26:** Share the 20 Ways AmeriCorps Helps the Earth on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

**April 8:** Share our CEO Wendy Spencer's blog on Environmental Stewardship.

**April 20-26:** Get involved week – serve with an AmeriCorps environmental stewardship program near you, or find an environmental volunteer opportunity on Serve.gov.

### **April 22: Earth Day**

- Volunteer or attend an Earth Day event
- Change your Facebook or Twitter profile picture to the Earth A badge
- Tweet about how AmeriCorps is helping the Earth
- Share a photo or video of your AmeriCorps team in action

## Spreading the Word on Social Media

Below are some other ways you can highlight AmeriCorps' vital role in the environment through social media during the month of April. Please use the hashtag #AmeriCorps20 so we can track your tweets!

### **AmeriCorps Grantees**

- Retweet the 20 Ways AmeriCorps helps the Earth. (Make sure you follow AmeriCorps at <https://twitter.com/amicorps>.)
- Tweet your support on Twitter: *(Twitter handle)* is proud to be an AmeriCorps environmental stewardship program #AmeriCorps20
- Or tweet: 20 Ways AmeriCorps helps the Earth. *(Insert your program and mission here)* #AmeriCorps20

- Ask the program directors and administrators you work with to submit an op-ed, letter to the editor, or blog items explaining how important AmeriCorps members are to their environmental initiatives.
- You may also submit AmeriCorps success stories to [pressoffice@cns.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cns.gov) (300-500 words).

### **AmeriCorps Members**

- If you are a current AmeriCorps member in an environment-focused program, tweet about your service and impact:
  - *I am helping the earth through @AmeriCorps by [your service activity] #AmeriCorps20*
  - *Every day is Earth Day for @AmeriCorps #environmental programs #AmeriCorps20*
  - *Going Green with AmeriCorps with (program name) at (organization name) #AmeriCorps20*
- On Earth Day, change your Facebook and Twitter profile picture to the “Earth A” graphic.
- Send us a photo or video of you and your AmeriCorps team engaged in environmental service. Follow the steps at <http://nationalservice.tumblr.com/submit-photos-videos>
- Submit your personal AmeriCorps environmental success stories all month long to [pressoffice@cns.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cns.gov) (300-500 words).

### **AmeriCorps Alums**

- Tweet about your service in AmeriCorps environmental programs:
  - *Going Green with @AmeriCorps alum with (program name) at (organization name) #AmeriCorps20*
- Submit your personal AmeriCorps environmental success stories all month long to [pressoffice@cns.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cns.gov) (300-500 words).

**CNCS Environmental Stewardship Resources**

[National Service Blog: Energy and the Environment](#)

[National Service Knowledge Network: Environmental Stewardship](#)

[Toolkit: Audit Your Home | en Español](#)

[Toolkit: Maintain Public Lands | en Español](#)

[Toolkit: Start a Community Garden](#)