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State of California
Resources Agency
Department of Conservation

THE CALIFORNIA ECOLOGY CORPS

The California Ecology Corps is the solution Governor Reagan has adopted to meet California's continuing need for a reserve of trained manpower to confront the ravages of wildland fire and to meet this State's commitment for preserving the environment.

The Corps was officially established in an Executive Order (see Attachment A) issued by Governor Reagan on April 27, 1971. That event marked the beginning of the Corps as a legal entity, but it was by no means the first step.

To find the first step we must go back in time more than 20 years ago when California's conservation camp program was inaugurated and even before that, back many decades to the days when state and county fire wardens conscripted citizens off the street or out of a sawmill to fight forest fires. In the intervening years, science has produced modern methods of fire control and fire suppression, but these new tools have not eliminated the need for trained manpower in organized crews.

Over the years, the Division of Forestry, the State's wildland firefighting force, has of necessity increased in efficiency and in manpower. Today, some 3,000 men, whose job it is to meet the challenges of the wildland fires, are on the State's payroll. This force is augmented each summer by 1,800

Presented by James G. Stearns, Director, California Department of Conservation, before the Assembly Committee on Efficiency and Cost Control, Sacramento, California, April 4, 1972.

young men who are employed as seasonal firefighters. Together, they man the fire stations, bulldozer crews and air bases that are three of the basic components available to us for wildland firefighting.

Conservation Camp Program

In the late 1940's, the need for trained hand crews became evident to the State's professional wildland firefighters as the fourth component. In cooperation with the State Department of Corrections and the California Youth Authority, the conservation camp program became a reality and was formally organized.

This program enabled foresters to utilize minimum security inmates as fire-fighting hand crews and to assist in the construction of our fire defense system, working out of a new camp environment in the State's forest lands. Working with the leadership of forestry personnel, the inmates have proven to be a tremendous asset.

And then came social changes -- and new concepts in penology and dealing with prison inmates. A new probation subsidy program was initiated in 1966, providing for payment to the counties on a per-case basis so that county probation staffs could be beefed up and the less serious felons who formerly ended up in conservation camps could be dealt with at home.

Since the probation subsidy program started in 1966, the prison population -- and, of course the camp population -- began to decrease rather rapidly. In recent years, the prison population had dropped from 28,800 to under 20,000, as of this week.

A study was conducted in 1970-71 to find the alternative manpower sources necessary to replace the dwindling camp population. A partial solution was to contract with counties to use local prisoners to provide the manpower. (San Diego County now supplies manpower for two camps; another camp will soon be manned by county prisoners from Shasta and four other northern California counties.)

As this narration indicates, the Department of Conservation was faced with a problem, and with an obligation to find broader solutions.

California Ecology Corps is ONE of the solutions. But it is more than that: it is a unique experiment in bringing concerned young men into the field of conservation in this State to provide the work experience and job training that can open career doors in many conservation fields.

The Problem Becomes Acute

Although we in the Department of Conservation had long been aware that some day the conservation camp program would no longer provide the total answer to the manpower reserve problem, and although we had been searching for alternatives for a long time, the need became acute just over a year ago when, simply stated, there were not enough inmates to adequately man the camps then in existence. Looking at the program as it then existed, it was obvious, from a purely financial point of view, that as many as five of the conservation camps must be closed by June 30, 1971. That prospect was not satisfactory to Governor Reagan or to the Legislature. The question remained -- what shall we do?

In our earlier examination, we had thought of some type of program where young men who had completed their high schooling and yet who had not decided where their lives would lead them could serve for, hopefully, up to two years. Such a program, we decided, would be patterned after experiences in other programs we have administered using young men; except that we would have these young people in our employ on a year-around basis rather than just during the critical months that we know as the "fire season." On the other hand, we knew that this program would augment the conservation camp program to the extent that the young men would engage in a variety of ecology and conservation-related work projects similar to the federal government's Civilian Conservation Corps of the pre-World War II era, including work on federal land where inmates can only work on an emergency basis.

Thus, with this concept in mind and the problem at hand, the California Ecology Corps became a fact. To implement a new program would obviously require considerable attention to detail, including recruitment. We asked ourselves, "Where can we find young men who are readily accessible, who are unemployed, and who could be put to work quickly within the limits of funds available to us"?

It was at this point that we turned to the Selective Service System and specifically to those with conscientious objector classification.

Conscientious Objectors

Let me remind you that the Executive Order signed by Governor Reagan and subsequently ratified by the Legislature as part of the Budget Act of 1971 did not limit the California Ecology Corps to conscientious objectors.

The language of the Executive Order does not, in fact, set forth any qualifications for persons employed in the program.

Nevertheless, we did ask that the Corps be designed as alternate service for young men who had been classified as conscientious objectors by local draft boards. Conscientious objector officials from the California headquarters of the Selective Service System studied our request and visited the facilities we proposed to use to house the Corpsmen. Dr. Curtis Tarr, Director of the Selective Service System in Washington, D.C., also made a personal inspection trip, as did various representatives of conscientious objector associations.

In the spring of 1971 there were approximately 5,000 conscientious objectors in California, and many of them were looking for alternate service. Alternate service, incidentally, is easily defined as a 24-month period when conscientious objectors must work for a non-profit or public service agency, thus serving a time comparable to the time a draftee into the armed services must serve.

And so to meet the immediate problem, namely the prospect of closing five conservation camps, we had a program and we had an immediate source from which to recruit. In the meantime, we had arrived at satisfactory arrangements offsetting the additional costs of the new program (camp overhead, corpsmen pay and subsistence) through cooperative agreements with other conservation agencies of the State and federal governments. Basically, these agreements allowed the Department of Conservation to charge the other agencies on a man-day basis for the environmental and conservation work to be done by the new California Ecology Corps. The net

cost of the Ecology Corps to the State of California in 1972-73 is budgeted at \$814,398 based on a corpsman population of 340. (See Attachment B for a list of projects; see Attachment C for budget summary.)

The agreements were negotiated; and we decided to convert inmate-manned conservation camps in Humboldt, Tehama, and Calaveras counties into centers to house the new Ecology Corps. These sites were selected because they were the closest to the work projects that were the subject of the various agreements that had been negotiated. (A fourth center was later added in Inyo County.)

Draft Law Expires

We set July 1, 1971, as the date to officially launch the Ecology Corps; but, as it turned out, this was not a good day insofar as the Nation's draft law was concerned. The law expired on that date, and it would be months before Congress would agree on a new law. In the meantime, although many of the conscientious objectors did respond and select the California Ecology Corps as their alternate service, many others concluded that in the absence of a draft law, they were under no selective service obligation whatsoever. Consequently, we did not fulfill our earlier expectation of quickly filling the new Ecology Centers with minimums of 80 men each.

The availability of conscientious objectors remains questionable. Despite this, there is no plan to phase conscientious objectors out of the California Ecology Corps, but rather continue the Corps as qualified alternate service for those who volunteer.

Recruitment Expanded

On December 1, 1971, in keeping with the original concept of the Corps, I authorized the recruitment of any qualified young men for six-month enlistments; and this meant that we would no longer rely solely on our original source for recruitment, the conscientious objectors. We have been successful in the weeks since December 1 in recruiting young men and more than doubling the size of the Corps. The attached graph (Attachment D) illustrates our recruitment success, and I particularly call your attention to the increase since the first of the year. I am confident that each of the four centers will be at minimum capacity within a few weeks, thereby giving us at least 340 men.

As of today, there are slightly over 100 corpsmen who are conscientious objectors. These are men whose average age is 22, who average two years of college. These are the "seniors" in the program; and the majority are, and have been, highly-productive and dedicated workers whose extra effort made the whole idea work.

Many of the newer members of the Corps are in the program as a result of other forms of recruitment. Some are, for example, young men out of high school -- and out of work. There are some Vietnam veterans in the program now, and more are expected.

Benefits and Requirements

Corpsmen are not regular state employees: they are exempt contractees. They do receive some benefits comparable to our regular employees, such as vacations, holidays and workmen's compensation insurance. A comprehensive health benefit program will be implemented August 1, 1972.

Since the beginning of the program, we have provided Corpsmen with food, lodging, clothing and personal care items and have paid them \$40 each month. Beginning July 1, 1972, Corpsmen will receive at least \$100 per month plus the other items I have listed. On February 1, the overtime rate for most emergency work was set at \$2.80 per hour.

Corpsmen are entitled to approximately the same grievance procedure as allowed regular State employees, including the permanent employees of the Department of Conservation. A Corpman with a grievance discusses the problem with his immediate supervisor (generally a crew foreman of the Division of Forestry) and, failing to receive acceptable adjudication at this level can appeal to the Center Director, the Corps Administrator, and ultimately to me.

During the summer fire season, Corpsmen must remain at their duty post for a continuous five-day period. At other times, they are required to perform their normal eight-hour work shift, Monday through Friday. These requirements are not unique to the Ecology Corps, but are the same requirements applied to all fire station personnel.

Offers Individual Potential

The California Ecology Corps has much to offer the young men who participate. Educational institutions, such as the North American School of Conservation and Ecology, for example, are working with us in recruiting Corpsmen. Several of that school's recent graduates are now Corpsmen obtaining actual on-the-job experience in ecology and conservation work. Already, some Corpsmen have gone on to employment for public and private

environmental agencies, since service in the Corps qualifies as job experience for civil service examinations and for other employment.

