

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1612

To amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to expand the authorization of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior to provide service-learning opportunities on public lands, help restore the Nation's natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, and scenic resources, train a new generation of public land managers and enthusiasts, and promote the value of public service.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 19, 2009

Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself and Mr. RAHALL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture and Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to expand the authorization of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior to provide service-learning opportunities on public lands, help restore the Nation's natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, and scenic resources, train a new generation of public land managers and enthusiasts, and promote the value of public service.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Public Lands Service
3 Corps Act of 2009”.

4 **SEC. 2. REFERENCE.**

5 A reference in this Act to “the Act” is a reference
6 to the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1721
7 et seq.; title II of Public Law 91–378).

8 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE PUBLIC LANDS CORPS ACT**
9 **OF 1993.**

10 (a) **NAME AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION CHANGES.—**

11 The Act is amended—

12 (1) by striking “Public Lands Corps” each
13 place it appears and inserting “Public Lands Service
14 Corps”;

15 (2) by striking “conservation center” each place
16 it appears and inserting “residential conservation
17 center”; and

18 (3) by striking “appropriate conservation
19 projects” each place it appears and inserting “ap-
20 propriate natural and cultural resources conservation
21 projects”.

22 (b) **FINDINGS.—**Section 202(a) of the Act is amend-
23 ed as follows:

24 (1) In paragraph (1), by striking “the natural
25 and cultural” and inserting “natural and cultural”.

1 (2) In paragraph (2), by inserting “, cultural,
2 historic, archaeological, recreational and scenic”
3 after “Many facilities and natural”.

4 (3) By adding at the end the following:

5 “(4) Young men and women who participate in
6 the rehabilitation and restoration of our nation’s
7 natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, rec-
8 reational, and scenic treasures will gain an increased
9 appreciation and understanding of our public lands
10 and of the value of public service, and are likely to
11 become life-long advocates for those values.

12 “(5) The work of conservation corps can benefit
13 communities adjacent to public lands, through im-
14 provement of civic engagement and participation
15 among corps participants and those they serve, im-
16 proving student engagement, student achievement,
17 graduation rates, and college attendance rates, and
18 the improvement and rehabilitation of public assets,
19 including parks, forests, trails, rivers, estuaries, and
20 coastal and marine areas.”.

21 (c) PURPOSE.—Section 202(b) of the Act is amended
22 as follows:

23 (1) In paragraph (3), by striking “natural re-
24 sources” and inserting “natural, cultural, historic,
25 archaeological, recreational and scenic resources”.

1 (2) In paragraph (4), by striking “and” at the
2 end.

3 (3) By amending paragraph (5) to read as fol-
4 lows:

5 “(5) instill in a new generation of young men
6 and women from across the nation, including those
7 from diverse backgrounds, the desire to seek careers
8 in natural and cultural resource stewardship and
9 public service by allowing them to work directly with
10 conservation professionals in land management
11 agencies; and”.

12 (4) By inserting after paragraph (5), the fol-
13 lowing:

14 “(6) promote public understanding and appre-
15 ciation of the mission and work of the federal land,
16 coastal, and ocean management agencies.”.

17 (d) DEFINITIONS.—Section 203 of the Act is amend-
18 ed as follows:

19 (1) By amending paragraph (1) to read as fol-
20 lows:

21 “(1) APPROPRIATE NATURAL AND CULTURAL
22 RESOURCES CONSERVATION PROJECT.—The term
23 ‘appropriate natural and cultural conservation
24 project’ means any project for the conservation, res-
25 toration, construction, or rehabilitation of natural,

1 cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, or sce-
2 nic resources.”.

3 (2) By striking paragraph (8).

4 (3) By redesignating paragraphs (9), (10),
5 (11), (12), and (13) as paragraphs (8), (9), (10),
6 (11), and (12), respectively.

