

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Civilian Conservation Corps Act

### Section-by-Section

#### **Section 1. Short title:**

21st Century Civilian Conservation Corps Act

#### **Section 2. Civilian Conservation Corps.**

This section creates a fund for the \$9 billion of Department of Labor appropriations for qualified land and conservation corps, to increase job training and hiring specifically for jobs in the woods. The funding will help restore public lands and address this rise in unemployment due to COVID-19. By scaling up the existing network of Service and Conservation Corps, this program will help employ hundreds of thousands of young Americans and complete millions in necessary project work on public lands and in communities across the country.

#### **Section 3. Supplemental Appropriations for the Forest Service and The Bureau of Land Management.**

- **Hazardous Fuels Forest Service:** The 21st Century Civilian Conservation Corps Act proposes a \$3.5 billion increase in the U.S. Forest Service hazardous fuels account. The legislation requires that the additional funding be prioritized for projects that are shovel ready, the best for fire-risk reduction and have already been environmentally reviewed. Normally, the hazardous fuels program is funded at approximately \$445 million per year and helps restore forest health and reduce wildfire risks. Given increased drought risk and the damaging respiratory effects of COVID-19, there is an urgent need to increase the pace and scale of our restoration efforts, and the Hazardous Fuels program is a linchpin in that effort.
- **Hazardous Fuels BLM:** This legislation provides an additional \$2 billion for the BLM's Hazardous Fuels program, which restores forest health and reduces wildfire risks and is traditionally funded at \$1.2 billion. Our nation's ability to protect its forest and grassland resources is now at risk due to drought, the impacts of climate change, increasingly severe wildfires, and uncharacteristically large outbreaks of insects and disease. There is an urgent need to increase the pace and scale of our restoration efforts and the Hazardous Fuels program is a linchpin in that effort. Healthy, resilient landscapes have greater capacity to adapt to and withstand natural disturbances and large scale threats to sustainability.

#### **Section 4. Reforestation.**

This legislation directs and funds the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of Interior to plant 2.5 billion trees by 2030 and a total of 9.5 billion trees on federal land by 2050. Requires all reforestation to employ ecologically based practices that are informed by climate change science

and that enhance forest health, resilience, and biodiversity. Dedicates funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs for reforestation on Indian trust lands.

Provides cost share grants to states, tribes, local governments, and nonprofits to plant 1.6 billion trees by 2030 and over 6.5 billion by 2050. Dedicates funding to plant 100 million trees by 2030 in urban neighborhoods most in need of tree canopy cover, prioritizing communities of color and low-income communities. Requires prevailing wages be paid for all grant funded reforestation.

### **Section 5. Additional Supplemental Appropriations.**

- **National Fire Capacity (previously State Fire Assistance):** \$100 million for the National Fire Capacity program (traditionally funded at \$56 million), which administers the Firewise program, and helps the Forest Service support and assist State Foresters and local communities in building capacity for the prevention, mitigation, control, and suppression of wildfires on non-Federal lands. The program helps State agencies create more fire-adapted communities by implementing pre-fire prevention and mitigation programs described in State Forest Action Plans.
- **Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program:** The legislation proposes a \$150 million increase in funding for the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP), a proven model to meet current resource needs like no other program. The competitive program, which is traditionally funded at \$40 million per year, funds large-scale, community-driven restoration projects with the goal of reducing the risk of megafire, supporting jobs in rural communities, producing timber, and enhancing wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities across the nation.
- **Regional Conservation Partnership Program:** This legislation provides an additional \$5.5 billion in funding to USDA's successful Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), to increase on-farm, watershed, and regional conservation work that puts people to work creating water resiliency infrastructure. The bill ensures additional funding will be used to expedite the highest-impact water infrastructure projects, while reserving \$200 million of the additional funding for project planning.
- **Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART program:** The legislation provides \$4.5 billion in supplemental funding for the WaterSMART program, which provides water and energy efficiency grants to farmers and ranchers to build and improve infrastructure that helps reduce drought effects and water use, while promoting important resource conservation efforts.
- **USFWS: Partners for Fish and Wildlife:** The legislation provides an additional \$150 million for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Partners for Fish and Wildlife program, traditionally funded at roughly \$57 million per year. This is a critical habitat conservation program, supporting voluntary, community-based conservation on private working lands along the coasts of the United States. The health of the country's fish and wildlife populations depends on private landowners, who manage more than two-thirds of the country's land.

- **USFWS: North American Waterfowl Management/Joint Ventures:** The legislation provides an additional \$150 million for the North American Waterfowl Management and Joint Ventures program, which is traditionally funded at \$15 million. This program funds species-focused joint ventures to help further the scientific understanding needed to manage specific waterfowl species in compliance with international treaties, but with a regional approach to solutions. These projects not only advance waterfowl conservation, but make substantial contributions toward the conservation of all species dependent on wetlands.
- **BIA: Operation of Indian Programs:** The legislation provides an additional \$45 million to the Operation of Indian Programs, to be used for tribal forestry projects. Funding provided will help advance landscape scale restoration and forest health treatments on reservations and Indian trust land, while also helping to recruit and train the necessary workforce to accomplish projects. Indian Tribes can and should be key partners in restoring the health of public lands and reducing fire risk to communities. The funding will be divided as follows:
  - \$20 million for tribal forestry projects;
  - \$20 million for tribal grants, to be used for large landscape-scale forest health treatments; and
  - \$5 million for a forestry workforce development initiation to help retain forestry professionals on tribal land.
- **FEMA: Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities:** The legislation provides \$100 million for FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), which support states, local communities, tribes and territories, as they undertake hazard mitigation projects reducing the risks they face from disasters and natural hazards. The BRIC program guiding principles are supporting communities through capability- and capacity-building; encouraging and enabling innovation; promoting partnerships; enabling large projects; maintaining flexibility; and providing consistency. Investments in BRIC will ultimately reduce the cost of responses to natural disasters, including wildfire. This program was authorized in 2018.
- **National Coastal Resilience Fund:** The legislation provides \$2 billion for the National Coastal Resilience Fund and Resiliency and Habitat grant program for the purposes of creating jobs, restoring wetlands, dunes, reefs, marshes, kelp forests, and mangroves and other living shorelines to reduce flood risks, create habitat, and restart tourism.

## **Section 6. Conservation Stewardship Program.**

This legislation makes climate stewardship practices eligible for new supplemental funding under CSP without changing existing CSP programs and funding. Supports voluntary climate stewardship practices on over 100 million acres of farmland by providing tens of billions of dollars of supplemental funding for USDA working lands conservation programs, with new funding dedicated to stewardship practices such as rotational grazing, improved fertilizer efficiency, and planting tens of millions of new acres of cover crops.