Community colleges are looking at the California Ecology Corps as a possible supplement to their environmental and forestry curriculum for the same reasons.

Let me also emphasize the potential the Corps offers the State of California as a training resource for future employees of the Division of Forestry, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and other units of all levels of government concerned with environmental protection.

As I have said, four centers are now in operation. The centers and a brief description follows:

Tehama Ecology Center. Located 25 miles east of Red Bluff in Tehama County near the community of Paynes Creek, Corpsmen are performing a valuable service of habitat improvement on the nearby Tehama Winter Deer Range for the Department of Fish and Game.

Calaveras Ecology Center. This center, four miles from Angels Camp, houses Corpsmen who are engaging in numerous conservation projects in the Sierras for several agencies, primarily the United States Forest Service, National Park Service, and Department of Parks and Recreation.

Humboldt Ecology Center. Situated in the midst of California's State Parks, Corpsmen at this center are performing vital work in recreational development for our State Park system.

Inyo Ecology Center. This center is 10 miles from the city of Bishop. The Corpsmen here will be involved in trail construction and other conservation projects in the High Sierra for National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Department of Parks and Recreation.

In addition to the Centers, several spike camps are in operation. Corpsmen assigned to these camps, such as those at the Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park Headquarters at Ash Mountain and at El Portal near Yosemite Valley are engaged in special work projects for the National Park Service except when they are needed for fire dispatch. (Photographs of the projects are shown in Attachment E.)

The Corpsmen have performed, and performed well, in a wide variety of projects since July 1, 1971. Representatives of several of the contracting departments have prepared testimony for your information, and a complete list of current or completed projects as of today is attached.

Beyond its mission in ecology work and emergency firefighting, the Corps performs yet another valuable service. A skilled, trained mountain rescue team is now available to local authorities throughout the State to assist in the rescue of persons trapped in mountainous areas and cliffs.

There may be some confusion between the role of the California Ecology Corps and that of the Youth Conservation Corps, established last year, and/or the California Youth Conservation Corps, which was authorized in legislation proposed last year by Assemblyman Mobley.

The programs and the concepts are entirely different. The California Ecology Corps is a permanent year-around program employing men who are

at least 18 years old. The other programs are primarily designed as a summer work program for younger people, both boys and girls. Both of these programs have definite roles in the protection of California's environment; and, as a matter of fact, each should compliment the work of the other.

Summary of Comments

To summarize the present situation with the Ecology Corps, I would like to refer again to the situation the Department found itself in just about a year ago.

We had five fine state facilities about to be vacated and a continuing and pressing need for the trained hand crews that have become a part of the State's resource management and protection system.

A continuing success of the Department of Corrections rehabilitation program made it plain that it was vitally necessary to establish a work force of free people to continue these worthwhile public efforts into the years ahead.

We have succeeded in establishing the Ecology Corps in less than a year and have found that we can recruit and organize into productive crews the young men that have participated up to this point. We can look beyond work projects now contracted for to a substantial expansion in the program as other public agencies turn to these crews more and more to accomplish the purposes for which they receive public funds.

The comparison must be drawn when we look to the future with the old Civilian Conservation Corps we all remember from the depression. That agency built practically the entire network of roads and trails and

campgrounds available to the Forest Service and Park Service today, and opened an area of employment for thousands of young men whose opportunities were extremely limited. Some of those same men are high in state government positions today, as they are in conservation agencies across the country.

With careful management, the Ecology Corps can fulfill those purposes in California again; and at the same time we can continue our partnerships with the Department of Corrections, California Youth Authority, and the counties to the end that existing facilities can be utilized, and the vital work can go on. I will say, again, the California Ecology Corps was developed to make up the difference between the inmates and wards available to us and our manpower needs, and not to supplant them. These proven programs will continue, with the California Ecology Corps a new and exciting element.

I would ask your support and understanding to that end.

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ATTACHMENT A

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
State of California

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. R-27-71

Preservation and protection of the bountiful resources with which this state has been enriched demand ever increasing vigil and continuing effort.

To meet this responsibility, it has been determined there is a need for an organized group of citizens who are willing to join in a common purpose to conserve California's great natural resources.

Therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of California, the following is ordered:

Section 1. California Ecology Corps. The California Ecology Corps is hereby established and shall activate on July 1, 1971. The Corps will be headed by the Director of Conservation.

Section 2. The Director shall have authority to direct and supervise all personnel and activities thereof. The Director shall take all actions as may be necessary to organize the corps so as to carry out the functions and to achieve the purposes set forth in this order.

Section 3. Functions. The Corps shall:

(1) Recruit and employ members to aid in the maintenance of the natural ecology and the preservation of the beauty and natural resources of this state.

(2) Utilize its members in conservation and emergency projects to effect full utilization and protection of the natural resources for the greatest possible number of people.

Shall assist in the protection of natural resources, which will include, but will not be limited to, forests, grasses, vegetation, soil, air, water, wildlife, recreational and scenic resources.

(3) Assist in fire prevention and fire protection.

Section 4. Cooperation. The corps shall cooperate with all sectors of government in carrying out its objectives. All state departments shall, whenever possible or feasible, cooperate with the Corps in the protection of environment or preservation of natural resources.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed hereto this 27th day of April, 1971.



RONALD REAGAN
Governor of California

Attest:

EDMUND G. BROWN, JR.
Secretary of State

CALIFORNIA ECOLOGY CORPS

1971-72 Fiscal Year

<u>CENTER</u>	<u>PROJECTS</u>	<u>SUPPORTING AGENCY</u>
Humboldt	1. Construct 1,000 picnic tables, 750 camp cupboards, 750 camp stoves, 200 fire rings, 750 stove grills, 1,000 assorted signs.-----	Calif. Department of Parks and Recreation
	2. Construct roadside rest -- 1,400 man days.-----	Calif. Department of Parks and Recreation
	3. Construct 75-unit campground.-----	Calif. Department of Parks and Recreation
	4. San Simeon State Beach - expand camping facilities.-----	Office of Architecture and Construction
Tehama	1. Rehabilitation of the Tehama Winter Deer Range, including spring development, big game water guzzlers, Ishi fire road construction and fence building.-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	2. Construct big game water guzzlers with exclosures in Modoc County.---	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	3. Mechanical and hand drill planting of browse species (brush) for interstate deer herd and rehabilitation of burned over area in Modoc County.(Snag falling and planting.)-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	4. Lopping mountain mahogany for re-sprouting deer browse on Hot Creek Ridge, Shasta County.-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	5. Flood control maintenance on Sacramento River - Colusa area.-----	Department of Water Resources
Calaveras	1. Road stabilization -- water drains, culverts, and berms.-----	Stanislaus National Forest
	2. Timber stand improvement -- brushing, clearing.-----	Stanislaus National Forest
	3. Fuel break construction.-----	Stanislaus National Forest
	4. Lake boundary cleanup.-----	Stanislaus National Forest

CENTERPROJECTSSUPPORTING AGENCYCalaveras
(Cont.)

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 5. Cover type conversion -- range improvement, construct pre-attack road signs.----- | Stanislaus National Forest |
| 6. Fire station and fire access road maintenance.----- | Calif. Division of Forestry |
| 7. Water system maintenance.----- | Calif. Division of Forestry |
| 8. Construct nursery potting flats and shipping tops.----- | Calif. Division of Forestry |
| 9. Surplus property acquisition and distribution.----- | Calif. Division of Forestry |
| 10. Mountain rescue training.----- | Calif. Division of Forestry |
| 11. Training and development of visual aids for Fire Academy.----- | Calif. Division of Forestry |
| 12. Mapping for water pollution control and soil study classification.--- | Calif. Division of Forestry |
| 13. Campground maintenance.----- | El Dorado National Forest |
| 14. Beach cleanup - Lake Tahoe.----- | El Dorado National Forest |
| 15. Slip planting for Genetics Lab (Lab located in Placerville).----- | El Dorado National Forest |
| 16. Fertilizing plants for seed and soil experiments.----- | El Dorado National Forest |
| 17. On site planting -- storing and shipping seedlings.----- | El Dorado National Forest |
| 18. Hazard reduction -- tree removal.----- | Sequoia-Kings Canyon N. P. |
| 19. Campground cleanup.----- | Sequoia-Kings Canyon N. P. |
| 20. Hogan Reservoir Recreation area development.----- | Corps of Engineers |
| 21. Tree planting -- Kaweah Reservoir.----- | Corps of Engineers |

<u>CENTER</u>	<u>PROJECTS</u>	<u>SUPPORTING AGENCY</u>
Calaveras (Cont.)	22. Trail maintenance -- fire break construction, campground cleanup, Calaveras Big Trees State Park.-----	Calif. Department of Parks and Recreation
	23. Emergency snow removal.-----	Calif. Division of Highways
Inyo	1. White Mountain Research Station maintenance and operations.-----	U. C. Riverside
	2. Construct three dams on Owens River for fish habitat improvement.-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	3. Pup fish sanctuary development.-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	4. Construct drift fences on Tule Elk winter range.-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	5. Stream improvements.-----	Bureau of Land Management
	6. Water development, campground improvement, trail construction in New York Mountain area.-----	Bureau of Land Management
	7. Campground development.-----	County of Inyo
	8. Water development, campground improvement, trail work -- Death Valley	National Monument
	9. Restoration of Ghost Town -- Bodie.-----	Calif. Department of Parks and Recreation

