

**Forest Service Manual
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Forest Service Manual 1800 – Volunteers And Service

Chapter 1840 - Youth Conservation Corps

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Responsible Staff:

Explanation of changes: Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

Posting Instructions: Amendments are numbered consecutively by title and calendar year. Post by document; remove the entire document and replace it with this amendment. Retain this transmittal as the first page(s) of this document. The last amendment to this title was 1800-2014-4 to FSM 1830.

1840: Revises chapter in its entirety.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1840.1 - Authority.....	3
1840.2 - Objectives	3
1840.3 - Policy	3
1840.4 - Responsibility.....	3
1840.41 - Washington Office, Director, Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources ..	3
1840.42 - Regional Foresters	4
1840.43 - Station Directors and the Area Director.....	4
1840.44 - Forest Supervisors.....	4
1840.45 - Project Managers and Camp Directors.....	4
1841 - Program Financing	4
1842 - Program Structure and Implementation	5
1842.1 - YCC Partnerships	6
1842.2 - Outreach and Recruitment	6
1842.3 - Applications	7
1842.4 - Selection	7
1843 - YCC Member Appointment, Pay, and Separation	9
1843.1 - Appointment.....	9
1843.2 - Pay.....	9
1843.3 - Separation.....	10
1844 - Work Program and Environmental Awareness.....	10
1845 - Safety	11
1846 - Forms, Program Materials, and Reports.....	11
1846.1 - Forms.....	11
1846.2 - Uniforms and Program Materials.....	11
1846.3 - Reports	12

1840.1 - Authority

This program is authorized by the Youth Conservation Corps Act (Public Law 93-408, 88 Stat. 1066, 16 U.S.C. 1701-1706) as amended. Annually, Congress designates appropriated funds within the Forest Service budget for high priority projects to be carried out by the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) directly by the Forest Service or through partner organizations. Forest Service appropriations or funds may be used to finance the YCC program, however the law requires that camps and projects preserve the YCC program character and maintain program identity.

1840.2 - Objectives

The objectives of the Youth Conservations Corps (YCC) are to:

1. Accomplish needed conservation work on public lands.
2. Provide gainful employment for 15- through 18-year old males and females from all social, economic, ethnic, and racial backgrounds.
3. Develop an understanding and appreciation of the Nation's natural environment and heritage in participating youths.

1840.3 - Policy

Provide YCC members with opportunities to enhance self-dignity, promote self-discipline, and build lasting cultural bridges between youths from various social, ethnic, racial, and economic backgrounds and of varying physical abilities while fostering knowledge of the environment and natural resources conservation. The Forest Service shall partner with any public agency or organization or any private non-profit agency or organization which has been in existence for at least 5 years for the operation of any Youth Conservation Corps project. The Forest Service and partner YCC programs include an environmental education component are open to diverse youth, and provide paid natural or cultural resources work experience.

1840.4 - Responsibility

The Deputy Chief, National Forest System, has the overall responsibility for the Volunteers and Service program of work, including the YCC.

1840.41 - Washington Office, Director, Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources

The Washington Office, Director, Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources, has staff responsibility for the management and administration of the YCC program.

1840.42 - Regional Foresters

The Regional Forester has overall responsibility for the Region's YCC program. It is the responsibility of the Regional Forester to assign program responsibilities to a Regional staff member.

1840.43 - Station Directors and the Area Director

It is the responsibility of each Station Director and the Area Director to:

1. Administer the YCC program within their jurisdiction.
2. Assign staff responsibility for the program.

1840.44 - Forest Supervisors

Within the broad framework of applicable laws, policies, delegations, and guidelines, Forest Supervisors, through District Rangers, Project Managers or Camp Directors, are responsible for the overall management and operation of projects located in their Forests.

1840.45 - Project Managers and Camp Directors

It is the responsibility of the Project Manager or Camp Director to implement all project activities, including the supervision of staff personnel and YCC members for Forest Service conducted programs. If the YCC program is conducted through a partnership agreement, representatives of the partner organization may perform these functions with oversight by Forest Service staff. See section 1846.3.

1841 - Program Financing

1. The annual budget and level of performance plan transmitted to Regions, Stations, and the Area by Albuquerque Service Center, Budget and Finance (ASC), includes suggested levels of participation based on yearly appropriation language and prior year performance outcomes, recommended spending levels, and reporting requirements. Regions are encouraged to spend above the recommended spending levels, and to leverage funding through cost sharing with partner organizations.
2. Regions, Stations, and the Area Director shall establish a system for monitoring direct indirect YCC costs, along with other performance outcomes, and reporting them in Volunteers and Partners (VP) Reports.
3. See FSM 6511.11 for direction on purchasing non-monetary items of nominal value to disseminate program information to private and public individuals and organizations to further the YCC program.

