

CCC gained following for conservation work

By the end of 1937, the Civilian Conservation Corp had surmounted growing pains and the "great American experiment" had met its stride. A majority of even the sternest adversaries had lessened their objections to the CCC program. The aggregate number of Louisiana men given employment was 51,820 consisting of 46,597 junior and veteran enrollees and 5,223 officers plus supervisory and administrative personnel. The accomplishments of these men, Roosevelt's Tree Army, were staggering. Over 3,700 bridges were built and 3,125 miles of fences constructed over the state. More than 110,000 square miles of channels were cleared.

165,792,000 new trees were planted and 1,510,147 trees and shrubs relocated. The Boys of the CCC spent 100,461 man-days fighting forest fires and clawed out enough fire breaks in Louisiana alone to reach across our nation and halfway back. With hard work centered in the southern parishes, the CCC mounted an effort to control the mosquito population thus lessening the spread of diseases caused by the insect.



Along with the camp billets and support buildings, the Louisiana enrollees constructed numerous major structures including the log headquarters office building that remains in service today near Woodworth, Louisiana. In the rear of that building stands a fire lookout tower erected by the Corp and believed to be the tallest in the nation.

Over seventy years later and we're still reaping benefits from the efforts of the CCC. The enrollees reforested Louisiana thus replenishing our environment for naturalist and sportsman alike and setting standards for renewable woodland resources. National and state parks carved from wilderness areas are the organic treasures and forest preserves we enjoy today. The financial transfusion from the organization pumped desperate needed revenues in local economies and hometowns across the nation. The Corp took hungry, unemployed youth off the streets and gave them hope and purpose. We can spew out the statistics of what was built and when but we must remember the men also built character. The Boys of the CCC learned to be the Men of the CCC through hard work and dedication. We must also remember the economic impact to the recovery from the Great Depression.

CCC final days and disbandment

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was a public work relief program that operated from 1933 to 1942 in the United States for unemployed, unmarried men from relief families, ages 18-25. A part of the New Deal of U.S. President

Franklin D. Roosevelt, it provided unskilled manual labor jobs related to the conservation and development of natural resources on the Nation's forest and agricultural lands. The CCC was designed to provide employment for young men in relief families who had difficulty finding jobs during the Great Depression while at the same time implementing a general natural resource conservation program in every State and territory. Men enrolled in the CCC planted over 2 billion trees, built over 125,000 miles of roads and trails, constructed over 6 million erosion control structures, and spent 6 million workdays fighting forest fires. (No women were ever enrolled in the CCC.) Their efforts pioneered methodologies for conserving and restoring forest and agricultural lands. An equally remarkable accomplishment was the program's effect on the lives of the CCC young men, changing despondent youths to confident, well-prepared men who would capably defend the United States during World War II.



The CCC program began to compete with military preparedness movements in 1940 and the program ended in 1942. Over the 9 years of its operation, millions of lives of young men were changed for the better. They and their families were helped economically, they received valuable academic and vocational training, performed conservation tasks that began restoration of much of the Nation's natural heritage, acquired social and cultural refinements, and gained confidence and discipline. Their experience in CCC camps prepared them to become leaders in military units as World War II began and stood them in good stead as they moved into private life after the War.

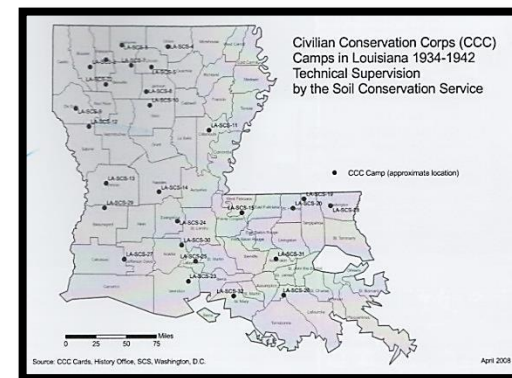
In uniform voices, enrollees looked back on their experience in CCC camps and remarked on how positively their lives were changed. Changed, too, was the environment in which they lived. They pioneered the development and large-scale application of conservation practices that continue to be applied across the State, region, and Nation.



Acknowledgments

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The Southern Forest Heritage Museum requests that readers, who have CCC information or artifacts, please contact the main office at 318-748-8404. All donations will be displayed or cataloged so that future generations can honor the men who served in the Civilian Conservation Corp.

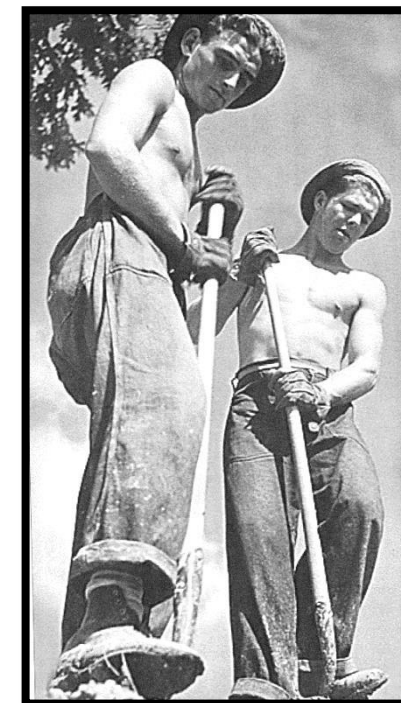


Map of Louisiana showing the locations of camps located in LA from 1934 to 1942. (Natural Resources Conservation Service 2008)

THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS IN LOUISIANA

**on exhibit at
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The CCC made men out of boys