



Creating Green Jobs for Young Canadians: A Proposal for a Canadian Conservation Corps Pilot Program

Canada is home to extensive natural systems that continue to face threats such as habitat loss and climate change. Canada's woodlands, grasslands and wetlands sequester greenhouse gases, store substantial amounts of carbon and help mitigate the effects of climate change. Our forests help cool the planet. Conservation contributes natural buffers that support resilient communities and mitigate adverse impacts such as flooding and drought. Conservation of our lands and waters is integral to any strategy to combat climate change.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) recognizes that our youth are some of our greatest allies in conservation. We can do more to provide Canada's young people with the skills they need to become global environmental leaders. NCC is proposing to build upon its current successful partnership with the Government of Canada through the creation of a Canadian Conservation Corps Pilot Program.

A Canadian Conservation Corps: Green Jobs for Younger Canadian Workers

The Nature Conservancy of Canada can help the federal government achieve its campaign and mandate letter commitments to create good quality jobs for younger Canadian workers. The Canadian Conservation Corps Pilot Program (Conservation Corps), in partnership with the Government of Canada, would launch a national internship initiative. Phase one, running two years, will establish the program and will coincide with Canada's 150th birthday celebrations.

Skilled Workers Needed to Protect the Environment

Through the Conservation Corps, the Government of Canada would provide funding to train and prepare young Canadians for the jobs of tomorrow. Canada needs skilled workers, such as wildlife biologists, planners, and researchers who will help mitigate the effects of habitat loss and climate change. The



Conservation Corps will create good quality jobs for younger Canadians by training them in the on-the-ground business of protecting, managing and caring for our natural heritage.

The Conservation Corps is an opportunity to bridge the gap between the classroom and the field. Real world experience, skills development in the sciences, and mentorship from leaders on the ground will provide young workers with a knowledge base in environmental management. It will support a growing number of younger Canadians who are challenged to secure meaningful and stable employment. It will help Canadians better

understand why good stewardship of ecosystems is so important to the health and economic well-being of society.

Trained in Canada, Helping the World

Conservation Corps members will be our future environmental stewards—trained in Canada, but also focused on helping the world. Through the Conservation Corps, NCC proposes to train young Canadians in conservation, preparing them to become key players working with government, industry and not for profits to achieve environmental impact. These future conservation leaders will also be able to demonstrate Canadian environmental leadership on the world stage.

Working in Partnership with Indigenous Communities

The Conservation Corps will incorporate partnerships with Indigenous communities. Currently, NCC has active relationships with ten Indigenous communities across Canada and plans to expand that in the coming years. NCC is also commissioning a study to investigate the applicability and potential role of the private land conservation model to support Indigenous land conservation.

How the Canadian Conservation Corps Pilot Program Would Work

NCC recommends an initial investment of \$5 million from Employment, Workforce Development and Labour Canada to create and support a two-year Conservation Corps Pilot Program, beginning in 2016. This will establish paid internships for 200 younger workers aged 18-30, focusing on skills development for undergraduate and graduate-level students. Interns may focus on stewardship work, research and science, or communications and public engagement. Year 1 (2016) would support 50 intern positions and Year 2 (2017) would support 150 intern positions and coincide with Canada's sesquicentennial. Drawing on its experience in managing such programs, the Nature Conservancy of Canada would lead and administer the pilot program. In conjunction with the needs of other non-government organizations in the environment sector, the plan would be to grow the program to support 1,000 interns annually in subsequent years.

The benefits of a Conservation Corps include:

- **Supporting youth employment with higher skills development** in the environmental sector
- **Training skilled workers** in conservation to protect the environment
- **Preparing future environmental leaders** in Canada by giving them practical on-the-ground expertise and experience applicable across Canada and around the world
- Working in **partnership with Indigenous communities to care for their lands.**

The United States, England and Australia have all launched similar successful programs and these models would all be examined as part of the delivery of the Canadian Conservation Corps Pilot Program.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada: A Strong Partner

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is uniquely positioned to partner with the Government of Canada to create green jobs for young Canadians through the Conservation Corps. NCC has demonstrated its ability to professionally deliver as a partner in administering the Natural Areas Conservation Program with Environment and Climate Change Canada. Moreover, we have a strong track record managing successful internship programs. Since 2002, NCC has managed an internship program focused on training the next generation of conservation leaders in Canada. To date, this program has trained more than 500 interns. Many leading conservation professionals working with government, industry and not for profits today, including NCC's own Chief Conservation Officer, have benefited from our internship program.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada looks forward to discussing the Canadian Conservation Corps Pilot Program in more detail with you.



The Nature Conservancy of Canada is the country's leading not-for-profit, private land conservation organization. For nearly 60 years, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and its partners have built a legacy of conservation that has helped to protect more than 1.1 million hectares, (2.8 million acres), and the species the land sustains, from coast to coast to coast.

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