7 (4) By amending paragraph (8) (as so redesign-
8 nated) to read as follows:

9 “(8) PUBLIC LANDS.—The term ‘public lands’
10 means any lands or waters (or interest therein)
11 owned or administered by the United States, includ-
12 ing those areas of coastal and ocean waters, the
13 Great Lakes and their connecting waters, and sub-
14 merged lands over which the United States exercises
15 jurisdiction, except that such term does not include
16 any Indian lands.”.

17 (5) In paragraph (9) (as so redesignated)—

18 (A) in subparagraph (B), by striking
19 “and” at the end;

20 (B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the
21 period and inserting “; and”; and

22 (C) by adding at the end the following:

23 “(D) makes available for audit for each fis-
24 cal year for which the qualified youth or con-
25 servation corps receives Federal funds under

1 this Act, all information pertaining to the ex-
2 penditure of the funds, any matching funds,
3 and participant demographics.”.

4 (6) In paragraph (11) (as so redesignated)—

5 (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking
6 “and” at the end;

7 (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the
8 period and inserting “; and”; and

9 (C) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(C) with respect to the National Marine
11 Sanctuary System, coral reefs, and other coast-
12 al, estuarine and marine habitats, and other
13 lands and facilities administered by the Na-
14 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,
15 the Secretary of Commerce.”.

16 (7) By adding at the end the following:

17 “(13) RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION CEN-
18 TERS.—The term ‘residential conservation centers’
19 means the facilities authorized under section 205.

20 “(14) CONSULTING INTERN.—The term ‘con-
21 sulting intern’ means a consulting intern selected
22 under section 205.”.

23 (e) PUBLIC LANDS SERVICE CORPS PROGRAM.—Sec-
24 tion 204 of the Act is amended as follows:

25 (1) In subsection (a)—

1 (A) by striking “and the Department of
2 Agriculture” and inserting “, the Department
3 of Agriculture, and the Department of Com-
4 merce”; and

5 (B) by adding at the end the following:
6 “The Secretary of the Interior shall establish a
7 department-level office to coordinate Public
8 Lands Service Corps activities within the De-
9 partment of the Interior. The Secretary of Agri-
10 culture shall establish within the U.S. Forest
11 Service an office to coordinate Public Lands
12 Service Corps activities within that agency. The
13 Secretary of Commerce shall establish within
14 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-
15 istration an office to coordinate Public Lands
16 Service Corps activities within that agency. The
17 Secretary of each department shall designate a
18 Public Lands Service Corps coordinator for
19 each agency within that department that ad-
20 ministers eligible service lands.”.

21 (2) In subsection (b), by inserting “for a period
22 of not more than 2 years” after “who are enrolled”.

23 (3) In subsection (c)—

24 (A) by striking “priority” each place it ap-
25 pears;

1 (B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as
2 paragraph (3); and

3 (C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the
4 following:

5 “(2) RECRUITMENT.—The Secretary shall un-
6 dertake, or contract for, a program to attract eligi-
7 ble youth to the Corps by publicizing Corps opportu-
8 nities through high schools, colleges, employment
9 centers, and other appropriate institutions.”.

10 (4) By redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
11 section (e).

12 (5) By inserting after subsection (c) the fol-
13 lowing:

14 “(d) TRAINING.—The Secretary shall establish a
15 training program based at appropriate residential con-
16 servation centers or at other suitable regional Federal or
17 other appropriate facilities or sites to provide training for
18 Corps members. The Secretary shall—

19 “(1) ensure that the duration and comprehen-
20 siveness of the training program shall be commensu-
21 rate with the projects Corps members are expected
22 to undertake;

23 “(2) develop department-wide standards for the
24 program that include training in—

25 “(A) resource stewardship;

1 “(B) health and safety;

2 “(C) ethics for those in public service;

3 “(D) teamwork and leadership; and

4 “(E) interpersonal communications;

