



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FORTUNA CCC CREW HEADS TO VIRGIN ISLANDS TO HELP WITH HURRICANE MARIA CLEANUP

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- *12 Corpsmembers deployed to St. Thomas, USVI for hurricane cleanup*
 - *Heavy workload remains in tearing out wallboard and flooring from homes*
 - *Additional Corpsmembers assisting cleanup in Puerto Rico and Texas*
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SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Corpsmembers from the California Conservation Corps' Fortuna Center leave Saturday for St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands to spend the next month helping clean up the destruction Hurricane Maria left behind weeks ago.

The 12-member crew from Fortuna will spend the next month on the island removing water and wind damaged wallboard and flooring from homes; what's called muck and gut work.

"From fires to floods, these Corpsmembers are seeing it all in just a few weeks, and the work ahead of them is especially difficult," said Bruce Saito, director of the California Conservation Corps.

The Corpsmembers – all of them 18 to 25 years old – have specialized muck and gut training to cut out wallboard and flooring without damaging a home's framing and electrical. They must wear respirators and HazMat Coverall suits to avoid exposure to mold and contaminants.

Because of the tropical heat and humidity inside of buildings where there is no air conditioning, they must work 30 minute on/off shifts to avoid dehydration.

(more)

Many of the Corpsmembers bound for hurricane cleanup just returned from serving on the October outbreak of wildland fires throughout California. In fact, the CCC postponed sending the Corpsmembers to assist with the hurricane cleanup so that the Corps could support firefighters in-state.

“We know all too well the emotional impact that natural disasters such as fires and floods can deliver, and are both proud and glad that we are able to now send support to out-of-state neighbors,” said Saito.

The CCC is dispatching a total of 60 Corpsmembers this month to assist with hurricane cleanup- three crews of 12 are headed to Texas and another crew will help with removing downed trees and debris in Puerto Rico. Much of the CCC's hurricane cleanup work is funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency through the Corporation for National and Community Service.

About the CCC

The California Conservation Corps is a state agency offering young men and women a paid opportunity to improve California's natural resources and communities. The CCC also responds to emergencies such as fires, floods, weather and agricultural disasters.

Created by Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. in 1976, the CCC is the oldest and largest conservation corps in the nation.

The CCC has corpsmember openings every month for young adults ages 18 to 25 and veterans to age 29. For information on joining, call 1-800-952-JOBS or visit ccc.ca.gov

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