4. Actual costs expended as well as performance outcomes are reported to Congress as required by the YCC legislation in the annual PAR (Performance Accountability Report). Every Federal agency submits a PAR at the conclusion of the fiscal year.

1842 - Program Structure and Implementation

YCC programs may be structured as non-residential or residential. Non-residential programs provide paid daytime work activities with members living in their own lodging and commuting to the Forest Service unit. Residential programs provide lodging and meals to enrollees 4 to 7 nights per week, typically in a group living arrangement, as well as remunerate participants for daytime work activities.

1. Non-residential programs may be conducted by Forest Service units or implemented by partner organizations.

- a. Members live locally, providing their own lodging.
- b. Daytime paid work projects are conducted by the Agency YCC program or partner organization on Forest Service lands.
- c. Members will be paid Federal or State minimum wage, whichever is higher.
- d. Members report to the Forest Service unit or the partner organization to begin the work day.
- e. Projects may include periodic overnight “spike” camp situations if warranted by project location, such as in wilderness areas. Overnight camping must include on-site supervision and provision of meals to members.

2. Residential programs may be conducted by Forest Service units or implemented by partner organizations.

- a. Federally-owned facilities may be utilized for residential programs.
- b. Members will be paid Federal or State minimum wage, whichever is higher, for daytime work activities.
- c. Cost of food, lodging, and laundry expenses may be included in program costs or deducted from members’ pay using automatic payroll deduction.
- d. On-site supervision must be provided during non-work hours by the implementing unit or partner organization if any enrollees are under age 18.
- e. Meals must be provided, or food provided if cooking facilities are available in the residential facility. Cost of meals/food may be included in program costs.

- f. YCC members may bring and be responsible for maintaining their own bedding, towels, toiletries, and other personal items for use during the program.

1842.1 - YCC Partnerships

Units may partner with State, local, and non-profit entities to conduct, expand, or enhance their YCC program. Program funding can be leveraged with partner cost-sharing. See FSM 1810 regarding such partnerships including authorities and instruments. A partner program qualifies as a YCC program if it is open to both males and females and diverse youth ages 15-18, has been in existence for at least 5 years, has experience in managing conservation and/or natural resource programming for youth, pays minimum wage or better, and includes an environmental education component.

1842.2 - Outreach and Recruitment

Thoughtfully planned and executed outreach and recruitment activities at the National, Regional, and local levels are essential to the implementation of an YCC program that is representative of our nation's diversity. Market the YCC program broadly to constituents in the communities served by Forest Service units that host YCC programs. Partnerships with other Federal, State and local youth serving agencies such as Department of Labor Workforce Investment Boards and conservation corps will leverage additional resources while increasing awareness about YCC opportunities. Forest Service leadership and staff are advised to adhere to the following guidance to maximize cooperation with our many stakeholders and achieve Agency priorities relative to Cultural Transformation and youth employment.

1. For economy and efficiency, where two or more agencies share a common recruitment area, local Forest Service Program Managers should work with officials of other agencies to combine recruitment efforts and jointly select the YCC members.
2. Where States and private non-profit organizations operate summer youth programs under their own authorities and appropriations, Forest Service staff are encouraged to coordinate and cooperate in recruitment programs with designated staff to reduce competition for YCC members.
3. Carry out coordinated recruitment efforts within the commuting area of existing projects or camps through local school systems, employment security offices, and other eligible agencies in each State.
4. Ensure the YCC program is open and made known to all eligible youth within the commuting area and outreach efforts generate a diverse pool of YCC applicants that is reflective of the nation's demographics.

5. Outreach and recruitment should generally be conducted January through April 15 to ensure extensive outreach occurs and selected YCC members are on-boarded and engaged on essential projects in the late spring and summer months. Regional leadership may adjust scheduling to accommodate unique needs or circumstances at Forests and Ranger Districts. Adjustments should take into account the Agency's goal of ensuring YCC participants reflect the diversity of American youth.

1842.3 - Applications

Forest Service units are required to use YCC forms FS-1800-18 and FS-1800-3. Partner organizations are encouraged to use these OMB approved Federal YCC forms, but may use their organization's forms if they collect at a minimum the information requested on the Federal YCC forms. Applicants complete and submit form FS-1800-18, YCC Application available on the Washington Office forms website.

1. All applications for applicants under 18 years old must include approval signature by the applicant's parent(s) or legal guardian.
2. Applications that are generated for direct Forest Service hires should be postmarked no later than April 15, or the date designated by the Regional Forester or Designee.