5 “(3) direct the National Park Service, the Bu-
6 reau of Land Management, and the U.S. Fish and
7 Wildlife Service in the case of the Department of the
8 Interior, the U.S. Forest Service in the case of the
9 Department of Agriculture, and the National Oce-
10 anic and Atmospheric Administration in the case of
11 the Department of Commerce, to develop agency-
12 specific training guidelines to ensure that Corps
13 members enrolled to undertake projects for a specific
14 agency are appropriately informed about matters
15 specific to that agency, including—

16 “(A) the history and organization of the
17 agency;

18 “(B) the agency’s core values; and

19 “(C) any agency-specific standards for the
20 management of natural, cultural, historic, ar-
21 chaeological, recreational, and scenic resources;
22 and

23 “(4) take into account training already received
24 by Corps members enrolled from qualified youth or
25 conservation corps.”.

1 (6) In subsection (e) (as so redesignated)—

2 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “The
3 Secretary may utilize the Corps or any qualified
4 youth or conservation corps to carry out appro-
5 priate” and inserting “The Secretary may use
6 the Corps or any qualified youth or conserva-
7 tion corps to carry out, under appropriate su-
8 pervision and training, appropriate natural and
9 cultural resource”; and

10 (B) by striking “on public lands.” insert-
11 ing the following: “on eligible service lands.
12 Such projects may include, but are not limited
13 to, the following:

14 “(A) Protection, restoration, or enhancement of
15 ecosystem components to promote species recovery,
16 improve biological diversity, enhance productivity
17 and carbon sequestration, and enhance adaptability
18 and resilience of public lands and resources in the
19 face of climate change and other natural and human
20 disturbances.

21 “(B) Promoting the health of forest and public
22 lands and coastal and marine areas, including—

23 “(i) protection and restoration of water-
24 sheds and forest, riparian, estuarine, grassland,
25 coral reef, intertidal, or other habitat;

1 “(ii) reduction of wildfire risk and mitiga-
2 tion of damage from insects, disease, and disas-
3 ters;

4 “(iii) erosion control;

5 “(iv) control or removal of invasive, nox-
6 ious, or non-native species; and

7 “(v) restoration of native species.

8 “(C) Collection of biological, archaeological, and
9 other scientific data, including monitoring of cli-
10 matological information, species populations and
11 movement, habitat status, and other factors.

12 “(D) Assisting in historical and cultural re-
13 search, museum curatorial work, oral history
14 projects, documentary photography, and activities
15 that support the creation of public works of art re-
16 lated to public lands.

17 “(E) Construction, repair, rehabilitation and
18 maintenance of roads, trails, campgrounds, and
19 other visitor facilities, and employee housing, his-
20 toric sites and structures, and facilities that further
21 the purposes of the Public Lands Service Corps.”.

22 (C) By redesignating paragraphs (2) and
23 (3) as paragraph (4) and (5), respectively.

24 (D) By inserting after paragraph (1) the
25 following:

1 “(2) VISITOR SERVICES.—The Secretary may—

2 “(A) enter into or amend an existing coop-
3 erative agreement with a cooperating associa-
4 tion, educational institute, friends group, or
5 similar non-profit partner organization for the
6 purpose of providing training and work experi-
7 ence to Corps members in areas including, but
8 not limited to, sales, office work, accounting,
9 and management provided that the work experi-
10 ence directly relates to the protection and man-
11 agement of the public lands; and

12 “(B) allow Corps members to help provide
13 information and orientation services that pro-
14 mote visitor safety and enjoyment of public
15 lands, and assist in the gathering of visitor use
16 data.

17 “(3) INTERPRETATION.—The Secretary may
18 not assign Corps members to provide interpretation
19 or education services for the public. However, under
20 the direct and immediate supervision of an agency
21 employee, Corps members may—

22 “(A) provide orientation and information
23 services to visitors;

24 “(B) assist agency employees in the deliv-
25 ery of interpretive or educational programs

1 where audience size, environmental conditions,
2 safety, or other factors make such assistance
3 desirable;

4 “(C) present programs that relate the per-
5 sonal experience of the Corps member for the
6 purpose of promoting public awareness of the
7 Corps, its role in public land management agen-
8 cies, and its availability to potential partici-
9 pants; and

10 “(D) create non-personal interpretive prod-
11 ucts, such as website content, Junior Ranger
12 program books, printed handouts, and audio-
13 visual programs.”.

