



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

November 20, 2018

S. 1403 **21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act**

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
on October 2, 2018*

S. 1403 would amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993, which governs programs that employ young adults to work on lands managed by the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Forest Service.

Existing Public Lands Corps (PLC) programs vary by agency and funding source. Although historically some agencies have received specific appropriations to carry out the program, the National Park Service often has derived funding from recreation fees that the agency can use without further appropriation action. Additionally, most PLC projects are carried out through partnerships with existing qualified youth or conservation corps in each state. The costs of those projects are split between the federal government and the participating service corps.

S. 1403 would, among other things:

- Expand the program to include the Department of Commerce (specifically, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA),
- Assist Indian tribes and related youth groups with the operation of the Indian Youth Service Corps,
- Offer an educational credit as a form of compensation for participation in the PLC,
- Require participating agencies to designate program coordinators,
- Require data collection and a subsequent report to the Congress about the operations and effectiveness of the PLC programs,
- Open the program to veterans under the age of 35, and
- Authorize agencies to use appropriated funds to provide transportation subsidies to program participants.

Using information from DOI, the Forest Service and NOAA, CBO estimates that S. 1403 would not significantly increase spending subject to appropriation.

Enacting S. 1403 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply

CBO estimates that enacting S. 1403 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2029.

S. 1403 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

On May 4, 2018, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 2987, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on January 17, 2018. The two pieces of legislation are similar, however H.R. 2987 would expand and authorize more activities under the Public Lands Corps Act than S. 1403. CBO estimates that neither bill would have a significant effect on the federal budget.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Jacob Fabian. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.