



CA Veterans Train To Fight Fires Hoping To Find Jobs



CPR photo/Amy Quinton

The California Conservation Corps and the US Forest Service are training more than 50 young veterans to fight fires. The goal is to help them transition from military to civilian life and give them a shot at a job with the Forest Service.

[Permalink](#)

Listen now:



(Auburn, CA)

Wednesday, May 09, 2012

By Amy Quinton

A team of about a dozen California veterans are carrying hoses up a mountainside in 80-degree heat.

They're learning the difficulties of fighting fires in rugged terrain.

But for veterans returning home from war, the real difficulty is finding a job.

"Being in a combat arms unit we really have no real outside job in the civilian world"

That's 21 year old Iraq War veteran Jacob Delaney.

"If was not doing this program I really do not know what I'd be doing, really."

Since 1976, the California Conservation Corps has trained young people in environmental and emergency response.

Now this program is training veterans to be part of the civilian workforce.

But the Corps' Erin Healy says not everyone will get a job...the Forest Service has only 200 spots open nationwide.

"The pressure is on at this point, they're all going to compete against each other at this point but I think the forest service has a commitment to bringing in as many eligible folks into the apprentice program as possible."

This is just the opportunity veteran Jason Howerton was looking for, after serving as an army combat medic.

"I've put in well over 40 or 50 applications just in the past few months, it's really hard to transition your military experience into something marketable for the civilian sector."

He says even if he doesn't make it with the Forest Service he'll have the training he needs to find another firefighting job somewhere else.

Related Resources



Veterans Train Using Hose on mountainside outside the Sierra foothills town of Auburn



Veterans Learn How to Use Fire Shelters While Training in Sierra Foothills Town of Auburn