

CONSENT

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Bill No: SB 1207  
Author: Laird (D)  
Amended: 4/15/26  
Vote: 21

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SENATE NATURAL RES. & WATER COMMITTEE: 7-0, 4/14/26  
AYES: Becker, Seyarto, Allen, Cabaldon, Cortese, Grove, Stern

SENATE LABOR, PUB. EMP. & RET. COMMITTEE: 5-0, 4/22/26  
AYES: Smallwood-Cuevas, Strickland, Cortese, Durazo, Laird

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

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**SUBJECT:** California Conservation Corps

**SOURCE:** Author

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**DIGEST:** This bill requires projects of the California Conservation Corps (CCC) to assist in wildfire prevention and suppression, including forest resiliency; require projects provide opportunities to California Native American tribes; and require the CCC to report on the number of corpsmember who enroll in postsecondary education. This bill authorizes Corpsmembers to receive service credit in the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) and exempt Corpsmembers from certain requirements relating to the wages, hours, and working conditions.

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing law:

- 1) Authorizes CCC programs, including the management of environmentally important lands and water, public works projects, facilitating public use of resources, assistance in emergency operations, assistance in fire prevention and

suppression, energy conservation, and environmental restoration. (Public Resources Code (PRC) § 14300)

- 2) Specifies that CCC projects are to be directed toward providing opportunities for the public for their education or the use of natural resources or environmentally important public lands and waters, while providing young adults with an opportunity for personal development. Projects are undertaken in both urban and rural areas. (PRC § 14304)
- 3) Authorizes the director of CCC (director) to utilize any services, materials, or property of any agency of the state and may make any agreements with any agency of the state, or take any other actions, that are reasonable and necessary. (PRC § 14308)
- 4) Specifies that Corpsmembers shall not receive state retirement benefits. (PRC § 14310)
- 5) Establishes that the CCC may enter into a contract with an individual or collective of community conservation corps to further the objectives of the CCC. (PRC § 14318)
- 6) Authorizes the CCC to develop nonresidential programs in urban communities that have a need for conservation work. (PRC § 14400)

This bill:

- 1) Amends the definition of “public service,” to include serving as a corpsmember with the CCC, for the purposes of CalPERS service credit.
- 2) Specifies that CCC corpsmembers may make contributions to receive credit for service in CalPERS.
- 3) Amends findings related to the CCC that the:
  - a) CCC benefits young adults by providing training opportunities.
  - b) CCC relieves individuals from unemployment.
  - c) CCC helps California meet its goal of helping young adults become productive citizens and environmental stewards.
  - d) Legislature intends that young adults who have completed at least one year of service with the CCC be recognized for their dedication and development and that all state entities look for paths to include former corpsmembers into their organization.
- 4) Specifies that young adults in the CCC should be engaged in projects that relate to or support natural resource and energy conservation, preservation, and engagement.

- a) Specifies that those projects may include projects supporting wildfire and forest resiliency.
  - b) Specifies that those projects may include technical, administrative, culinary, and other services to individuals and entities engaged in work aligning with natural resource and energy conservation.
- 5) Authorizes the director to enroll, rather than employ, special corpsmembers regardless of their age.
  - 6) Authorizes the CCC to direct projects towards providing opportunities to tribal entities and corpsmembers, in addition to the public.
  - 7) Repeals a provision of code authorizing the director to utilize any services, materials, or property of any agency of the state and may make any agreements with any agency of the state, or take any other actions, that are reasonable and necessary.
  - 8) Specifies that corpsmembers may receive certain CalPERS retirement benefits.
  - 9) Authorizes the CCC to enter into a contract with a corps established by a California Native American Tribe to further the objectives of the CCC.
  - 10) Requires the CCC to report, in disaggregated numbers, the number of former corpsmembers enrolled in a California Community College, California State University, University of California, or private postsecondary institution.
  - 11) Makes various nonsubstantive conforming and technical changes.

## **Background**

*California Conservation Corps.* The California Conservation Corps (CCC) is established in the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA). The mission of the CCC, pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) § 14000, includes “increasing awareness of and improving our natural resources, ...instilling basic skills and a healthy work ethic in California youth, building their character, self-esteem, and self-discipline, and establishing within them a strong sense of civic responsibility and understanding of the value of a day’s work for a day’s wages.”

*Repealing redundant section of code.* This bill proposes to repeal section 14308 of the PRC, which is duplicative of section 14306(k) in the PRC. This reduces confusion and provides greater clarity.

*Accurate reflection of scope of projects completed by Corpsmembers.* The CCC has been called in as a cost-effective, high-quality team to perform wildfire and

forest resiliency, as well as added “behind the scenes” support for groups performing projects supporting natural resource and energy conservation. While this work might broadly fall into categories of work the CCC is authorized to perform, best practice is to codify that those activities are authorized by the Legislature.

*Incorporating Tribal entities.* The CCC is currently authorized to engage in projects that provide opportunities to educate the public or for the public to use natural resources and environmentally important public lands and waters. This bill extends that authorization to Tribal entities and corpsmembers.

The CCC is currently authorized to contract with an individual or collective of community conservation corps for a project or program. This bill extends that authorization to conservation corps established by one or more California Native American tribes, such as those recently established through the Nature-Based Solutions Tribal Corps Program.

### **Related/Prior Legislation**

AB 1928 (McCarty, Chapter 253, Statutes of 2018) authorized the CCC to enter into contracts with an individual or collective of certified community conservation corps to further the projects and programs of the CCC.

SB 267 (Deddeh, Chapter 1276, Statutes of 1989) specified that corpsmembers are required to be engaged in projects that which preserve, maintain, and enhance the environment, as specified.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Appropriation: Yes Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

**SUPPORT:** (Verified 5/4/2026)

California Association of Local Conservation Corps  
California Conservation Corps Foundation

**OPPOSITION:** (Verified 5/4/2026)

None received

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:** According to the author, “Senate Bill 1207 honors the role that members of the California Conservation Corps (CCC) play in protecting our state and environment by allowing them to purchase service credit through the California Public Employees’ Retirement System and updating the

CCC's statutes to better represent their mission. This measure is especially timely, as this year marks the CCC's 50th anniversary."

"The desire to begin saving for retirement should not preclude anyone from participating in a program like the CCC. SB 1207 will bring alignment with similar programs, including the Peace Corps and AmeriCorps, whose participants are already able to earn and purchase service credit for their time in the Corps, while also encouraging California Conservation Corpsmembers to both start and continue a career in state service."

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5/5/26 15:55:44

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