

THINK OUTSIDE



STATE PARKS YOUTH CORPS

State Parks Youth Corps

SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAM: The State Parks Youth Corps was established by Gov. Jay Nixon in 2010. The program empowers youth through meaningful projects in Missouri's state parks and historic sites while fostering an understanding of the outdoors and building new skills for the workforce.

SPYC By the Numbers

In 2010, more than

2,000

gallons of paint used

More than

800,000

— Hours of Service —

In 2011

84

work
locations

3,700+ WORKERS HIRED

42 CCC-era structures
painted in 2012

86,355

hours in municipal parks
in 2014 and 2015

In 2013 **2,744**

Acres of Habitat Restored

thinkoutside.mo.gov

The impact of State Parks Youth Corps is made possible through a partnership between Missouri State Parks and the Missouri Department of Economic Development, in cooperation with the Missouri Conservation Federation, local Workforce Development Boards and their service providers and the Department of Social Services.



How Does the Program Work?

State Parks Youth Corps is a cooperative partnership between the Division of Workforce Development and Missouri State Parks.

Young people who desire to be a part of the State Parks Youth Corps apply online. Parks staff and counselors from the state's fourteen local Workforce Development Boards recruit and select income eligible applicants for the positions.

"It was an exciting learning experience that helped me better appreciate our state parks and the people who take care of them."

-Wallace State Park SPYC

"I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do in my future pertaining to my career. This program helped solidify my decisions of my education."

-Nathan Boone Homestead State Historic Site SPYC

"Every day is a new experience and adventure."

—Long Branch State Park SPYC

"You all made this one of the most memorable summers of my life."

—Rock Bridge Memorial State Park SPYC



Impact on WORKERS

The State Parks Youth Corps trains workers to be effective, service-oriented leaders. In addition to technical skills, they learn

- 1) Interpersonal and Leadership Skills
 - Cooperation, teamwork and group dynamics
 - Listening skills and accepting different opinions
 - Giving and receiving feedback
- 2) "Think Outside" Knowledge
 - Importance of Missouri's natural and cultural resources
 - Understanding of the different Missouri ecosystems

Impact on the OUTDOORS

State Parks Youth Corps projects:

- Improved trails and access to state park lands
- Preserved natural and wild areas
- Renovated and restored state park and state historic site structures

Impact on VISITORS

Each year, the State Parks Youth Corps includes interpretative aids who foster visitors' appreciation for Missouri's natural and cultural resources by providing hikes, tours and evening programs. Throughout the season, they have the opportunity to:

- Improve presentation and communication skills
- Connect with an array of diverse audiences

Expanding the Program

In 2014, SPYC was expanded to include municipal parks in St. Louis and Kansas City.

This addition provides more opportunities for urban youth to get outdoor work experience.