14 (E) In paragraph (5) (as so redesignated),
15 by striking “Appropriate conservation projects”
16 and inserting “Appropriate natural and cultural
17 resources conservation projects”.

18 (7) By adding at the end the following:

19 “(h) OTHER PARTICIPANTS.—The Secretary may
20 allow volunteers from other programs administered by the
21 Secretary to participate as volunteers in projects carried
22 out under this section on such terms as the Secretary con-
23 siders appropriate.”.

1 (f) RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION CENTERS AND
2 PROGRAM SUPPORT.—Section 205 of the Act is amended
3 as follows:

4 (1) In subsection (a)—

5 (A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as
6 follows:

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Secretary may establish
8 residential conservation centers for—

9 “(A) such housing, food service, medical
10 care, transportation and other services as the
11 Secretary deems necessary for the Public Lands
12 Service Corps; and

13 “(B) the conduct of appropriate residential
14 conservation projects under this Act.”;

15 (B) in paragraph (4), by striking “with
16 State” and inserting “with another Federal,”

17 (C) by striking paragraph (2); and

18 (D) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and
19 (4) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively.

20 (2) In subsection (b)—

21 (A) by striking “The Secretary” and in-
22 sserting the following:

23 “(1) The Secretary”; and

24 (B) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(2) The Secretary may make arrangements
2 with other Federal agencies, States, local govern-
3 ments, or private organizations to provide temporary
4 housing as needed and available.

5 “(3) In project areas where Corps members can
6 reasonably be expected to reside at their own homes,
7 the Secretary may fund or provide transportation to
8 and from project sites.”.

9 (3) By redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
10 section (g).

11 (4) By inserting after subsection (e) the fol-
12 lowing:

13 “(d) FACILITIES.—The Secretary may, as an appro-
14 priate natural and cultural resources conservation project,
15 direct Corps participants to aid in the construction of resi-
16 dential conservation center facilities, including housing.

17 “(e) GREEN BUILDINGS.—The Secretary may seek
18 the assistance of the Secretary of Energy in identifying
19 and using solar and other green building technologies and
20 modular housing designs that may be adapted for residen-
21 tial conservation center facilities, including—

22 “(1) designs from the Department of Energy’s
23 Solar Decathlon competition; and

24 “(2) logistical support, assistance and training
25 from Solar Decathlon participants.

1 “(f) MENTORS.—The Secretary may recruit from
2 programs, such as agency volunteer programs, and from
3 veterans groups, military retirees, and active duty per-
4 sonnel, such adults as may be suitable and qualified to
5 provide training, mentoring, and crew-leading services to
6 Corps participants.”.

7 (5) In subsection (g) (as so redesignated), by
8 striking “that are appropriate” and all that follows
9 through the period and inserting “that the Secretary
10 determines to be necessary for the residential con-
11 servation center.”.

12 (g) RESOURCE ASSISTANTS AND CONSULTING IN-
13 TERNs.—Section 206 of the Act is amended as follows:

14 (1) In subsection (a), by striking “The Sec-
15 retary is authorized, to provide individual place-
16 ments of resource” and inserting the following: “The
17 Secretary is authorized, to provide individual place-
18 ments of the following:

19 “(1) Resource”.

20 (2) In subsection (a)(1) (as so designated), by
21 striking “law, rule regulations” and inserting “laws,
22 rules, or regulations”.

23 (3) By inserting after subsection (a)(1) (as so
24 designated), the following:

1 “(2) Consulting interns with any Federal land,
2 coastal, or ocean management agency under the ju-
3 risdiction of the Secretary to carry out management
4 analysis activities on behalf of the agency. To be eli-
5 gible for selection as a consulting intern, an indi-
6 vidual must be a current enrollee and have com-
7 pleted at least one full year at a graduate or profes-
8 sional school that has been accredited by an accred-
9 iting body that has been recognized by the Secretary
10 of Education. The Secretary may select consulting
11 interns without regard to the civil service and classi-
12 fication laws, rules, or regulations of the United
13 States.”.

