



Overview of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps Public Partnership Program

2024 Program Season

Public Partnerships Program Overview

The purpose of the Outdoor Corps' Public Partnership Program is to allow municipalities, land conservancies, trail organizations, and other non-profits the opportunity to partner with the Corps to undertake recreation and conservation projects on non-DCNR public lands on a cost share basis.

Organizations interested in developing a partnership must submit project nominations using the nomination template and must indicate in an email the amount of local funding available to support the cost share.

The Student Conservation Association (SCA) is DCNR's contracted vendor for the Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps Program. Once a project is selected, SCA will work directly with the public partner to develop a site and funding agreement, which facilitates the work and cost share transaction.

Crews can be assigned for as little as one day, or for several weeks. But in general, it's helpful if partners can commit to week intervals. General guidelines for the fee for service option are as follows:

- Partnering entities must be a governmental or non-profit organization.
- Project must have a conservation or recreation focus.
- Projects must take place on public land, which includes land that is open to the public in perpetuity.
- Applications are typically received in the fall of the year for the next calendar year but may be accepted and awarded at any time at the discretion of DCNR and SCA.
- Site and funding agreements must be finalized at least four weeks prior to the project start date.
- Partner must provide a cash cost share, which is paid directly to SCA.
- Partner projects should provide an educational benefit to the crew while on site. Educational opportunities can extend to topics beyond the immediate project scope. At the very least the site contact should explain the purpose behind the work that is being performed.
- Partners must assign an onsite project coordinator that is available to conduct a pre-project meeting and support the crew while they are on site. For most unskilled project scopes, it is not necessary to assign staff/volunteers to work along-side the crew. More complicated projects may require more staff investment. At the very least, the crew needs a contact that is available for support during work hours.
- Outdoor Corps project leaders will contact the site lead in advance of the scheduled project time to discuss scope, schedule, logistics, and expectations. Partners are not charged a fee for project planning meeting(s).
- Partners are responsible for providing all materials, supplies, and specialized tools (note: crews carry a small cache of trail building and maintenance tools with them).
- Crews must work under the PA Outdoor Corps brand and will be employed by SCA.
- Generally, summer crews are assigned to a location for a period not to exceed 50% of their employment period (i.e., three weeks maximum assignment for a six-week summer crew).

Cost Share

- Cost share amount to the partner is a fixed contract amount, calculated by SCA using factors such as the crew member/leader hourly wage rates for the agreed upon period, additional direct and indirect costs, administrative costs, etc.
- Travel time to and from the site, breaks, and educational time will be included in the partner's shared cost.
- SCA will bill the Partner in the weeks following the agreed upon project.
- Partners agree to remit payment as specified in the cost share agreement and in accordance with SCA invoicing.
- An example of weekly and daily wage rates are outlined below.

2024 Public Partnership Example Wage Table— This table shows prevailing wage rates. Additional cost share will be applied based on the individual program needs and specifics:

Crew Type	General Work Schedule*	Weekly Wage Rate**	Daily Wage Rate**
Youth Summer Crew	Mon – Fri, 7:30am-3:30pm	\$3,859.18	\$771.84
Adult Community Crew	Mon – Thurs, 7am-5pm	\$2,608.53	\$652.13

*Hours are 30 minutes less on the last day of the workweek. Times shown are crew starting times and do not include commute time.

**Rates for Federal partners may differ. Contact Emily Borcz for more information, 717-614-7032, eborcz@pa.gov.

Typical Crew Makeup:

- Youth Crew: 2 Leaders (21+), 6 Members (15-18)
- Adult Crew: 1 Leader (21+), 5 Members (18-25)

To Apply to the Public Partnerships Program

1. Contact the DCNR Outdoor Corps Manager or your DCNR liaison:
 - a. Discuss your project ideas and available funding
 - b. Obtain a project nomination form
2. Submit to the Outdoor Corps Manager:
 - a. A completed project nomination form
 - b. Correspondence confirming:
 - i. The amount of funding available to support the cost share
 - ii. Any project specifics that may be helpful in scheduling or coordinating the work.
 - 1) For Example: *Permits will be secured by such a date; work must be done after leaf-out; site contains safety hazards; etc.*
3. The Outdoor Corps Manager will contact partners with any questions or to accept or decline the offer.
4. Once the Outdoor Corps accepts the partnership offer, the partner must work with the SCA to execute the site and funding agreement(s). **The agreement(s) can take several weeks to develop and must be in place at least four weeks before the scheduled project begin date.**
5. Once the work is complete, or the agreed upon time is satisfied, SCA will bill the cost share Partner per the funding agreement.
6. The Partner then remits payment directly to SCA.

Example projects include, but are not limited to:
Improving land

Invasive species management
Tree planting and maintenance

Habitat enhancement
Create and maintain public access
Shade Tree Commission support

Visitor use structure improvements
Light construction
Playground installation or rehabilitation

Improving shorelines and waterways

Riparian buffer planting and maintenance

Improving trails

Tread-work, brushing, widening, blazing
Establishing new trails, Closing social trails
Building turnpike, installing drainage features
Installing steps or staircases

Building, maintaining and rehabilitating structures

Partnership requests and questions please contact:

Emily Borcz, Program Assistant
Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps
717-614-7032
eborcz@pa.gov

Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps Program Overview

The Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps (Corps) offers work experience, job training and educational opportunities to young people who complete conservation and recreation projects on Pennsylvania’s public lands and waterways. The Corps is managed by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), in cooperation with the Student Conservation Association (SCA), a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit conservation and jobs organization that has engaged thousands of young people in hands-on service to the land. The Corps is financially supported by DCNR and the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry’s Reemployment Program, and by private contributions primarily made through the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation.

The Corps tackles projects such as trail development and rehabilitation, tree planting, inventory and maintenance, light construction, shoreline stabilization, and habitat management on Pennsylvania’s public lands. The Corps also undertakes specialty projects, which may include public outreach, research, and assessments.

In addition to immersive work experience, the Corps provides regular educational opportunities in natural resource management, environmental issues, and recreation skills. Corps members develop professional qualities that position them for success in the workforce, such as accountability, problem solving and teamwork.

The Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps consists of two components:

- 1) Six-week summer program for youth between the ages of 15-18; and
- 2) Ten-month program for young adults ages 18-25

There are nine young adult crew locations in 2024:

Altoona	Harrisburg	Meadville	Dubois	Norristown
Pittsburgh	Somerset	Wilkes-Barre	Williamsport	

There are 18 youth crew locations in 2024:

Allentown	Altoona	Bradford (ANF)	Ridgeway (ANF)	Erie	Harrisburg	Hazleton
Chambersburg	Norristown	Pittsburgh	Reading	Renovo	Wellsboro	
Wilkes-Barre	Williamsport	York	Greensburg	Pittsburgh	American Sign Language	

Youth members are provided lunch and transportation to and from the work site. Young adult crew members receive optional health insurance and basic field meal sustenance. The period of employment for the young adult crews is from about March through late November; youth crews run from July through early-August. All crews return home each night. Crews work a 37.5-hour week. The last day of each work week is shortened to accommodate the 37.5-hour work week.