1972-73

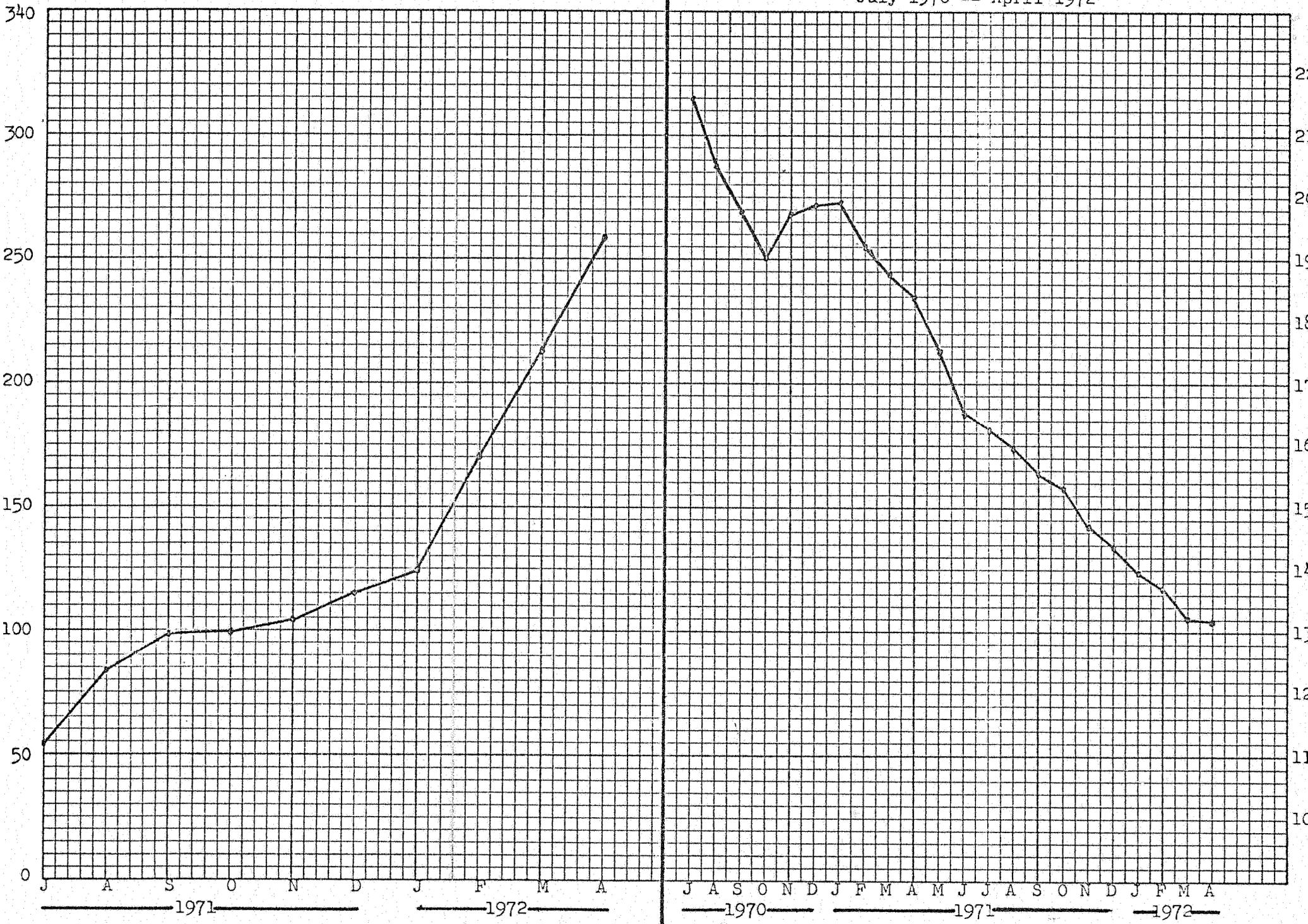
LINE ITEM DETAIL
BUDGET FOR ECOLOGY CENTERS
APRIL 1, 1972

	Humboldt Ecology Center	Tehama Ecology Center	Calaveras Ecology Center	Inyo Ecology Center	Total All Centers
PERSONAL SERVICES					
<u>Salaries & Wages</u>					
Forest Ranger II	(1) 14,114	(1) 14,114	(1) 14,114	(1) 14,113	(4) 56,455
Fire Crew Foreman	(5) 59,258	(5) 59,258	(5) 59,258	(6) 71,110	(21) 248,884
Heavy Fire Equip. Oper.	(1) 10,878	(1) 10,878	(1) 10,878	(1) 10,878	(4) 43,512
Forestry Cook II	(2) 15,088	(2) 15,088	(2) 15,088	(.5) 3,772	(6.5) 49,036
Total Salaries & Wages	(9) 99,338	(9) 99,338	(9) 99,338	(8.5) 99,873	(35.5) 397,887
<u>Staff Benefits</u>					
Retirement (Staff Only)	14,900	14,900	14,900	14,980	59,680
Health & Welfare (Staff Only)	1,728	1,728	1,728	1,632	6,816
Workmen's Comp. (Staff)	1,818	1,818	1,818	1,828	7,282
Workmen's Comp. (Corpsmen)	9,000	9,000	12,000	9,000	39,000
Total Staff Benefits	27,446	27,446	30,446	27,440	112,778
Total, Personal Services	126,784	126,784	129,784	127,313	510,665
OPERATING EXPENSES AND EQUIPMENT					
General Expense	8,000	8,000	8,100	8,000	32,100
Small Tools	891	891	1,518	891	4,191
Housing	3,726	3,726	6,348	6,348	20,148
Oper. Supp. & Exp.	891	891	1,518	1,518	4,818
Communications	1,215	1,215	2,070	2,070	6,570
Travel-in-State	1,377	1,377	2,346	2,346	7,446
Motor Vehicle Oper.	18,063	18,063	30,774	30,774	97,674
Emp. Relocation	480	480	840	480	2,280
Utilities	10,692	10,692	18,216	18,216	57,816
Recreation & Lib. Supp.	972	972	1,656	972	4,572
Repair & Maint. of Fac.	4,293	4,293	7,314	7,314	23,214
Subsistence	42,300	42,300	56,400	42,300	183,300
Corpsmen Clothing	13,950	13,950	18,600	13,950	60,450
Medical & Dental Supp.	1,782	1,782	3,036	1,782	8,382
Search & Rescue	-	-	2,000	2,000	4,000
Corpsman Pay	36,775	36,775	45,970	36,775	156,295
Exp. Acct. Property	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	4,000
Equipment	8,744	8,744	8,744	8,745	34,977
Total O. E. & E.	155,151	155,151	216,450	185,481	712,233
Gross Total Cost	281,935	281,935	346,234	312,794	1,222,898
Reimbursements	-104,000	-104,000	-120,000	-80,500	-408,500
Net Total Cost	177,935	177,935	226,234	232,294	814,398

POPULATION TRENDS

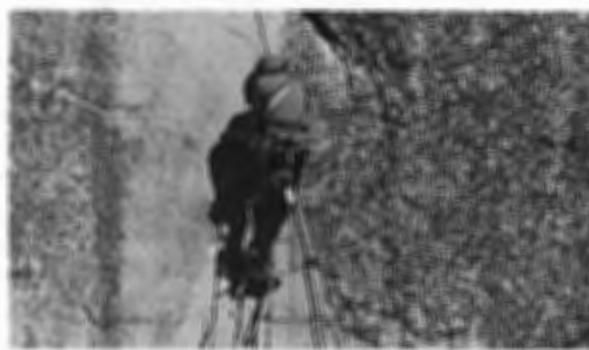
California Ecology Corps
July 1971 -- April 1972

Division of Forestry
Conservation Camps
July 1970 -- April 1972





The California Ecology Corps in fotos



Mountain rescue training

Members of the Ecology Corps' new mountain rescue team have been going through an intensive training program which will eventually prepare them to handle rescue missions in difficult terrain and under all-weather conditions.

Rescue team members have already received professional instruction in both free and aid rock

climbing, and will be given additional training in cold weather survival, snow and ice-field climbing, and cross-country skiing. They will also be trained in first aid and follow-up field medical treatment, as well as litter handling.

Operating out of the Calaveras Ecology Center, the mountain rescue team will be available to public agencies, statewide, for rescue missions in any of California's rugged terrain, but especially in the Sierra-Nevada range.



Timber stand improvement and fuel break construction

Corpsmen working for the Stanislaus National Forest have been engaged primarily in timber stand improvement and fuel break construction.



Timber stand improvement involves thinning overcrowded timber stands to promote better tree growth, clearing brush from areas to be planted as timber plantations, and disposing of road-side slash with motorized chippers.

