

Conservation Corps Visit to North Haven

Conservation Corps have a long history of providing young people a hands-on work experience while completing valuable conservation and community projects throughout the country. President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1933 as one means of combating high unemployment during the Great Depression. Among other projects CCC crews fought forest fires, planted trees, and helped build the infrastructure of many of our National and State Parks. CCC crews in Maine worked on a variety of projects and locations including Baxter State Park, Acadia National Park, and Camden Hills State Park. The CCC became a model for today's Conservation Corps movement with over 100 programs operating today at the local, state and national level, engaging young adults in community service and conservation activities. Conservation Corps programs are near and dear to my heart. As the Director of a Conservation Corps program for 20 years I find these programs to be an invaluable tool in completing priority conservation projects while having a profound impact on both crew leader and crew members.

The Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) was established in 1983 with a mission to “accomplish conservation initiatives that inspire people and enhance communities”. MCC members are dedicated to providing service to the State of Maine, communities and the conservation and preservation of natural resources all while gaining valuable hands-on work skills.

NHCP applied to the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to host a Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) field crew in 2024. NHCP's application outlined a scope of work that included invasive species control, trail maintenance, wildfire fuel reduction and boundary line maintenance. MCC field crews typically consist of 4 crewmembers and 2 crew leaders that work within a community to complete a variety of conservation work projects while gaining a deeper understanding of the environment. NHCP was fortunate enough to be asked to host the MCC crew leader training which will consist of 11 leaders working and training for 9 days. These crew leaders will be working on trail maintenance, invasive species control and fuel reduction while honing their skills and gaining experience prior to leading crews throughout the summer. MCC crew will be here from April 16 – 24. In an effort to engage the community with the MCC crew and celebrate Earth Day NHCP will be hosting a volunteer workday on Saturday, April 20th at 9:00 am at our Mill Stream Preserve.

NHCP will also be hosting two community outreach programs in February. Join us for our ever-popular Valentine's Day Candlelit hike at our Paleg Thomas Preserve on February 14, beginning at 6:00 pm. We will be participating the National Back Yard Bird Count which runs from February 16 – 19 with a birding walk on Saturday, February 17 at 9:00 am meeting at the North Shore Preserve. If you cant join us for the walk we encourage you to observe and document bird species and numbers on your own between the February 16 and 19 and submit your data to us for inclusion in the national data base. Please feel free to contact NHCP with any questions or more details at nhcp@northhavenconservation.org or 867 2113.