14 (4) In subsection (b)—

15 (A) by striking “Whenever” and inserting
16 “(1) Whenever”; and

17 (B) by adding at the end the following:

18 “(2) Whenever one or more nonprofit organiza-
19 tions can provide, in the judgment of the Secretary,
20 appropriate recruitment and placement services to
21 fulfill the requirements of this section, the Secretary
22 may implement this section through such nonprofit
23 organizations. Participating nonprofit organizations
24 shall contribute to the expenses of providing and
25 supporting the consulting interns through private

1 sources of funding, at a level equal to 10 percent of
2 the total costs of each participant in the consulting
3 internship program who has been recruited and
4 placed through that nonprofit organization. Any
5 such participating nonprofit organization shall be re-
6 quired, by the respective land, coastal, or ocean
7 management agency, to submit an annual report
8 evaluating the scope, size, and quality of the pro-
9 gram, including the value of work contributed by the
10 consulting interns, to the mission of the agency.”.

11 (h) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The Act is amended
12 by redesignating sections 207, 208, 209, 210, and 211 as
13 sections 208, 209, 210, 211, and 212, respectively.

14 (i) GUIDANCE.—The Act is amended by inserting
15 after section 206 the following:

16 **“SEC. 207. GUIDANCE.**

17 “Not later than 18 months after funds are made
18 available for this purpose, the Secretaries shall issue
19 guidelines for the management of the Public Lands Serv-
20 ice Corps programs for use by regional and State direc-
21 tors, and the supervisors of individual parks, forests, dis-
22 tricts, sanctuaries, reserves, and refuges.”.

23 (j) LIVING ALLOWANCES AND TERMS OF SERVICE.—
24 Section 208 of the Act (as so redesignated) is amended—

1 (1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the
2 following: “The Secretary may—

3 “(1) apply a cost-of-living differential to such
4 allowances; and

5 “(2) reimburse Corps members for travel costs
6 at the beginning and end of their term of service if
7 the Secretary deems appropriate.”;

8 (2) in the heading of subsection (c), by adding
9 at the end “PREFERENCE AND FUTURE EMPLOY-
10 MENT”;

11 (3) in subsection (c)—

12 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at
13 the end;

14 (B) by amending paragraph (2) to read as
15 follows:

16 “(2) provide to a former member of the Public
17 Lands Service Corps noncompetitive hiring status
18 for a period of not more than two years after the
19 date on which the member’s service with the Public
20 Lands Service Corps is complete, if the candidate—

21 “(A) has served a minimum of 960 hours
22 on an appropriate natural or cultural resource
23 conservation project that included at least 120
24 hours through the Public Lands Service Corps;
25 and

1 “(B) meets Office of Personnel Manage-
2 ment qualification standards for the position to
3 which the candidate is applying.”; and

4 (C) by adding at the end the following:

5 “(3) provide to an individual who has success-
6 fully fulfilled the consulting internship program non-
7 competitive hiring status for a period of not more
8 than two years after the date on which the indi-
9 vidual has completed a graduate degree from an ac-
10 credited institution; and

11 “(4) provide, or enter into contracts or coopera-
12 tive agreements with qualified employment agencies
13 to provide, alumni services such as job and edu-
14 cation counseling, referrals, verification of service,
15 communications, and other appropriate services to
16 members who have completed their Corps service.”.

17 (k) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section
18 212 of the Act (as so redesignated) is amended—

19 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “to carry out”
20 and all that follows through the period and inserting
21 “such sums as may be necessary to carry out this
22 title”;

23 (2) by striking subsection (b); and

1 (3) by redesignating subsection (c) as sub-
2 section (b).

○