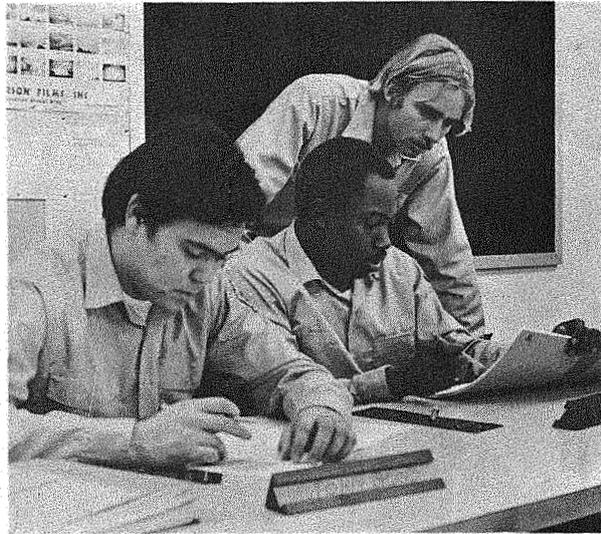


The construction of fuel breaks generally involves clearing a swath of brush from alongside fire access roads. Fuel breaks provide an early defense against wildland fires.

Instructing COD trainees

Four corpsmen were given a temporary assignment this January to instruct Career Opportunity Development trainees attending a five week session at the Division of Forestry Fire Academy in Lone.

Utilizing special program learning aids, the corpsmen helped the C.O.D. trainees review high school level course material in English, mathematics and physical sciences.



Fire road construction

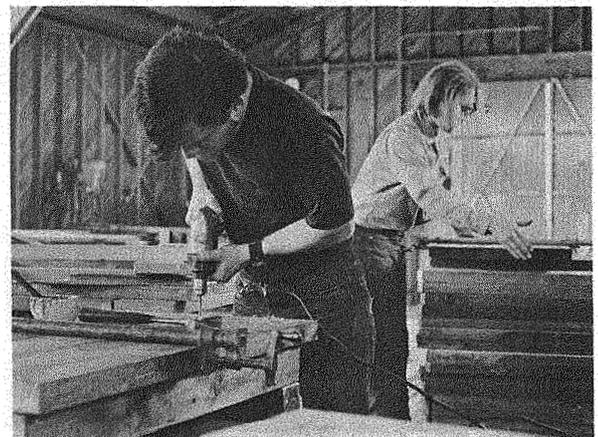
A major project at the Tehama Ecology Center has been constructing the Ishi road, an unpaved all vehicle road that will serve both as a major fire access road and as a major link into the Tehama Winter Deer Range.

Corpsmen on the project are engaged drilling blasting holes, and constructing culverts and header walls around the culverts.

Constructing camp ground equipment

Corpsmen working in the carpentry shop at the Humboldt Ecology Center are presently constructing picnic tables and camp cupboards for the State Department of Parks and Recreation.

The carpentry shop will also produce assorted signs for the Department of Parks and Recreation.





Campsite development

At the Humboldt Ecology Center, there are two crews of corpsmen assigned to campsite development at Benbow Lake State Park.

Funded by the State Department of Parks and Recreation, the project involves clearing the land, leveling campsites, installing pipe lines, building fences, and constructing roads and parking areas.

Corpsmen are also engaged in removing hazardous limbs, snags and dead trunks that might endanger children playing in the park; thinning trees to make the campsites more accessible for campers, and constructing gates and log banks to prevent cars from parking improperly.





News from the Department of Conservation

State of California — Resources Agency 1416 Ninth Street, Sacramento, California 95814

For further information call:

Jerry Newton

Office of Information (916) 445-7228

Date: April 4, 1972

FOR RELEASE: Today

Memo to Editors:

Attached is the text of testimony to be delivered before a meeting of the Assembly Committee on Efficiency and Cost Control at 1:45 p.m. Tuesday, April 4, in Room 6028 of the State Capitol. The topic is the California Ecology Corps. The speaker will be James G. Stearns, Director of the Department of Conservation, the department that administers the California Ecology Corps.

Director Stearns has headed the department since 1967, when he was appointed by Governor Reagan. He is a former Modoc County supervisor.

State of California
Resources Agency
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Conservation Camp Program

In the late 1940's, the need for trained hand crews became evident to the State's professional wildland firefighters as the fourth component. In cooperation with the State Department of Corrections and the California Youth Authority, the conservation camp program became a reality and was formally organized.

This program enabled foresters to utilize minimum security inmates as fire-fighting hand crews and to assist in the construction of our fire defense system, working out of a new camp environment in the State's forest lands. Working with the leadership of forestry personnel, the inmates have proven to be a tremendous asset.

And then came social changes -- and new concepts in penology and dealing with prison inmates. A new probation subsidy program was initiated in 1966, providing for payment to the counties on a per-case basis so that county probation staffs could be beefed up and the less serious felons who formerly ended up in conservation camps could be dealt with at home.

Since the probation subsidy program started in 1966, the prison population -- and, of course the camp population -- began to decrease rather rapidly. In recent years, the prison population had dropped from 28,800 to under 20,000, as of this week.

A study was conducted in 1970-71 to find the alternative manpower sources necessary to replace the dwindling camp population. A partial solution was to contract with counties to use local prisoners to provide the manpower. (San Diego County now supplies manpower for two camps; another camp will soon be manned by county prisoners from Shasta and four other northern California counties.)

As this narration indicates, the Department of Conservation was faced with a problem, and with an obligation to find broader solutions.

California Ecology Corps is ONE of the solutions. But it is more than that: it is a unique experiment in bringing concerned young men into the field of conservation in this State to provide the work experience and job training that can open career doors in many conservation fields.

The Problem Becomes Acute

Although we in the Department of Conservation had long been aware that some day the conservation camp program would no longer provide the total answer to the manpower reserve problem, and although we had been searching for alternatives for a long time, the need became acute just over a year ago when, simply stated, there were not enough inmates to adequately man the camps then in existence. Looking at the program as it then existed, it was obvious, from a purely financial point of view, that as many as five of the conservation camps must be closed by June 30, 1971. That prospect was not satisfactory to Governor Reagan or to the Legislature. The question remained -- what shall we do?

In our earlier examination, we had thought of some type of program where young men who had completed their high schooling and yet who had not decided where their lives would lead them could serve for, hopefully, up to two years. Such a program, we decided, would be patterned after experiences in other programs we have administered using young men; except that we would have these young people in our employ on a year-around basis rather than just during the critical months that we know as the "fire season." On the other hand, we knew that this program would augment the conservation camp program to the extent that the young men would engage in a variety of ecology and conservation-related work projects similar to the federal government's Civilian Conservation Corps of the pre-World War II era, including work on federal land where inmates can only work on an emergency basis.

Thus, with this concept in mind and the problem at hand, the California Ecology Corps became a fact. To implement a new program would obviously require considerable attention to detail, including recruitment. We asked ourselves, "Where can we find young men who are readily accessible, who are unemployed, and who could be put to work quickly within the limits of funds available to us"?

It was at this point that we turned to the Selective Service System and specifically to those with conscientious objector classification.

Conscientious Objectors

Let me remind you that the Executive Order signed by Governor Reagan and subsequently ratified by the Legislature as part of the Budget Act of 1971 did not limit the California Ecology Corps to conscientious objectors.

The language of the Executive Order does not, in fact, set forth any qualifications for persons employed in the program.

Nevertheless, we did ask that the Corps be designed as alternate service for young men who had been classified as conscientious objectors by local draft boards. Conscientious objector officials from the California headquarters of the Selective Service System studied our request and visited the facilities we proposed to use to house the Corpsmen. Dr. Curtis Tarr, Director of the Selective Service System in Washington, D.C., also made a personal inspection trip, as did various representatives of conscientious objector associations.

In the spring of 1971 there were approximately 5,000 conscientious objectors in California, and many of them were looking for alternate service. Alternate service, incidentally, is easily defined as a 24-month period when conscientious objectors must work for a non-profit or public service agency, thus serving a time comparable to the time a draftee into the armed services must serve.

And so to meet the immediate problem, namely the prospect of closing five conservation camps, we had a program and we had an immediate source from which to recruit. In the meantime, we had arrived at satisfactory arrangements offsetting the additional costs of the new program (camp overhead, corpsmen pay and subsistence) through cooperative agreements with other conservation agencies of the State and federal governments. Basically, these agreements allowed the Department of Conservation to charge the other agencies on a man-day basis for the environmental and conservation work to be done by the new California Ecology Corps. The net

cost of the Ecology Corps to the State of California in 1972-73 is budgeted at \$814,398 based on a corpsman population of 340. (See Attachment B for a list of projects; see Attachment C for budget summary.)

The agreements were negotiated; and we decided to convert inmate-manned conservation camps in Humboldt, Tehama, and Calaveras counties into centers to house the new Ecology Corps. These sites were selected because they were the closest to the work projects that were the subject of the various agreements that had been negotiated. (A fourth center was later added in Inyo County.)

Draft Law Expires

We set July 1, 1971, as the date to officially launch the Ecology Corps; but, as it turned out, this was not a good day insofar as the Nation's draft law was concerned. The law expired on that date, and it would be months before Congress would agree on a new law. In the meantime, although many of the conscientious objectors did respond and select the California Ecology Corps as their alternate service, many others concluded that in the absence of a draft law, they were under no selective service obligation whatsoever. Consequently, we did not fulfill our earlier expectation of quickly filling the new Ecology Centers with minimums of 80 men each.

