The CorpsNetwork

# Corps and Disaster Response and Mitigation




## What is a Corps?

Corps are local organizations that engage young adults (generally ages 16 – 30) and veterans (up to age 35) in service projects that address conservation and community needs. Through a term of service that could last from a few months to a year, Corps participants – or "Corpsmembers" – gain work experience and develop in-demand skills. Corpsmembers are compensated with a stipend or living allowance and often receive an education award or scholarship upon completing their service. Additionally, Corps provide participants educational programming, mentors, and access to career counseling. Corps partner with federal, state, and local resource management and community agencies to engage Corpsmembers in critical projects.

The Corps Network, the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, represents more than 140 Corps across the country that annually engage upwards of 22,000 young people in service and career development every year

***About The Corps Network*** *Established in 1985, The Corps Network is the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps. Our membership of more than 140 Corps operates across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Territories. The Corps Network supports* Corps *through advocacy, guidance, and providing access to funding and project opportunities.*

## Corps and the Disaster Cycle

Corps partner with government entities at the local, state, and federal level to help public land managers and communities to prepare for disasters and respond when an event happens. Corps have experience in all phases of the disaster cycle, completing projects such as:

| Mitigation/Preparedness | Response | Recovery |
|---|---|---|
| • Removing hazardous fire fuels, creating defensible space around structures<br>• Stabilizing hillsides<br>• Placing sandbags<br>• Community education | • Clearing debris<br>• Removing downed trees<br>• Mucking and gutting structures<br>• Tarping roofs<br>• Data collection<br>• Donation and volunteer coordination | • Revegetation<br>• Habitat restoration<br>• Repairing trails and other damaged park infrastructure<br>• Installing erosion control measures<br>• Continued debris removal |






## In Numbers

*From 2021 – 2025, Corps…*

- Planted almost **2.5 million** trees
- Restored over **2.3 million** acres of habitat
- Treated nearly **950,000** acres of hazardous fire fuels
- Placed **372,000** sandbags
- Conducted over **193,300** acres of erosion control
- Assisted more than **32,300** homes with disaster response projects
- Responded to more than **1,900** wildfires

Watch a video about a Corps' response to 2025 Texas flooding

Watch a video about a Corps' response to the 2025 storm in Bemidji, MN

## Corps are Strong Partners

- Corps engage thousands of **service-minded young adults** who are ready to help.
- Corps operate **across all 50 states**. Many have the **ability to travel** to support communities in the aftermath of a disaster.
- Corps also respond to nearby disasters. Corpsmembers are locals, allowing them to respond quickly, build trust, and provide more **community-centered support** because they are serving in the places they call home.
- Many Corpsmembers are **trained or certified** in chainsaw operation and the use of common hand tools and power tools. Some Corps provide training in HAZMAT response. Some have undergone Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. Many have completed FEMA Independent Study Incident Command System (ICS) trainings through the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- Corpsmembers are accustomed to **working in the elements.**
- After the initial disaster response work, Corps can continue to support project partners with **long-term recovery efforts.**

## Examples of Corps Response Efforts

### Palisades and Eaton Fire Recovery (2025 – ongoing)

Following the catastrophic Palisades and Eaton Fires in Los Angeles County, multiple Corps joined California state agencies for an extended watershed protection mission. Corpsmembers have stabilized hillsides, reduced flooding and debris-flow risks, and protected homes and habitats by installing erosion-control systems, clearing storm drains, and removing debris. Corpsmembers completed extensive training.

### Hurricane Helene Response and Recovery (2024 – ongoing)

Trained AmeriCorps teams from Asheville and across the country came to NC to clear downed trees, muck and gut flooded homes, stabilize erosion-prone areas, and manage runoff. Corpsmembers also supported local donation and supply distribution centers and assisted with volunteer management and logistics. As recovery progressed, local Corpsmembers transitioned into rebuilding and resilience work.

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