1842.4 - Selection

1. YCC applicants must:
 - a. Be at least 15 and not yet 19 years of age when enrolled in the program.
 - b. Be citizens or permanent residents of the United States or its territories or possessions.
 - c. Have no history of serious criminal activity such as a felony, or other antisocial behavior that might jeopardize their safety or that of others.
 - d. Be able to participate fully in the activities of the YCC program. Include youth with disabilities who can participate with or without reasonable accommodations.
 - e. Be willing and able to participate for the duration of the local YCC program.
 - f. Possess a social security card and have a work permit (if required) before first working day of YCC program.
 - g. Not be considered for enrollment if they previously enrolled in the program, unless they are selected as crew leaders or an exception to the selection criteria has been granted (para. 3).

2. Random selection. Any selection method is acceptable; however, each applicant must have an equal chance of selection. The only classification of applications permitted using random selection is on the basis of gender to ensure enrollment is approximately 50 percent female and 50 percent male. Applications may also be grouped by previous enrollment (par. 3 and 4).

3. A unit may request to use a non-random selection method in order to ensure diversity of YCC members. Non-random selection may be requested by the unit to the Washington Office, Director, Recreation, Heritage, Volunteer and Resources by March 1, using the Request for Non-Random Selection of YCC Applicants form. Contact Washington Office, Volunteers & Service for the form and instructions.

4. In sparsely populated areas, if it is difficult to find enough eligible applicants who have not previously been in the YCC, seek exception to the selection criteria from the next higher organizational level on a case-by-case basis. Such exceptions may be approved if:

- a. The unit conducted an extensive outreach and recruitment program, the established area of recruiting was reasonable, and the number of first-year applicants is insufficient for the project.
- b. The number of applications is inadequate when classified by gender and by "no previous YCC enrollment" and "previous enrollment" groups.
- c. All applicants in the "no previous enrollment" group have been selected, and there are still vacancies in the program.

If the exception is approved, randomly select from the male and female groups who were previously enrolled in the program for the remaining positions, but try to attain an equal number of male and female YCC members.

5. Up to 20 percent of YCC members may be appointed as crew leaders outside the random selection process from either the previous year's YCC members or from current year, randomly selected YCC members.

6. Conduct random selection of YCC members for each project in cooperation with other local public lands agencies operating YCC projects.

7. Sons and daughters of USDA employees may serve in the YCC if they meet the eligibility requirements and are selected through a random process as defined in the directive.

1843 - YCC Member Appointment, Pay, and Separation

1843.1 - Appointment

1. To enroll members in a Forest Service YCC program, use the instructions provided in the HRM Employment Guide for YCC located on the Albuquerque Service Center website for Human Resources Management Temporary Employment.
2. Form FS-1800-3 Youth Conservation Corps Medical History form must be submitted after selection and before or on the date the YCC member reports for duty. YCC applications for persons under 18 years old must be signed by their parent or legal guardian.
3. Submit YCC member time and attendance reports for up to 80 hours per pay period at the base rate. Process payments for hours over 80 per pay period on form AD-343 Payroll Action Request. Electronic time and attendance report processing may be used.
4. YCC members are considered Federal employees only for tort claims (28 U.S.C. 171) and the Federal Employees Compensation Act (54 U.S.C. 81).

1843.2 - Pay

1. Schedule YCC members for up to a 40-hour work week. Line officers may require YCC members to work the established schedule if the administrative unit uses flextime for the unit. Federal child labor laws prohibit 15-year olds from working before 7:00 a.m. and working more than 8 hours per day or more than 40 hours per week. However, YCC members 16 years of age and older may work up to 10 hours per day and up to 50 hours per week on non-fire-related work at the minimum wage. Compliance with State child labor laws is required if their laws are more restrictive.
2. Pay YCC members at the current Federal or State minimum hourly wage, whichever is higher.
3. Pay YCC members for the actual hours worked and for Federal holidays. Record all absences from work for personal reasons or illness in the remarks block.
4. At residential projects, deduct for food and lodging from the YCC member's gross pay. If YCC members are in a residential or spike camp, reimburse them at the same per diem rate as seasonal or temporary employees.
5. Pay crew leaders assigned additional responsibilities as adjunct staff an additional 15 percent above the selected rate (Federal or State minimum wage rate).
6. Pay enrollees working on a non-hazardous fire activity, either within the 40-hour week or on overtime.

7. Notify the Washington Office, Director of Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources, when a rate higher than the Federal/State minimum wage rate is proposed.

1843.3 - Separation

Use Nature of Action Code 908, No Authority, to separate YCC members. Electronic time and attendance reports may be used for payrolling but should not be used for separation action.

1. If it is necessary to discharge an YCC member for disciplinary reasons, the Director or work Supervisor shall ensure that the action has been fair, unbiased, and not prejudicial. Parents or legal guardians must be contacted prior to an YCC member's disciplinary discharge from a residential camp.
2. For either disciplinary or normal separations, use Nature of Action Code 908, No Authority, to separate YCC members.

