

Forest Service all employee email from Chief Christiansen

This morning Department of Agriculture Secretary Perdue sent Department of Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta a letter to request the transfer of operations of all USDA Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers to the Department of Labor. The move is part of the Secretary's goal to make USDA the most effective, efficient, and customer-focused department in the entire federal government.

This transfer of operations will mostly impact employees who work in 24 of our Job Corps centers across the country. We will need to permanently transition the Forest Service Job Corps workforce and will seek reduction in force authority to do so. We will provide more information to all Forest Service Jobs Corps CCC employees about this process as we work with the Department of Labor on a transition. We anticipate this transition will be complete by the end of 2019. In December 2018 the Department of Labor previously announced the transfer of Centennial Jobs Corps Center to the state of Idaho as a demonstration pilot. A transition for that center is already underway, with expected completion by July 1, 2019.

I wanted to reach out to all employees, as personally as I can, and explain the reasons behind this decision.

The Department of Labor and the Department of Agriculture are making this change for three main reasons:

1. **Mission alignment** - The purpose of Jobs Corps centers directly aligns with the Department of Labor's mission, which includes a commitment to providing at-risk youth with quality education and skills instruction leading to meaningful in-demand jobs.
2. **Efficient government** - Transitioning operations of Jobs Corps Centers currently operated by the Forest Service to the Department of Labor is good government. This transfer is intended to make the entire Job Corps program more efficient and flexible to local needs when operated by State or private sector entities.
3. **Better service for students** - Unified government responsibility under the Department of Labor will promote greater consistency, accountability and responsiveness to meet student needs. This will better benefit the students in the long run.

The Department of Labor intends to continue the Job Corps program under a different operator at most Forest Service Jobs Corps Civilian Conservation Center locations except nine. DOL has shared the following information about the future status of the 25 centers:

Sixteen CCCs will continue under a new contract operator or partnership: Angell CCC in Yachats, Oregon; Boxelder CCC in Nemo, South Dakota; Centennial CCC in Nampa, Idaho (previously initiated); Collbran CCC in Collbran, Colorado; Columbia Basin CCC in Moses Lake, Washington; Curlew CCC in Curlew, Washington; Great Onyx CCC in Mammoth Cave, Kentucky; Harpers Ferry CCC in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia; Lyndon Johnson CCC in Franklin, North Carolina; Jacobs Creek CCC in Bristol, Tennessee; Mingo CCC in Puxico, Missouri; Pine Ridge CCC in Chadron, Nebraska; Schneck CCC in Pisgah Forest, North Carolina; Trapper Creek CCC in Darby, Montana; Weber Basin CCC in Ogden, Utah; and Wolf Creek CCC in Glide, Oregon.

Nine CCCs will be proposed for deactivation through a Federal Register Notice: Anaconda CCC in Anaconda, Montana; Blackwell CCC in Laona, Wisconsin; Cass CCC in Ozark, Arkansas; Flatwoods CCC in Coeburn, Virginia; Fort Simcoe CCC in White Swan, Washington; Frenchburg CCC in Frenchburg, Kentucky;

Oconaluftee CCC in Cherokee, North Carolina; Pine Knot CCC in Pine Knot, Kentucky; and Timber Lake CCC in Estacada, Oregon.

This change does not reflect on the quality of your work as Forest Service employees. We value the service and contributions Forest Service Job Corps CCC has made to our mission in its decades long history.

As you know, we have five agency core values: **service, conservation, diversity, interdependence and safety**. They don't always align in equal priority. Our value of interdependence reminds us that we often times have to rely on others to accomplish the work we have in the past done ourselves. I hope our value of service will guide us as we work with each other and the CCC students toward a new stewardship model for future Job Corps participants.

I know you will have many questions over the next several weeks. I am committed to work through this with you. We will keep Job Corps CCC employees informed about options and choices for their future as we move into that phase of the transition.

I am proud of the civilian conservation corps legacy we have left for generations of youth to build their individual capacity and independence. The most important thing we can do right now is reach out to our Job Corps CCC colleagues to support them as they move into a very difficult transition. As with all changes, the challenge lies in balancing what is lost in the change with the hope for what is yet to come.