1984

The Maine Conservation Corps in 1984: The First Program Year

Maine Conservation Corps

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A Report to the Legislature

The Maine Conservation Corps in 1984:

The First Program Year

Submitted by:

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Commissioner
Department of Conservation

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Director
Maine Conservation Corps
Department of Conservation

March, 1984
Abstract

Working in cooperation with 14 public land managing and all nine of the state's Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) agencies, the Maine Conservation Corps employed 161 Corpsmembers and Project Team Leaders in 1984. Twenty major conservation-related projects were completed in 12 counties. Project teams were employed an average of eight weeks and expended 38,312 hours of labor. An estimated $1.13 in direct work value was achieved for each $1 of direct project expenditures. Maine Conservation Corps expenditures equaled $98,391 in calendar year 1984; "in-kind" expenditures for the program equaled $150,798 from JTPA agencies and $87,857 from land managing agencies.

Preface

This report summarizes the achievements of the Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) during its first year. A more detailed report describing program planning, organization, and specific projects is available from the Commissioner's Office, Department of Conservation.

Acknowledgements

The work of the Maine Conservation Corps could not have been accomplished without the enthusiastic cooperation of the many public land managing and job training agencies who participated in the program. These agencies not only provided material and staff support to the program, but also invaluable moral support and encouragement to the Director and all MCC staff. This support was critical to the success of the program.

Special Thanks

Shaw's Supermarkets, Inc. graciously donated a buffet luncheon for the Recognition Ceremony held on August, 18, 1984, at the Maine State Armory in Augusta. This ceremony was held to recognize the hard work and accomplishments of Corpsmembers throughout Maine. Senate President Gerard Conley spoke to the gathering of over 100 Corpsmembers, Project Team Leaders, and invited guests. Shaw's generosity made this festive event possible.
The Maine Conservation Corps in 1984

The First Program Year

Background

The Maine Conservation Corps was created by the 111th Maine Legislature and approved by Governor Joseph E. Brennan in 1983. The first MCC projects began in May, 1984. The purpose of the Maine Conservation Corps is to: (1) provide job training and work opportunity for Maine's unemployed on public property; (2) complete work projects of lasting significance for the use and increased enjoyment by the public; and (3) cooperate with other agencies to provide maximum training, job skills, and educational activities for Corpsmembers.

Goals and Objectives

The Maine Conservation Corps' first year was a demonstration year for the program. The major goal was to show the Maine Conservation Corps could successfully combine the resources of land managing and job training agencies to plan, operate, and complete projects to the satisfaction of land managing agencies using unskilled, previously unemployed Corpsmembers.

As this report documents, this major goal was accomplished.

Specific objectives for the 1984 program were to: (a) give Corpsmembers useful, outdoor work on Maine's public lands and to provide related educational activities which offered an understanding of conservation goals, benefits, and careers; (b) develop and operate diverse projects in terms of work, participating agencies, and sites in order to have the greatest possible range of program experience; and (c) develop MCC projects throughout Maine. These major objectives were met.

Summary of Achievements

One hundred and thirty-five Corpsmembers and 19 team leaders were employed in 19 project teams for an average of 8 weeks in June, July, and August, 1984. From November 12, 1984, to January 11, 1985, the first adult team, composed of six Corpsmembers and a Project Team Leader, was employed at Cobscook Bay State Park in Washington County. Corpsmembers accomplished labor intensive work on public lands which otherwise would not have been done. Typical work included: hiking trail construction, timber stand improvement, erosion control, building construction, campsite and picnic site development, and parking lot and roadside improvements. See Table I for the distribution of work hours by type of activity.

Corpsmembers worked 32 hours per week and were paid the minimum hourly wage ($3.35).

An average of seven Corpsmembers and a Project Team Leader were employed on each team. A total of 38,312 hours of labor was expended by project teams.
All Corpsmembers were economically disadvantaged citizens of the state and were unemployed; 33% were from families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits and 57% in families receiving food stamps. Almost all Corpsmembers were 15 to 21 years old, most were 16 to 19 years old.

Projects were jointly funded by the Maine Conservation Corps, public land managing agencies, and job training agencies. Fourteen different land managing agencies, including eight cities and towns, participated in the program and contributed a total of $88,000 in materials, equipment, tools, and staff time.

