



**California Conservation Corps
Watershed Stewards Program
in partnership with AmeriCorps**



General WSP Applicant Questions

- 1. I am a student. Can I be in the Watershed Stewards Program while I am studying?**
 - WSP requires a full-time commitment (40 hours/week during regular business hours) and is not appropriate for current students.
- 2. Do I need to turn in all of my application materials at the same time?**
 - No. You can turn in your application, and then send your cover letter, resume and letters of recommendation (LOR) as they are ready. We expect that most people will have LORs sent in separately from their application materials. All materials must be received by the application deadline.
- 3. Will WSP reimburse me for the costs involved in moving to California and/or finding and securing housing near my Placement Site?**
 - No - WSP will not reimburse for these costs. However, WSP and your Placement Site will cover all cost for travel required for the program/Placement Site throughout your term of service.
- 4. Do I qualify for Cal Fresh (food stamps) as an AmeriCorps Member?**
 - While we cannot guarantee that you will qualify for Cal Fresh, as it is based on your household income, AmeriCorps Members often qualify for this benefit. The amount per month is dependent on the county (average \$200/month).
- 5. If I choose to defer my college loans while serving with WSP, will they still accrue interest?**
 - **Yes** – your student loans will continue to accrue interest. However, if they are *eligible loans* you can place your loans into forbearance using the MyAmeriCorps portal, and you will then be eligible to have the accrued interest paid in full upon the successful conclusion of your term. We will share more information about this during WSP's Orientation.
- 6. Am I required to have a car?**
 - **No/Yes** – Depending on your Placement Site location, it is strongly suggested you have a vehicle. Housing and services are often a distance from Placement Sites and public transport is not always available (especially in rural areas). Some Placement Sites require Corpsmembers to use their personal vehicle for field work (they will be reimbursed).
- 7. Given that after I am made a conditional offer of enrollment, I must pass a National Criminal History Check to complete my enrollment, what type of criminal charges would prevent me from enrolling with WSP?**

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A program of the California Conservation Corps, WSP is one of the most productive programs for future employment in the environmental field. WSP is administered by CaliforniaVolunteers, the Office of the Governor and sponsored by AmeriCorps and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.



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- For Corpsmember criminal history check eligibility, we do not have a list of ineligible crimes. We determine eligibility by reviewing the codes an applicant was convicted of once the criminal history check has been run. Convictions of the following make you ineligible: (i) first degree murder equivalent to and/or as defined and described in 18 U.S.C. § 1111; (ii) crimes that require you to register as a sex offender and/or result in you being listed on the National Sex Offender Public Website ; and/or, (iii) crimes involving arson or against vulnerable populations. Other criminal history results may require your conditional offer of enrollment to be further review; for example: (i) if you are on parole, probation, postrelease community supervision, or mandatory supervision; and, (ii) if you were convicted of a serious felony or violent crime as defined by California Penal Code section 667.5(c) or 1192.7(c)). Convictions sealed under Welfare and Institutions Code Section 781 or Penal Code Section 1203.45 do not apply. CM applicants also cannot be on a parole, probation, postrelease community supervision, or mandatory supervision status that would prevent them from fully participating in the program (i.e., preventing you from traveling throughout the State on short notice and for extended periods, working with or around inmates, working with CCC tools, working in remote areas with limited and/or restricted access to electronic communication, etc.).

Site-Specific Interviews

1. Does my application packet get sent to all the Placement Sites I ranked in my preference list?

- **No** - your list of preferences is very helpful when we match up applicants with sites, but we do not always send your application packet to every site that you ranked. WSP staff decides which applicant packets will be sent to sites based on both the applicants' interests and experience, and the sites' needs.
- WSP may also send your application to sites you did not indicate as a preference if we feel you are a strong candidate and you have identified being flexible on your WSP Application.

2. Can I contact Placement Sites directly to ask Site-specific questions?

- **No** - because our program receives such a high volume of applicants each year, we ask that you communicate with WSP staff instead of directly with the Placement Sites. If you are chosen for an interview with the Placement Site, you will have an opportunity to communicate directly with them at that time.

3. Can I re-rank my preferred sites after I have interviewed with Placement Sites?

- **Yes** - you can email your updated ranking preferences to WSP.Recruiter@ccc.ca.gov any time through **July 19th, 2021**. Rankings cannot be changed after that date. After interviews, please only rank sites with

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which you have interviewed. If you marked flexible on your application, your materials may still be sent to additional Placement Sites for their review and a possible interview.

4. If I am offered a position, will I get to choose which Placement Site I will serve at?

- **No** - candidates are offered a specific position at one Placement Site.

5. If I am chosen for a position who will make the offer?

- WSP Staff will call applicants to offer them positions. You will have several days to accept or decline.
- It is important that you notify WSP staff of any times that you may not be available by email or phone so that we can reach you regarding an offer.

COVID-19 Program Adaptations

1. How has the program adapted to COVID-19 safety concerns?

- WSP Corpsmembers as part of the California Conservation Corps are considered essential workers. This means that Corpsmembers are expected to perform their program requirements in the safest way possible adhering to requirements such as social distancing, wearing masks, washing hands, and conducting a health questionnaire prior to serving in the field.
- Many Placement Sites have made and continue to make adaptations to allow program activities to continue in the safest way possible. These includes planning for office/computer tasks and assigned duties to be conducted from home. This is called teleservice.

2. Will the Orientation be in person?

- Maybe?

3. Will a COVID-19 vaccine be required to enroll in WSP?

- Discussions at CCC HQ indicate the vaccine may be required to enroll in WSP. Health and religious accommodation may be allowable.

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