Youth Employment Partnerships

Engaging the Next Generation in Conservation

What is the Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) Youth Corps?

The FWS seeks partners to work collaboratively under the **Public Lands Corps Act (PLC)** within its **FWS Youth Corps**. This membership allows partners to provide **non-competitive federal hiring eligibility** to qualified youth.

Partners must enter into a cooperative agreement to implement PLC projects under the **Youth Engagement, Education, and Employment (15.676) Assistance Listing**. Projects can be funded through federally appropriated funds from FWS and any source of Federal Government funds. **Partners are required to provide a minimum 25% cost match from non-Federal sources** in the form of either cash or in-kind services (labor, facilities, materials, and/or equipment). No cost match is required for PLC projects carried out on Tribal lands or Hawaiian home lands. To request membership in FWS Youth Corps, organizations must obtain a **Request for Membership** from their region's FWS point of contact.

What types of internships & fellowships are typically offered?

The U.S Fish & Wildlife Service and its partners work together to provide extensive and diverse opportunities for youth in areas of interest such as:

- Education & Community Outreach
- Climate Action & Resilience
- Habitat & Wildlife Restoration
- Refuge & Fisheries Management
- Climate Action & Resilience
- Land & Water Conservation
- Historical & Cultural Preservation
- Digital Media & Data Management
- Infrastructure Maintenance

With whom is the Service currently partnering?

Nearly 40 organizations currently work with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to provide youth employment across the county. These organizations range in size, mission, and location. The eight providers by funding and number of participants are indicated below.

- American Conservation Experience: $7,639,976 – 291 participants
- Conservation Legacy: $1,882,940 – 103 participants
- Great Basin Institute: $1,252,838 – 49 participants
- Hispanic Access Foundation: $3,174,268 – 128 participants
- Kupu: $608,683 – 20 participants
- Mobilize Green: $3,943,187 – 93 participants

- Northwoods stewardship center: $499,935 – 55 participants
- Student Conservation Association: $4,991,562 – 172 participants

What is the Service looking for in its youth employment partners?

- Conduct effective targeted recruitment to help meet the agency's goal of building a diverse and inclusive workforce, particularly with those who may be economically, physically, or educationally disadvantaged
- Employ participants ages 16-30 and/or veterans up to age 35
- Provide meaningful work and training-based opportunities with a living allowance
- Ensure that participants work at least 640 hours total, with a minimum of 120 hours served on on or in support of public lands
- May be a State or local government entity, the governing body of any Indian tribe, a nonprofit organization, or an accredited institution of higher education
- Are or will become members of the FWS Youth Corps

First Steps for Financial Assistance with the US Fish and Wildlife Service

PLC projects are developed through a collaborative process between the funding FWS Program, the Region, The FWS Youth Corps Partner, and the local field station, refuge, or hatchery.

Applications for collaboratively developed projects between the FWS and FWS Youth Corps Partners must be submitted through GrantSolutions under **Notice of Funding Opportunity** (NOFO) **F24AS00129**. Please see the Full Announcement in NOFO F24AS000129 for additional eligibility requirements and program specific information. The NOFO posted to Grants.gov is posted for informational purposes only and is not a solicitation for new members to FWS Youth Corps. Applications submitted through grants.gov for either inclusion in FWS Youth Corps or for funded projects **will be returned as ineligible**. All applications for collaboratively developed funded projects must be submitted through GrantSolutions.

FWS is currently implementing a new **Small Grants process** to assist Youth Corps Partners who require additional support in systems registration and application submission. The Small Grants Process is designed to positively impact recipients by streamlining the application process, enhancing accessibility, reducing the documentation burden, and by providing dedicated technical assistance. Eligible organizations include Indian Tribes, targeted partnerships with minority serving institutions, and community-based youth serving institutions. Awards made under this new process cannot exceed $100,000, must be for a period of performance of less than 2 years, and must support habitat and species management, workforce development, outreach, or education. Organizations interested in the Small Grants process should consult with their FWS Project Officer prior to the submission of a funded project.

Regional & National Points of Contact

Headquarters: Grants Management Specialist – Patrick Schulze, patrick_schulze@fws.gov ,(703)358-2567

Headquarters: National Youth Employment and Education Coordinator – Brianna Amingwa, brianna_amingwa@fws.gov

Region 1: Pacific Northwest and Islands Region– Chelsea McKinney, chelsea_mckinney@fws.gov

Region 2: Southwest Region– Phillip Stephenson, phillip_stephenson@fws.gov

Region 3:Midwest Region– Megan Wandag, megan_wandag@fws.gov

Region 4: Southeast Region– Mara Lopez, mara_lopez@fws.gov

Region 5: Northeast Region–Sue Wojtowicz, susan_wojtowicz@fws.gov

Region 6: Mountain-Prairie Region – Sue McDonald, sue_mcdonald@fws.gov

Region 7: Alaska Region (Alaska) – Michelle Lawson, michelle_lawson@fws.gov

Region 8: Pacific Southwest Region (California, Nevada) – Matt Nakaya, matthew_nakaya@fws.gov

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