
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO A VETERANS' CONSERVATION CORPS PROGRAM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that many Hawaii
2 residents are veterans of this nation's armed forces and who
3 have important skills that may be used in work projects to help
4 protect and restore Hawaii's rivers, streams, lakes, reservoirs,
5 marine waters, and open lands, and maintain urban and suburban
6 wastewater and storm water management systems. The legislature
7 also finds that such work has demonstrated benefits for many
8 veterans who are coping with post traumatic stress disorder or
9 experience other mental health or substance abuse disorders
10 related to their service in the armed forces. The legislature
11 further finds that these work projects provide an opportunity
12 for veterans to obtain on-the-job training, leading to
13 certification in specific skill sets and to living wage
14 employment in environmental restoration and stewardship.
15 Accordingly, it is the purpose of this Act to create the
16 veterans' conservation corps program to assist veterans in
17 obtaining training, certification, and employment in the field
18 of environmental restoration and management, and to provide



1 state funding assistance for projects that restore Hawaii's
2 waters, forests, and habitat through the participation of
3 veterans.

4 SECTION 2. Chapter 363, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
6 and to read as follows:

7 "§363- Veterans' conservation corps program created;
8 Hawaii natural habitat restoration project; training and
9 employment project; account; gifts; report. (a) There is
10 created the veterans' conservation corps program within the
11 office of veterans' services. The office shall adopt rules in
12 accordance with chapter 91 to establish enrollment procedures
13 for the program. Enrollees may choose to participate in either
14 the Hawaii natural habitat restoration project authorized in
15 subsection (b) or the training and employment project authorized
16 in subsection (c), or both.

17 (b) There shall be a Hawaii natural habitat restoration
18 project within the veterans' conservation corps program. The
19 office shall promote the opportunity to volunteer for this
20 project and shall compile a list of veterans who enroll to
21 participate in this project. The office shall collaborate with
22 the department of land and natural resources through a



1 memorandum of understanding to determine the most effective ways
2 to utilize the Hawaii natural habitat restoration project to
3 assist public and private agencies and local sponsors of habitat
4 restoration projects. The office may enter into agreements with
5 the University of Hawaii, private institutions of higher
6 education, state or county agencies, or other entities to deploy
7 enrollees in this project.

8 (c) There shall be a training and employment project to
9 assist veterans who volunteer to participate in conservation
10 projects, including the maintenance and stewardship of state and
11 federal lands, maintenance and improvement of urban and rural
12 storm water management facilities and other water management
13 facilities, and other environmental maintenance, stewardship,
14 and restoration projects. The office shall consult with the
15 workforce development council, the University of Hawaii, the
16 department of labor and industrial relations, and the department
17 of land and natural resources to incorporate training and
18 education in environmental restoration and management fields
19 into the training and employment project. The office may enter
20 into agreements with the University of Hawaii, private
21 institutions of higher education, state or county agencies, or



1 other entities to provide training and educational courses to
2 enrollees.

3 (d) There is created the veterans' conservation corps
4 program account within the state treasury to be administered by
5 the office of veterans' services. The office may deposit into
6 the account all appropriations, gifts, grants, federal funds, or
7 other moneys from public or private sources to be expended only
8 for the purposes of the veterans' conservation corps program.
9 The office may expend funds in the account to defray the costs
10 of education and training associated with the training and
11 employment project in subsection (c).

12 (e) The office shall submit a report to the legislature by
13 December 1, 2010, and every even-numbered year thereafter, on
14 the status of the veterans' conservation corps program,
15 including the number of enrollees employed on projects, training
16 provided, employment placements achieved, and program funding
17 provided from all sources."

18 SECTION 3. Chapter 193, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
19 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
20 and to read as follows:

21 "§193- **Veterans' conservation corps program;**
22 **agreements; report.** (a) The department of land and natural



1 resources shall collaborate with the office of veterans'
2 services and any other state agency participating in the
3 veterans' conservation corps program pursuant to section 363-
4 to maximize the effect of projects under the program. The
5 department and agencies shall collaborate to identify
6 stewardship and maintenance projects on agency-managed lands
7 that are suitable for work by veterans' conservation corps
8 program enrollees.

9 (b) The department may enter into agreements with the
10 National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service of the
11 United States Department of the Interior, the Forest Service of
12 the United States Department of Agriculture, and other federal
13 agencies managing lands for the employment of veterans'
14 conservation corps program enrollees in maintenance,
15 restoration, and stewardship projects. The department may
16 provide up to twenty per cent of the costs of the participation
17 of veterans' conservation corps program enrollees in a federal
18 project, including the costs of training provided on the
19 project."

20 SECTION 4. **Reports.** (a) By September 30, 2010, the
21 department of land and natural resources, in conjunction with
22 the office of veterans' services and any other state agency



1 participating in the veterans' conservation corps program, shall
2 provide to the department of budget and finance and the
3 legislature a report that identifies any:

4 (1) Projects on state agency-managed lands that are
5 currently planned for veterans' conservation corps
6 program participation;

7 (2) Projects on state agency-managed lands that are
8 suitable for veterans' conservation corps program
9 participation and for which funding is appropriated to
10 the department of land and natural resources or the
11 state agency; and

12 (3) Additional suitable projects on state agency-managed
13 lands for which project implementation is funded or is
14 included in the state agency's stewardship budget, but
15 for which funding has not been appropriated to the
16 department of land and natural resources for training
17 and employment.

18 (b) By September 30, 2010, the office of veterans'
19 services shall report to the governor and the legislature on
20 agreements entered with federal agencies to employ veterans'
21 conservation corps program enrollees on federal land projects,



1 and recommendations for any necessary revisions to the program
2 to increase the number of these agreements.

3 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2009-2010 and the
6 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
7 2010-2011 for the veterans' conservation corps program.

8 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the office of
9 veterans' services for the purposes of this Act.

10 SECTION 6. New statutory material is underscored.

11 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;
12 except that section 5 shall take effect on July 1, 2009.

13

INTRODUCED BY: Cindy Evans
[Signature]

JAN 23 2009

Report Title:

Veterans' Conservation Corps Program

Description:

Creates veterans' conservation corps program within office of veterans' services to train and employ volunteer veterans and help conserve Hawaii's environment. Makes appropriation.

