



Northwest Youth Corps
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Northwest Youth Corps to invest \$4 Million received from USDA Forest Service to engage Eugene and Springfield youth in creating a more climate-resilient city through urban forestry.

Eugene, OR – Northwest Youth Corps (NYC) is grateful to receive a \$12 million grant from the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Inflation Reduction Act to engage youth and young adults in urban forestry stewardship and education activities in Boise, ID, Eugene, OR and Tacoma, WA. Working with local partners, NYC will invest \$4 million over five years in urban forestry programs in the Eugene/Springfield area.

Quote: Jeff Parker, Executive Director, Northwest Youth Corps

"This grant from the US Forest Service is a remarkable investment in our community", says Parker. "Our work over the next five years to increase the health and resilience of our urban forest will further enhance the health benefits of living in Eugene and Springfield. The young people who participate in this paid service initiative will graduate with skills and abilities that will help them advance their goals in the classroom and the workforce."

Urban forests provide numerous benefits, including:

- Reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Lowering energy consumption by providing shade and reducing heat island effects.
- Improving water quality and reducing stormwater runoff.
- Enhancing property values and economic vitality.
- Improving public health and well-being.

Quote: Lucy Vinis, Mayor, City of Eugene

"For over 25 years, the City of Eugene and Northwest Youth Corps have worked together on natural resource and recreation projects while investing in workforce development and activities for young people in our community", says Mayor Vinis. "This funding will help us achieve our shared goal of expanding urban forest stewardship opportunities by young people on the ground."

Quote: Sean VanGordon, Mayor, City of Springfield

"Springfield's Urban Forest helps with our environment and creates livability in our neighborhoods", says Mayor VanGordon. "This grant is an exciting opportunity for Northwest Youth Corps and Springfield. It will give our youth a hands on chance to learn about and experience Urban Forestry, and the work accomplished will make a notable improvement in the fabric of our community".

Northwest Youth Corps is excited to work with the following local project partners:

- City of Springfield Public Works Dept
- City of Eugene Parks and Open Space
- Willamalane Parks and Recreation District
- Eugene/Springfield Fire
- Oregon Dept of Forestry
- Eugene School District 4J
- Friends of Trees
- Lane Education Service District

Quote: Eric Adams, Parks Director, Willamalane Park and Recreation District

"Willamalane Park and Recreation District enthusiastically looks forward to capitalizing on funding awarded through the Urban & Community Forest Program. This will allow us to continue our longstanding, supportive relationship with Northwest Youth Corps and together we can sustain and improve Springfield's parks and natural areas."

Each year 2024- 2028, the Eugene/Springfield area will host eight conservation service crews.

- Spring and Autumn: Four Young Adult Conservation Corps Crews for individuals ages 19- 26, who participate in a 12-week, crew-based paid term of service during the spring and autumn. Each crew will be comprised of up to five young adult participants and one crew leader, who will average 35 hours per week on urban forestry projects and spend up to 10 hours per week in education and training. Participants will receive a stipend, industry recognized credentials, develop 21st Century work skills, and receive post program assistance connecting with green careers in their region.
- Summer: Four Youth Conservation Corps crews for individuals ages 15-18 who participate in a five-week day crew format. Summer Youth Conservation crews will average 32 hours per week working on urban forestry projects and eight hours a week engaged in education and training. Each crew will have eight youth members and two adult crew leaders. Participants will receive a stipend, industry recognized credentials, develop 21st Century work skills, and be eligible to receive high school credit.

NYC crews will be helping in the assessment of Eugene/Springfield's current tree canopy and engaging community members to have trees planted and maintained on their properties. Crews will also be leading Saturday service projects encouraging neighborhood involvement. Additional crews will care for trees within green stormwater infrastructure bioswales used for storm water detention and treatment.

This grant is a result of the Biden Administration's Inflation Reduction Act that includes a \$1.5 billion investment in the [USDA's Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program](#) (U&CF) and will support nearly 400 projects to expand access to green spaces and trees in communities across the country.

Northwest Youth Corps has received \$12 million of that funding to create urban forest programs in Boise, Eugene and Tacoma.

Tom Vilsack, US Agriculture Secretary of Agriculture

"Whether it's reducing heat stress or creating jobs in tree planting and maintenance, this grant funding will support local communities and partners who are working on the ground to advance environmental justice by mitigating the impact of climate change on communities who lack tree cover in urban spaces while giving kids more safe spaces to play outdoors."

About the Northwest Youth Corps

Northwest Youth Corps was founded in 1984 to offer teenagers an education-based, work experience modeled after the historic Civilian Conservation Corps. Our core purpose is to provide opportunities for youth and young adults to learn, grow, and experience success, while working to conserve our planet's precious resources. Our conservation service programs focus on education, challenge, community, leadership and empowerment, giving youth critical life skills and confidence. NYC operates in Idaho, Oregon and Washington, with offices in Boise, Eugene and Tacoma. Learn more at www.nwyouthcorps.org.