All nine different job training agencies funded under the Job Training Partnership Act in the state participated. These agencies contributed $105,000 in wages, fringe benefits, and supportive services (such as work boots and gloves) to Corpsmembers and $46,000 for costs associated with recruiting, training, and counseling Corpsmembers and accomplishing administrative functions (reporting, record keeping, payroll, etc.). See Table II for a list of participating agencies and Table III for details on program contributions and expenditures.

The Maine Conservation Corps expended $98,000 from its General Fund account on the program. Most MCC expenditures were for central office staff and Project Team Leader wages and fringe benefits. Expenditures also included staff travel, training, and safety equipment. Table IV provides information on the Maine Conservation Corps' appropriations and expenditures for FY 1984 and FY 1985.

Value of Projects

Following the legislative mandate to accomplish projects of significant and lasting value to the public, the Maine Conservation Corps employed Corpsmembers on projects which produced concrete results of lasting value.

The federal Youth Conservation Corps program and other state conservation corps programs determine the economic value of work performed by comparing the actual costs of projects to what the costs would have been if the most likely alternative means of accomplishing the project had been used. Using this approach, information on actual and alternative costs has been compiled for Maine Conservation Corps projects.

Table V presents the comparison of actual to estimated avoided alternative costs. The actual costs include labor costs (Corpsmember, Project Team Leader, and Technical Supervisor wage and fringe), and all supply, equipment, vehicle, and tool costs. The estimated avoided costs include the costs for labor, supplies, vehicles, and tools. Not included in either set of figures are indirect overhead or administrative costs—such as payroll, recruitment and selection of workers, program monitoring, and general supervision. The estimated avoided costs were developed by the participating land managing agencies by determining the most likely means of accomplishing the projects if the Maine Conservation Corps had not done the work (that is, either by outside contractor or agency staff), and then determining the costs. Most agencies calculated the costs based on use of agency staff for accomplishing the work. The primary difference between the actual cost and the estimated avoided cost is the difference in labor cost and labor productivity. In many projects,
Corpsmember labor productivity was judged to be equal to or better than productivity which could be expected from any general laborer. In those cases, the low labor cost combined with high productivity resulted in substantial savings. In almost all cases, the low labor costs outweighed any lower productivity and thereby resulted in cost savings.

It should be noted that none of these projects would have been accomplished without the Maine Conservation Corps program. The alternative costs are estimated costs. The land managing agencies did not have funds available to do the work.

In addition to the benefits derived from avoided costs, there were other benefits from the work accomplished that are difficult to quantify or total. Examples of those benefits include:

(1) A structure at the State Arboretum now valued at $4,000 was renovated by Corpsmembers. Without the Maine Conservation Corps, the dilapidated garage/storage shed would have been torn down.

(2) The clams seeded at Machiasport will result in a harvest valued at $2,500 by next spring, and information gathered from the project will be used to help the Cooperative Extension Service to promote clam bed management in the towns of Washington County.

(3) The new trail and boardwalk on the peat bog at Quoddy Head State Park is an additional attraction for park visitors and provides the only public access to a raised coastal peat bog in the State;

(4) The seeded road beds at Squa Pan not only will help to stabilize an expensive logging road, but provides acres of new forage for the areas' wildlife;

(5) The timber stand improvement work at town forests will result in more productive woodlots and more valuable timber in the years to come;

(6) The large waterbars on Mt. Agamenticus will prevent further erosion and, thereby, eliminate the need for more expensive remedial work in the future;

(7) The major campsite improvement at Little Squaw Brook and the new and renovated trails at Mt. Blue State Park, Camp Tanglewood, and the Wildlife Visitors Center will enhance the visitor enjoyment of those areas; and

(8) The new trail at the Yankee Woodlot in Skowhegan will assist the woodlot cooperators to demonstrate timber stand improvement techniques to the general public.

Benefits to Corpsmembers

The benefits which accrued to the individual Corpsmembers were as important as the economic benefits. All Corpsmembers had minimal or no previous work experience. The primary objective of the program in terms of Corpsmember development was to provide a well structured and supervised job in which the Corpsmember could learn and demonstrate basic work habits or work maturity skills. Working with counselors from the job training agencies, MCC Project
Team Leaders stressed basic job skills and evaluated Corpsmembers performance against established standards. Evaluations were conducted midway and at the end of employment. Evaluations were based in part on attendance, being prepared for work, observing work rules, showing initiative, and contributing to team efforts.