The availability of conscientious objectors remains questionable. Despite this, there is no plan to phase conscientious objectors out of the California Ecology Corps, but rather continue the Corps as qualified alternate service for those who volunteer.

Recruitment Expanded

On December 1, 1971, in keeping with the original concept of the Corps, I authorized the recruitment of any qualified young men for six-month enlistments; and this meant that we would no longer rely solely on our original source for recruitment, the conscientious objectors. We have been successful in the weeks since December 1 in recruiting young men and more than doubling the size of the Corps. The attached graph (Attachment D) illustrates our recruitment success, and I particularly call your attention to the increase since the first of the year. I am confident that each of the four centers will be at minimum capacity within a few weeks, thereby giving us at least 340 men.

As of today, there are slightly over 100 corpsmen who are conscientious objectors. These are men whose average age is 22, who average two years of college. These are the "seniors" in the program; and the majority are, and have been, highly-productive and dedicated workers whose extra effort made the whole idea work.

Many of the newer members of the Corps are in the program as a result of other forms of recruitment. Some are, for example, young men out of high school -- and out of work. There are some Vietnam veterans in the program now, and more are expected.

Benefits and Requirements

Corpsmen are not regular state employees: they are exempt contractees. They do receive some benefits comparable to our regular employees, such as vacations, holidays and workmen's compensation insurance. A comprehensive health benefit program will be implemented August 1, 1972.

Since the beginning of the program, we have provided Corpsmen with food, lodging, clothing and personal care items and have paid them \$40 each month. Beginning July 1, 1972, Corpsmen will receive at least \$100 per month plus the other items I have listed. On February 1, the overtime rate for most emergency work was set at \$2.80 per hour.

Corpsmen are entitled to approximately the same grievance procedure as allowed regular State employees, including the permanent employees of the Department of Conservation. A Corpman with a grievance discusses the problem with his immediate supervisor (generally a crew foreman of the Division of Forestry) and, failing to receive acceptable adjudication at this level can appeal to the Center Director, the Corps Administrator, and ultimately to me.

During the summer fire season, Corpsmen must remain at their duty post for a continuous five-day period. At other times, they are required to perform their normal eight-hour work shift, Monday through Friday. These requirements are not unique to the Ecology Corps, but are the same requirements applied to all fire station personnel.

Offers Individual Potential

The California Ecology Corps has much to offer the young men who participate. Educational institutions, such as the North American School of Conservation and Ecology, for example, are working with us in recruiting Corpsmen. Several of that school's recent graduates are now Corpsmen obtaining actual on-the-job experience in ecology and conservation work. Already, some Corpsmen have gone on to employment for public and private

environmental agencies, since service in the Corps qualifies as job experience for civil service examinations and for other employment.

Community colleges are looking at the California Ecology Corps as a possible supplement to their environmental and forestry curriculum for the same reasons.

Let me also emphasize the potential the Corps offers the State of California as a training resource for future employees of the Division of Forestry, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and other units of all levels of government concerned with environmental protection.

As I have said, four centers are now in operation. The centers and a brief description follows:

Tehama Ecology Center. Located 25 miles east of Red Bluff in Tehama County near the community of Paynes Creek, Corpsmen are performing a valuable service of habitat improvement on the nearby Tehama Winter Deer Range for the Department of Fish and Game.

Calaveras Ecology Center. This center, four miles from Angels Camp, houses Corpsmen who are engaging in numerous conservation projects in the Sierras for several agencies, primarily the United States Forest Service, National Park Service, and Department of Parks and Recreation.

Humboldt Ecology Center. Situated in the midst of California's *Red* State Parks, Corpsmen at this center are performing vital work in recreational development for our State Park system.

Inyo Ecology Center. This center is 10 miles from the city of Bishop. The Corpsmen here will be involved in trail construction and other conservation projects in the High Sierra for National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Department of Parks and Recreation.

In addition to the Centers, several spike camps are in operation. Corpsmen assigned to these camps, such as those at the Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park Headquarters at Ash Mountain and at El Portal near Yosemite Valley are engaged in special work projects for the National Park Service except when they are needed for fire dispatch. (Photographs of the projects are shown in Attachment E.)

The Corpsmen have performed, and performed well, in a wide variety of projects since July 1, 1971. Representatives of several of the contracting departments have prepared testimony for your information, and a complete list of current or completed projects as of today is attached.

Beyond its mission in ecology work and emergency firefighting, the Corps performs yet another valuable service. A skilled, trained mountain rescue team is now available to local authorities throughout the State to assist in the rescue of persons trapped in mountainous areas and cliffs.

There may be some confusion between the role of the California Ecology Corps and that of the Youth Conservation Corps, established last year, and/or the California Youth Conservation Corps, which was authorized in legislation proposed last year by Assemblyman Mobley.

The programs and the concepts are entirely different. The California Ecology Corps is a permanent year-around program employing men who are

at least 18 years old. The other programs are primarily designed as a summer work program for younger people, both boys and girls. Both of these programs have definite roles in the protection of California's environment; and, as a matter of fact, each should compliment the work of the other.

Summary of Comments

To summarize the present situation with the Ecology Corps, I would like to refer again to the situation the Department found itself in just about a year ago.

We had five fine state facilities about to be vacated and a continuing and pressing need for the trained hand crews that have become a part of the State's resource management and protection system.

A continuing success of the Department of Corrections rehabilitation program made it plain that it was vitally necessary to establish a work force of free people to continue these worthwhile public efforts into the years ahead.

We have succeeded in establishing the Ecology Corps in less than a year and have found that we can recruit and organize into productive crews the young men that have participated up to this point. We can look beyond work projects now contracted for to a substantial expansion in the program as other public agencies turn to these crews more and more to accomplish the purposes for which they receive public funds.

The comparison must be drawn when we look to the future with the old Civilian Conservation Corps we all remember from the depression. That agency built practically the entire network of roads and trails and

campgrounds available to the Forest Service and Park Service today, and opened an area of employment for thousands of young men whose opportunities were extremely limited. Some of those same men are high in state government positions today, as they are in conservation agencies across the country.

With careful management, the Ecology Corps can fulfill those purposes in California again; and at the same time we can continue our partnerships with the Department of Corrections, California Youth Authority, and the counties to the end that existing facilities can be utilized, and the vital work can go on. I will say, again, the California Ecology Corps was developed to make up the difference between the inmates and wards available to us and our manpower needs, and not to supplant them. These proven programs will continue, with the California Ecology Corps a new and exciting element.

I would ask your support and understanding to that end.

#

ATTACHMENT A

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
State of California

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. R-27-71

Preservation and protection of the bountiful resources with which this state has been enriched demand ever increasing vigil and continuing effort.

To meet this responsibility, it has been determined there is a need for an organized group of citizens who are willing to join in a common purpose to conserve California's great natural resources.

Therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of California, the following is ordered:

Section 1. California Ecology Corps. The California Ecology Corps is hereby established and shall activate on July 1, 1971. The Corps will be headed by the Director of Conservation.

Section 2. The Director shall have authority to direct and supervise all personnel and activities thereof. The Director shall take all actions as may be necessary to organize the corps so as to carry out the functions and to achieve the purposes set forth in this order.

Section 3. Functions. The Corps shall:

(1) Recruit and employ members to aid in the maintenance of the natural ecology and the preservation of the beauty and natural resources of this state.

(2) Utilize its members in conservation and emergency projects to effect full utilization and protection of the natural resources for the greatest possible number of people.

Shall assist in the protection of natural resources, which will include, but will not be limited to, forests, grasses, vegetation, soil, air, water, wildlife, recreational and scenic resources.

(3) Assist in fire prevention and fire protection.

Section 4. Cooperation. The corps shall cooperate with all sectors of government in carrying out its objectives. All state departments shall, whenever possible or feasible, cooperate with the Corps in the protection of environment or preservation of natural resources.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed hereto this 27th day of April, 1971.



RONALD REAGAN
Governor of California

Attest:

EDMUND G. BROWN, JR.
Secretary of State

ATTACHMENT B

CALIFORNIA ECOLOGY CORPS

1971-72 Fiscal Year

<u>CENTER</u>	<u>PROJECTS</u>	<u>SUPPORTING AGENCY</u>
Humboldt	1. Construct 1,000 picnic tables, 750 camp cupboards, 750 camp stoves, 200 fire rings, 750 stove grills, 1,000 assorted signs.-----	Calif. Department of Parks and Recreation
	2. Construct roadside rest -- 1,400 man days.-----	Calif. Department of Parks and Recreation
	3. Construct 75-unit campground.-----	Calif. Department of Parks and Recreation
	4. San Simeon State Beach - expand camping facilities.-----	Office of Architecture and Construction
Tehama	1. Rehabilitation of the Tehama Winter Deer Range, including spring development, big game water guzzlers, Ishi fire road construction and fence building.-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	2. Construct big game water guzzlers with exclosures in Modoc County.---	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	3. Mechanical and hand drill planting of browse species (brush) for interstate deer herd and rehabilitation of burned over area in Modoc County. (Snag falling and planting.)-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	4. Lopping mountain mahogany for re-sprouting deer browse on Hot Creek Ridge, Shasta County.-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	5. Flood control maintenance on Sacramento River - Colusa area.-----	Department of Water Resources
Calaveras	1. Road stabilization -- water drains, culverts, and berms.-----	Stanislaus National Forest
	2. Timber stand improvement -- brushing, clearing.-----	Stanislaus National Forest
	3. Fuel break construction.-----	Stanislaus National Forest
	4. Lake boundary cleanup.-----	Stanislaus National Forest