1844 - Work Program and Environmental Awareness

1. Plan YCC projects to accomplish needed resource work and to provide approximately two hours of environmental learning per week. Follow a local work-planning document for planning and approving YCC work activities. Expand project plans to include environmental learning objectives. Environmental learning hours per week can instead take the form of one full day per four weeks of program.
2. Upon completion of the YCC program, YCC members should understand the work projects and their overall benefits and impacts on the natural resource environment and understand the interrelation of the social, cultural, and environmental elements.
3. Keep YCC members together in crews when possible to help maintain program character and identity; however, YCC members may be assigned to other crews when there are fewer than four YCC members in a project crew. Encourage integration of YCC members into diverse work projects. When practical and beneficial for the YCC members and the project integrate YCC members into projects with other youth-oriented program participants.
4. Supervision ratio of YCC members to Supervisor shall be no greater than 10 YCC members to 1 Supervisor.
5. Document accomplishments, YCC member demographics, the hours engaged on project activities by resource area, and the costs expended to implement each YCC project including matching funds if the program is operated through a partnership agreement in the Volunteers and Partners accomplishments reporting (VP) Reports database.

1845 - Safety

Safety is the highest priority for enrollees and staff on YCC projects. All enrollees will receive appropriate safety equipment and training prior to beginning any project or new task, and crew leaders will assure that enrollees work in a safe manner throughout the project. Partner YCC organizations shall adhere to safety standards and document safety practices for their program.

1. Prioritize and emphasize safety in the YCC program.
2. Provide all YCC members a safe work environment, appropriate training, adequate sanitary facilities, and the personal protective equipment required for the work to be done.
3. Do not assign YCC members to forest fires except for non-red carded positions such as mop-up and camp activities.
4. Develop a Job Hazard Analysis, FS-6700-7, for all project work plans and provide safety training as required.
5. Ensure the YCC program is fully compliant with Federal and State child labor laws.

1846 - Forms, Program Materials, and Reports

1846.1 - Forms

The following standard forms are required for YCC programs:

1. FS-1800-3, Youth Conservation Corps - Medical History.
2. FS-1800-18, Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) Application.
3. 1800-4, Youth Conservation Corps Identification Card.
4. Form FS-1800-13, (YCC) Certificate of Completion.
5. FS-1800-13a, (YCC) Certificate of Appreciation.

1846.2 - Uniforms and Program Materials

1. The following materials may be distributed but are not required:
 - a. YCC brochures.
 - b. Tee shirts
 - c. Water bottles, other safety items.

- d. YCC patches.
 - e. Leader bar patches.
 - f. Decals.
2. Program identification materials containing the YCC emblem to provide group identification with the YCC program and promote the safety and wellbeing of YCC members engaged in strenuous outdoors work during the summer months may be purchased with Federal appropriations. These items must bear an accurate reproduction of the YCC insignia. Refer to FSM 6511.11f regarding purchase of items which promote Forest Service programs.

1846.3 - Reports

1. VP Reports. Regions, Stations, and the Area must complete reporting in VPReports, the application where accomplishments and Forest Service costs are reported, by November 15 unless otherwise directed. The report should include the following program costs and expenditures for the Forest Service and Partners.
 - a. Participant Wages/Stipends. Any wages, living allowances or stipends paid to participants employed on YCC projects.
 - b. Materials/Supplies. Cost of consumable items used to support YCC projects that may be readily available or purchased specifically to facilitate getting the work done such as gloves, goggles, copies of forms or other publications, pencils, and so forth.
 - c. Equipment/Vehicles. Cost of heavy-duty tools or equipment that may be reused and/or depreciate over time and rental or cost of vehicles (including maintenance and gasoline) assigned to support YCC projects.
 - d. Administrative/Training. Costs associated with administering the YCC program to include staff travel, recruitment, outreach, training, and other miscellaneous expenses. Costs may be reported for all categories where actual Forest Service spending occurred for the YCC project.
 - e. Budget line items. May be reported for all costs reported and will help the agency better understand how YCC is funded for future planning purposes.
 - f. Partner. Costs are reported annually to demonstrate that Forest Service spending helps leverage other funding for YCC programs.
 - g. Reporting. Include narrative statements on major items of interest and program highlights.

2. Reporting YCC Partnerships. Only partnerships or portions of partnerships that meet YCC guidelines for age, gender mix, and environmental education may be reported as YCC accomplishments. Forest Service expenditures and other data on YCC partnerships should be reported the same as Forest Service operated YCC programs.

3. Youth Conservation Corps Annual Report. As required by the YCC Act (FSM 1840-1), the Forest Service shall report YCC activities to the President and the Congress by April 1 following the close of each program year.