Supplementing the basic work maturity skills, Corpsmembers learned a variety of practical skills, such as basic forestry practices, erosion control techniques, rough carpentry, rock wall construction, and the use of hand and power tools.

Corpsmembers also received two hours of conservation education activities each week. In these activities, Corpsmembers learned about forest fire control, first aid, map reading, compass use, spruce budworm, fish hatcheries, marine ecology, paper production, and trees and plants.

At the end of employment, Corpsmembers received individual letters of recommendation from their Project Team Leaders. These letters described work maturities attained, practical skills learned, and a list of educational activities each participated in. Corpsmembers also received a Certificate of Achievement signed by Governor Brennan, Commissioner Anderson, and MCC Director Doiron.

Conclusion

The Maine Conservation Corps demonstrated to public land managing agencies the effectiveness and cost efficiency of employing MCC project teams. All work originally planned was completed by each of the individual teams—in most cases, more work was completed than was at first scheduled. To managers of the state's Job Training Partnership Act-funded agencies, the Maine Conservation Corps demonstrated it could provide well supervised and interesting work and learning opportunities for their participants.

For their part, the participating land managing agencies and job training programs clearly showed their capabilities and skills in working successfully with a new program. With this program, there is as much "give" as there is "take" from each of the participating agencies. Beyond doubt, the participating agencies gave substantially to the Maine Conservation Corps effort.

We at the Department of Conservation look forward to building on this partnership in order to continue accomplishing much needed conservation work while providing worthwhile work and training opportunities to Maine's unemployed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of Hours</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Seeding, Planting, and Erosion Control</td>
<td>1,769</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Construction (buildings, ramps, bridges, fences, tower cab, etc.)</td>
<td>5,260</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Portable Construction (wood duck boxes, beaver dam, siphon pipes, picnic tables, etc.)</td>
<td>1,853</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Timber Stand Improvement</td>
<td>3,666</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Roadway and Parking Lot Development and Improvement</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Land Clearing and Trail Work</td>
<td>8,095</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Clam Bed Management and Research</td>
<td>1,429</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Wildlife Habitat Management</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Campsite and Picnic Area Development</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Educational Activities</td>
<td>2,399</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Painting and General Labor</td>
<td>2,781</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Corpsmember Hours</td>
<td>29,272</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Direct Project Management and Supervision by Project Team Leaders</td>
<td>9,040</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Direct Hours of Labor on all Projects</td>
<td>38,312</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table II
List of Participating Agencies

Job Training Agencies

Employment and Training Program
Aroostook County Action Program
P. O. Box 1116
Presque Isle, ME

Training and Development Corporation
117 Broadway
Bangor, ME

Jobs Training Office, Washington County
Employment and Training Division
Department of Labor
14 Free Street
Machias, ME

Coastal Economic Development Corporation
300 High Street
Bath, ME

Jobs Training Office, Somerset County
Employment and Training Division
Department of Labor
140 North Avenue
Skowhegan, ME

Jobs Training Office, Kennebec County
Employment and Training Division
Department of Labor
Capitol Street
Augusta, ME

Mountain Valley Training
Franklin County Community Action Council
Church Street
East Wilton, ME

Jobs Training Office, York County
Employment and Training Division
Department of Labor
5 Washington Street
Biddeford, ME

(The above agencies are directed by the Private Industry Council for the 15 County Service Delivery Area established under the Job Training Partnership Act.)
Training Resource Center
107 Elm Street
Portland, ME

(This agency is directed by the Cumberland County Service Delivering Area Private Industry Council.)

**Land Owning or Managing Agencies**

Bureau of Public Lands
Department of Conservation

Bureau of Parks and Recreation
Department of Conservation

Maine Forest Service
Department of Conservation

Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

College of Forest Resources
University of Maine, Orono

Cooperative Extension Service in
Knox-Lincoln County,
Washington County, and
Somerset County

Pineland Center
Town of Machiasport
Town of Liberty
Town of Skowhegan
Town of Norway
Town of Kennebunkport
City of Biddeford
City of Augusta
Table III