<u>CENTER</u>	<u>PROJECTS</u>	<u>SUPPORTING AGENCY</u>
Calaveras (Cont.)	5. Cover type conversion -- range improvement, construct pre-attack road signs.-----	Stanislaus National Forest
	6. Fire station and fire access road maintenance.-----	Calif. Division of Forestry
	7. Water system maintenance.-----	Calif. Division of Forestry
	8. Construct nursery potting flats and shipping tops.-----	Calif. Division of Forestry
	9. Surplus property acquisition and distribution.-----	Calif. Division of Forestry
	10. Mountain rescue training.-----	Calif. Division of Forestry
	11. Training and development of visual aids for Fire Academy.-----	Calif. Division of Forestry
	12. Mapping for water pollution control and soil study classification.---	Calif. Division of Forestry
	13. Campground maintenance.-----	El Dorado National Forest
	14. Beach cleanup - Lake Tahoe.-----	El Dorado National Forest
	15. Slip planting for Genetics Lab (Lab located in Placerville).-----	El Dorado National Forest
	16. Fertilizing plants for seed and soil experiments.-----	El Dorado National Forest
	17. On site planting -- storing and shipping seedlings.-----	El Dorado National Forest
	18. Hazard reduction -- tree removal.-----	Sequoia-Kings Canyon N. P.
	19. Campground cleanup.-----	Sequoia-Kings Canyon N. P.
	20. Hogan Reservoir Recreation area development.-----	Corps of Engineers
	21. Tree planting -- Kaweah Reservoir.-----	Corps of Engineers

<u>CENTER</u>	<u>PROJECTS</u>	<u>SUPPORTING AGENCY</u>
Calaveras (Cont.)	22. Trail maintenance -- fire break construction, campground cleanup, Calaveras Big Trees State Park.-----	Calif. Department of Parks and Recreation
	23. Emergency snow removal.-----	Calif. Division of Highways
Inyo	1. White Mountain Research Station maintenance and operations.-----	U. C. Riverside
	2. Construct three dams on Owens River for fish habitat improvement.-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	3. Pup fish sanctuary development.-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	4. Construct drift fences on Tule Elk winter range.-----	Calif. Department of Fish and Game
	5. Stream improvements.-----	Bureau of Land Management
	6. Water development, campground improvement, trail construction in New York Mountain area.-----	Bureau of Land Management
	7. Campground development.-----	County of Inyo
	8. Water development, campground improvement, trail work -- Death Valley	National Monument
	9. Restoration of Ghost Town -- Bodie.-----	Calif. Department of Parks and Recreation

1972-73

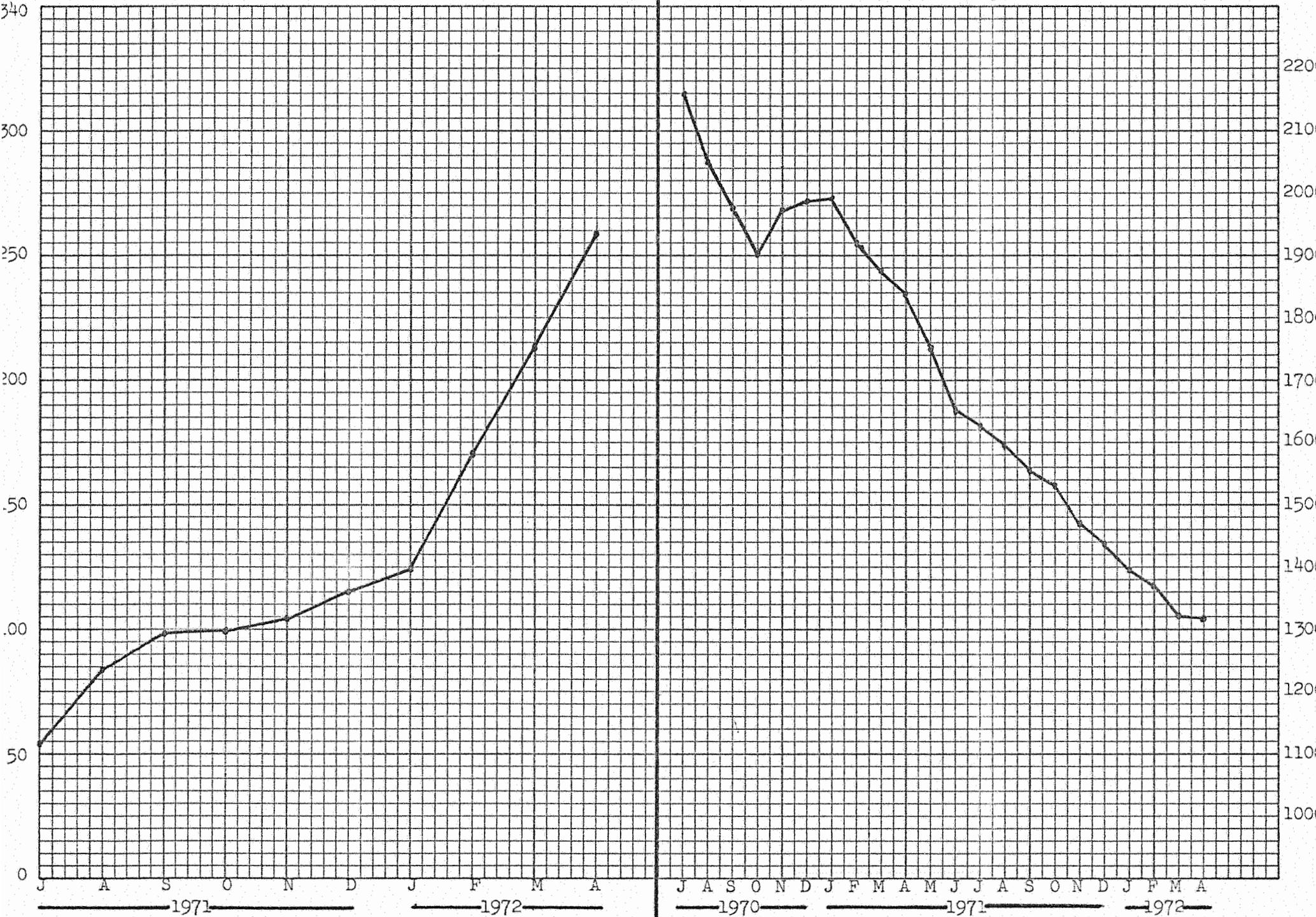
LINE ITEM DETAIL
BUDGET FOR ECOLOGY CENTERS
APRIL 1, 1972

	Humboldt Ecology Center	Tehama Ecology Center	Calaveras Ecology Center	Inyo Ecology Center	Total All Centers
PERSONAL SERVICES					
<u>Salaries & Wages</u>					
Forest Ranger II	(1) 14,114	(1) 14,114	(1) 14,114	(1) 14,113	(4) 56,455
Fire Crew Foreman	(5) 59,258	(5) 59,258	(5) 59,258	(6) 71,110	(21) 248,884
Heavy Fire Equip. Oper.	(1) 10,878	(1) 10,878	(1) 10,878	(1) 10,878	(4) 43,512
Forestry Cook II	(2) 15,088	(2) 15,088	(2) 15,088	(.5) 3,772	(6.5) 49,036
Total Salaries & Wages	(9) 99,338	(9) 99,338	(9) 99,338	(8.5) 99,873	(35.5) 397,887
<u>Staff Benefits</u>					
Retirement (Staff Only)	14,900	14,900	14,900	14,980	59,680
Health & Welfare (Staff Only)	1,728	1,728	1,728	1,632	6,816
Workmen's Comp. (Staff)	1,818	1,818	1,818	1,828	7,282
Workmen's Comp. (Corpsmen)	9,000	9,000	12,000	9,000	39,000
Total Staff Benefits	27,446	27,446	30,446	27,440	112,778
Total, Personal Services	126,784	126,784	129,784	127,313	510,665
<u>OPERATING EXPENSES AND EQUIPMENT</u>					
General Expense	8,000	8,000	8,100	8,000	32,100
Small Tools	891	891	1,518	891	4,191
Housing	3,726	3,726	6,348	6,348	20,148
Oper. Supp. & Exp.	891	891	1,518	1,518	4,818
Communications	1,215	1,215	2,070	2,070	6,570
Travel-in-State	1,377	1,377	2,346	2,346	7,446
Motor Vehicle Oper.	18,063	18,063	30,774	30,774	97,674
Emp. Relocation	480	480	840	480	2,280
Utilities	10,692	10,692	18,216	18,216	57,816
Recreation & Lib. Supp.	972	972	1,656	972	4,572
Repair & Maint. of Fac.	4,293	4,293	7,314	7,314	23,214
Subsistence	42,300	42,300	56,400	42,300	183,300
Corpsmen Clothing	13,950	13,950	18,600	13,950	60,450
Medical & Dental Supp.	1,782	1,782	3,036	1,782	8,382
Search & Rescue	-	-	2,000	2,000	4,000
Corpsman Pay	36,775	36,775	45,970	36,775	156,295
Exp. Acct. Property	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	4,000
Equipment	8,744	8,744	8,744	8,745	34,977
Total O. E. & E.	155,151	155,151	216,450	185,481	712,233
Gross Total Cost	281,935	281,935	346,234	312,794	1,222,898
Reimbursements	-104,000	-104,000	-120,000	-80,500	-408,500
Net Total Cost	177,935	177,935	226,234	232,294	814,398

POPULATION TRENDS

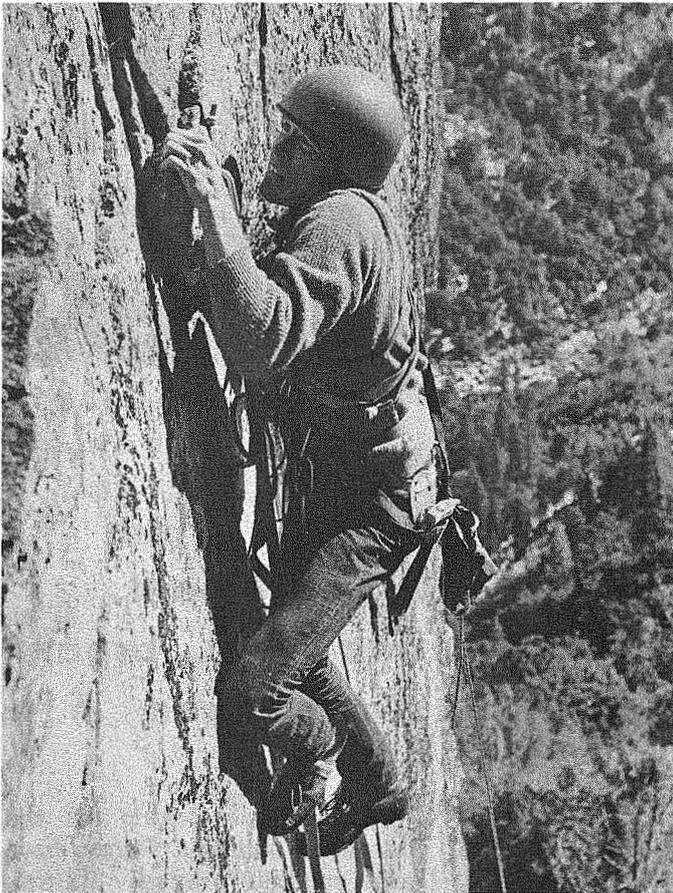
California Ecology Corps
July 1971 -- April 1972

Division of Forestry
Conservation Camps
July 1970 -- April 1972





The California Ecology Corps in fotos



Mountain rescue training

Members of the Ecology Corps' new mountain rescue team have been going through an intensive training program which will eventually prepare them to handle rescue missions in difficult terrain and under all-weather conditions.

Rescue team members have already received professional instruction in both free and aid rock

climbing, and will be given additional training in cold weather survival, snow and ice-field climbing, and cross-country skiing. They will also be trained in first aid and follow-up field medical treatment, as well as litter handling.

Operating out of the Calaveras Ecology Center, the mountain rescue team will be available to public agencies, statewide, for rescue missions in any of California's rugged terrain, but especially in the Sierra-Nevada range.



Timber stand improvement and fuel break construction

Corpsmen working for the Stanislaus National Forest have been engaged primarily in timber stand improvement and fuel break construction.



Timber stand improvement involves thinning overcrowded timber stands to promote better tree growth, clearing brush from areas to be planted as timber plantations, and disposing of road-side slash with motorized chippers.

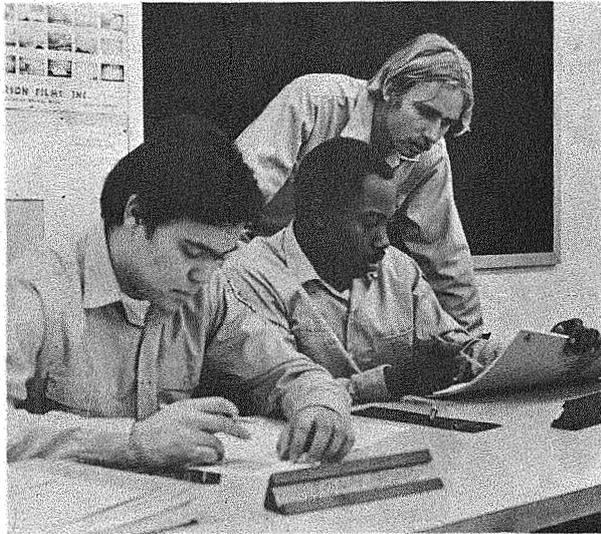


The construction of fuel breaks generally involves clearing a swath of brush from alongside fire access roads. Fuel breaks provide an early defense against wildland fires.

Instructing COD trainees

Four corpsmen were given a temporary assignment this January to instruct Career Opportunity Development trainees attending a five week session at the Division of Forestry Fire Academy in Ione.

Utilizing special program learning aids, the corpsmen helped the C.O.D. trainees review high school level course material in English, mathematics and physical sciences.



Fire road construction

A major project at the Tehama Ecology Center has been constructing the Ishi road, an unpaved all vehicle road that will serve both as a major fire access road and as a major link into the Tehama Winter Deer Range.

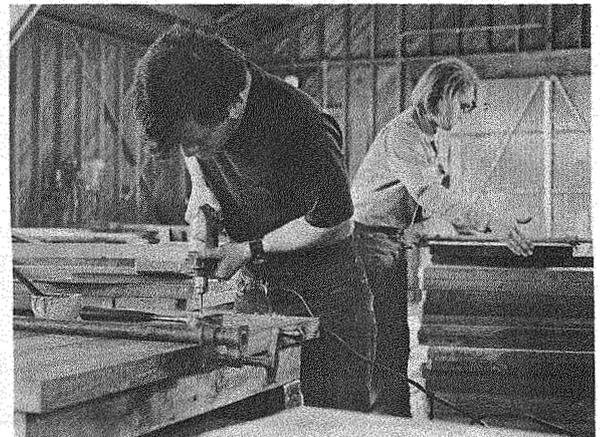
Corpsmen on the project are engaged drilling blasting holes, and constructing culverts and header walls around the culverts.



Constructing camp ground equipment

Corpsmen working in the carpentry shop at the Humboldt Ecology Center are presently constructing picnic tables and camp cupboards for the State Department of Parks and Recreation.

The carpentry shop will also produce assorted signs for the Department of Parks and Recreation.





Campsite development

At the Humboldt Ecology Center, there are two crews of corpsmen assigned to campsite development at Benbow Lake State Park.

Funded by the State Department of Parks and Recreation, the project involves clearing the land, leveling campsites, installing pipe lines, building fences, and constructing roads and parking areas.

Corpsmen are also engaged in removing hazardous limbs, snags and dead trunks that might endanger children playing in the park; thinning trees to make the campsites more accessible for campers, and constructing gates and log banks to prevent cars from parking improperly.



Department of Conservation - BRIEFING FOR GOVERNOR - California Ecology Corps

1. Assembly Committee on Efficiency and Cost Control conducted a hearing Tuesday to determine if the California Ecology Corps is performing as it should and specifically as provided in the Governor's Executive Order of April 27, 1971, which created the Corps.
2. Corpsmen from Inyo Ecology Center, one of four in the program, filed a petition with the Governor on Tuesday complaining about pay and benefits and that projects of the Corps are not truly ecological in nature.

Response to Pay and Benefits Issue:

Corpsmen pay is \$40 monthly, plus subsistence, and will go to \$100 on July 1; a special overtime rate of \$2.80 for emergency work has been paid since February 1. Funds for corpsmen pay come from contracts with other state and federal conservation agencies; the Department of Conservation assesses \$8.50 per man-day and this goes to \$12.50 to cover the pay increase. The man-day charge includes support costs as well as corpsmen pay.

The Department of Conservation has been attempting to improve the pay situation, within funds available. The eventual goal is the minimum wage, paid in dollars, and subsistence.

Medical care in work-related incidents is covered under workmen's compensation and emergency medical and dental care is provided regardless of the circumstances. The Department is developing a comprehensive health benefit package which it will implement August 1. There will be a slight cost to Corpsmen.

Projects:

Corps projects are environmental protection in nature and are consistent with the life and property-protection mission of the Department of Conservation and the concept outlined in the Governor's Executive Order.

Corpsmen are doing an excellent job. They have also been adequately trained to meet the challenge of a critical wildland fire situation, if one should develop in California this summer.

3. The Assembly Committee hearing concluded with a request by Assemblyman Cullen, the committee chairman, that the Department provide cost figures involved for a budget providing the minimum wage for 340 corpsmen; this will be provided by April 15, 1972.

Memorandum

To : Honorable Ronald Reagan
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, California

Date : May 17, 1971

Subject: California
Ecology Corps

Attention: Mrs. Nancy Clark Reynolds

From : Department of Conservation — Office of the Director

Background

California Ecology Corps was established by executive order on April 27 as a source of trained manpower for various conservation projects, particularly including wildland fire fighting. Conservation camp population has been steadily decreasing (now at the rate of about 20 per month) and alternative sources of manpower have been studied. California Ecology Corps will provide a partial solution.