Contributions and Expenditures - Calendar Year 1984

I. Contributions - Dollar Value of Resources/Services from Contributing Agencies

| A. Job Training Partnership Act Programs | $150,798 |
| B. Public Land Managing Agencies       | 87,857   |
| C. Maine Conservation Corps, General Fund Account | 98,391 |

Total                          $337,046

II. Expenditures

A. Job Training Partnership Act Programs

1. Direct Project Expenditures ($105,172) (Corpsmember Wages, Fringe, and Supportive Services)
2. Indirect Project Expenditures (45,627) (Training, Counseling, and Administrative Costs)

B. Public Land Managing Agencies

1. Personal Services (Primarily Technical Supervisors Time) 40,245
2. Supplies/Travel/Materials 33,843
3. Tools/Equipment 13,769

C. Maine Conservation Corps

1. Personal Services 85,637
2. All Other (Travel, Office Supplies, Staff Training, etc.) 12,754

Total $337,046

1 Contributions to the Maine Conservation Corps program were in the form of direct payments to Corpsmembers or were "in-kind" contributions in the form of materials, supplies, tools, or services to the program. The Maine Conservation Corps did not receive direct cash contributions from contributing agencies.

2 Estimates of indirect project expenditures were determined by using average costs per participant provided by the Maine Department of Labor.
### Table IV

**Maine Conservation Corps General Fund Account**

**Appropriations and Expenditures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 1984&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>FY 1985&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Expenditures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Personal Services</td>
<td>$24,616</td>
<td>$22,155</td>
<td>$46,771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. All Other</td>
<td>2,840</td>
<td>1,739</td>
<td>4,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>$27,456</td>
<td>$23,894</td>
<td>$51,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Operations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Personal Services</td>
<td>$3,372</td>
<td>$30,494</td>
<td>$38,866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. All Other</td>
<td>1,883</td>
<td>6,292</td>
<td>8,175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>$10,255</td>
<td>$36,786</td>
<td>$47,041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenditures</td>
<td>$37,711</td>
<td>$60,680</td>
<td>$98,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Appropriation</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$65,100</td>
<td>$125,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Carry Forward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Balance</td>
<td>$22,289&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>$26,709</td>
<td>$26,709</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 Expenditures in FY 1984 began in mid-December, 1984 with employment of the Director.

2 FY 1985 expenditures cover the period July 1 to December 31, 1984.

3 Balance was carried forward to FY 1985.
Table V
Comparison of Actual Direct Costs to Avoided Direct Costs by Project - Summer, 1984

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Actual Costs</th>
<th>Avoided Costs</th>
<th>Ratio: Actual to Avoided Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Squa Pan</td>
<td>17,046</td>
<td>17,300</td>
<td>1:1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenville</td>
<td>12,960</td>
<td>13,943</td>
<td>1:1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenbush</td>
<td>9,578</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>1:1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMO</td>
<td>8,800</td>
<td>6,399</td>
<td>1:0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quoddy Head</td>
<td>26,728</td>
<td>59,394</td>
<td>1:2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machiasport</td>
<td>10,124</td>
<td>10,124</td>
<td>1:1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frye Mountain</td>
<td>8,967</td>
<td>10,201</td>
<td>1:1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty</td>
<td>12,026</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>1:0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Tanglewood</td>
<td>8,276</td>
<td>9,698</td>
<td>1:1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skowhegan</td>
<td>16,610</td>
<td>10,995</td>
<td>1:0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Arboretum</td>
<td>10,134</td>
<td>12,017</td>
<td>1:1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Blue</td>
<td>11,387</td>
<td>14,291</td>
<td>1:1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangeley/Cupsuptic</td>
<td>10,552</td>
<td>12,736</td>
<td>1:1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>8,733</td>
<td>7,280</td>
<td>1:0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>8,182</td>
<td>8,701</td>
<td>1:1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineland Center</td>
<td>13,479</td>
<td>11,812</td>
<td>1:0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York/Kennebunkport</td>
<td>12,550</td>
<td>15,350</td>
<td>1:1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augusta-Hussey School</td>
<td>8,458</td>
<td>9,445</td>
<td>1:1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biddeford</td>
<td>12,751</td>
<td>14,690</td>
<td>1:1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobscook Bay</td>
<td>15,744</td>
<td>17,735</td>
<td>1:1.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>243,085</td>
<td>274,061</td>
<td>1:1.13</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1 See page 2 of Report for explanation of avoided costs