Activities Since Corps Established

1. Selective Service System has been asked to provide approximately 250 persons classified as conscientious objectors. CO's are required to perform 24 months of service "in the national interest;" California Ecology Corps has been designated as an acceptable alternate service. As of May 17, the Selective Service System has signed up about 40 volunteers for the Corps; there should be no difficulty obtaining enough CO's to staff two or three centers.
2. Plum Creek Conservation Camp (25 miles east of Red Bluff) has been designated as Tehama Ecology Center. Corpsmen will perform range improvement work on the nearby Tehama Winter Deer Range. Selection of a second site, Calaveras Ecology Center near Angels Camp (the Vallecito Conservation Camp) is proposed for announcement by you at your May 18 press conference. A third site is pending final arrangements (hopefully with the Department of Parks and Recreation) on funding. This site will probably be the present High Rock Conservation Camp near Garberville in Humboldt County, but should not be announced at this time.
3. Joe E. Griggs, a state forest ranger who has recently served as administrator of the Division of Forestry fire academy at Ione, has been named by me as project administrator for the Corps. He has had considerable experience in the camp program.
4. An emblem for the Corps has been designed and made public, via a presentation to you on May 12.

Public Reaction

The Corps has been generally well received by the public. Your office and mine have received about 125 letters and only about 10 percent have been totally negative. Many have questioned some of the requirements and many have been critical of the \$15 "pay." (The point being that we are trying to "punish" CO's by setting the "pay" so low.)

I have been on two major radio talk shows originating in Los Angeles; and there have been numerous press inquiries about the Corps. Newspaper editorials in papers such as San Diego Union, San Jose Mercury, Santa Rosa Press Democrat, and the Oakland Tribune have been favorable.

Our requirement for "reasonably short" hair -- purely for fire safety purposes -- has caused some questions. We are not advocating "butch" or military cuts; we just want the hair short enough to be contained within the Corpsman's safety helmet to avoid personal danger. No beards are permitted for the same reason.

Another topic of some controversy has been "uniforms." Corpsmen will wear blue jeans, a tan shirt (with the CEC emblem/shoulder patch) and safety accessories, including boots and helmet. An important reason for this "uniform appearance" is for instant recognition, particularly during emergency situations.

Expansion Beyond Conscientious Objectors

We have frequently been asked if persons other than CO's can volunteer. Our answer is that the initial phase will include only CO's, but we will accept other applications for the time when the Corps is expanded to include others; we are not able to say when that will be.

There have been at least a dozen inquiries about volunteering. These have been from California and also from Tennessee, Illinois, Hawaii, Florida, and other states. Two girls have inquired. (We do not contemplate a coeducational ecology center!)

Interest from Other States

Washington, New Mexico, Texas and Oklahoma have requested information about the California Ecology Corps program. They were sent the basic information package distributed to the press on April 27.

James G. Stearns, Director

JGS:mr

State of California

Resources Agency

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

James G. Stearns, Director

CALIFORNIA ECOLOGY CORPS

P R E S S B A C K G R O U N D R E P O R T

Prepared by Information Office
Department of Conservation
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April 27, 1971

CALIFORNIA ECOLOGY CORPS

An all-volunteer California Ecology Corps, with a primary goal of preserving and protecting California's natural resource environment, has been established by Governor Ronald Reagan.

The Corps has been designated as "appropriate civilian work" for young men having conscientious objector status to volunteer under the Selective Service Act.

Under the direction of the Department of Conservation, and supervised by the Division of Forestry, the Corps will engage in a wide array of conservation projects.

Improving Recreational Opportunities: Working in park areas, the Corps will engage in such activities as building trails, improving access to remote areas, improving and developing camp sites, erosion control and clean-up efforts.

Wildlife Assistance: Deer and game habitat will be improved; streams cleared to aid natural propagation of fish life and for flood control; access to remote areas of public game areas will be improved.

Forests: The Corps will participate in reforestation projects, build fuelbreaks, clear streams, work on revegetation projects, seed burned-over areas, and assist in other programs to improve California's forests and watersheds.

Although environment protection will be the principal objective of the Corps, it serves as another valuable asset for the citizens of California: A ready reserve of trained manpower to combat the menace of forest fires, floods and other natural disasters. In addition, the Corps will be available to local authorities for assistance in search and rescue missions.

California already maintains the world's outstanding forest fire-fighting force -- the Division of Forestry -- but the California Ecology Corps will provide instant backup service and will be thoroughly trained in fire control by the Division of Forestry.

In its pilot stages, the Corps will encompass three Ecology Centers accommodating approximately 80 men each.

Conscientious objectors are those young men who have been so designated by the Selective Service System as a result of having declared their conscientious objections to serving in the armed military service.

Those so classified, and having met the physical standards of military service, must complete 24 months of "appropriate civilian work." The work must be with a non-profit organization and must be "in the national interest."

The Selective Service System defines "appropriate civilian work" as service to a government agency or a non-profit corporation whose activities benefit the general public and do not principally benefit the organization or governmental entity itself.

The regulations of the Selective Service System also state the following, in part:

Civilian work which is appropriate to be performed in lieu of induction into the Armed Forces by registrants classified in Class I-O should meet the criteria prescribed in Section 1660.1 of the Selective Service Regulations.

Whenever possible, the work should be performed outside of the community in which the registrant resides. The position should be one that cannot readily be filled from the available competitive labor force, or from civil service or merit registers of the federal, state or local governments, and should constitute a disruption of the registrant's normal way of life somewhat comparable to the disruption of a registrant who is inducted into the Armed Forces.

(Source: Paragraph 1, Local Board Memorandum No. 64, as amended September 12, 1968; issued by National Headquarters, Selective Service System.)

When a registrant (for the draft) has been classified in Class I-O volunteers for civilian work in lieu of induction (into the military service) and has been found qualified for service in the Armed Forces, (he) shall be processed in the same manner as a volunteer for induction except that, in lieu of induction, he shall be ordered by the local (draft) board to perform civilian work.

(Same source as above; Paragraph 2.)

Any registrant who is between the ages of 18 and 26 and who has been classified in Class I-O, or who claims eligibility for classification in Class I-O, may volunteer at his local board for civilian work contributing to the maintenance of the national health, safety or interest in lieu of induction.

(Source: Section 1660.10, Selective Service System Regulations.)

Volunteers will apply to their Selective Service Boards for enlistment in the Corps.

Volunteers will be provided room and board at the Center. Clothing will also be supplied. Safety standards required of regular fire-fighters of the Division of Forestry will apply, including reasonably short hair and an allowance for properly trimmed mustaches.

ECOLOGY CENTERS

The California Ecology Corps will operate out of Ecology Centers. At this time, the exact locations of the Centers have not been selected. This is primarily because a determination must first be

made as to where the bulk of the work programs involving the Corps will be, and then determining which state-owned facilities are closer to that work. In any event, the Centers will be former conservation camps, five of which are being phased out by the State.

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April 28, 1971

NEWS RELEASE
FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28, 1971

Mr. Carlos C. Ogden, State Director of the California Selective Service System announced today the California Selective Service System thoroughly endorsed the volunteer California Ecology Corps established by Governor Ronald Reagan by executive order and announced to the press by the Governor on Tuesday, April 27, 1971.

Mr. Ogden emphasized this volunteer program will provide conscientious objectors with an excellent opportunity to perform a service that will assist the nation-wide ecology effort and provide the young participants with a real sense of accomplishment. The Ecology Corps is not restricted to conscientious objectors but will be open to all qualified volunteers.

He adds that only conscientious objectors who submit a written request for this type of service will be assigned to the California Ecology Corps, which will make it possible to fulfill the 24-month alternate service obligation as required by the Selective Service Law. If a young man who is classified as a conscientious objector wishes to participate in this program, he should direct his inquiry to his local board.

Volunteers for the California Ecology Corps will be assigned and utilized at ecology centers at conservation facilities located in key forest and coastal areas.

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Contact: Jerry E. Newton
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Date: April 29, 1971

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RED BLUFF -- An ecology center to house the first group of California Ecology Corps volunteers will be established 25 miles east of here near the Tehama Winter Deer Range.

The site, first of several to be chosen, was announced today in Sacramento by Director James G. Stearns of the State Department of Conservation and Director G. Ray Arnett of the State Department of Fish and Game.

Ecology corpsmen assigned to the new Tehama Ecology Center will play a vital role in habitat development on the 46,000-acre Tehama Winter Deer Range, Arnett said. "We have long desired to complete a rehabilitation of this valuable wildlife range," Arnett added.

Teams from the center will also be available for summertime wildland fire-fighting and for other emergencies, such as assistance in search and rescue efforts in northern California.

MORE

Add 1 - Ecology Center

First teams of California Ecology Corps -- a unique new program established Tuesday by Governor Reagan -- will report to the center, located near the Tehama County community of Paynes Creek, about July 1, 1971. Volunteers from the ranks of conscientious objectors to military duty will be the first corpsmen.

Facilities at the center have been used since 1960 to house state conservation camp crews. Although camp crews are in the custody of the State Department of Corrections, the site has no fences or walls. "About the only restrictions around here are the 'keep off the grass' signs on the lawn," said Joe E. Griggs, Ecology Corps Project Administrator.

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