

New Mexico Youth Conservation Corps Commission

2023 Annual Report





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Michelle Lujan Grisham,
Governor

New Mexico Youth Conservation Corps Commission



Amanda Getchell Stevenson, Chair
Carmen Austin, Vice-Chair
Sarah Wood, Executive Director

Governor Appointees:
Amanda Getchell Stevenson
Ron Hannan
Alicia Littlebear
Marlene Yanez

Carmen Austin
Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Dept
Cassie Ruiz
Children, Youth & Families Dept
Dana Vackar-Strang
State Land Office
Vacant
Public Education Department

November 29, 2023

To: The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor
The Honorable Members of the New Mexico Legislature House and Senate.

As the Chair of the Youth Conservation Corps Commission, I am pleased to share with you the Commission's Annual Report for 2023. The Commission's core mission is to provide a process for New Mexico youth, ages 14-25, to be employed in public projects of lasting community value. We emphasize access to employment, a variety of job opportunities and career development when soliciting and selecting projects.

In 2023, the Commission funded 41 projects. Youth earned a paycheck while learning restoration techniques in the Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon and McBride fire burn scars; obtained Wildland Firefighting certificates while doing hands-on forest resiliency work; improved and rehabilitated numerous public parks and campgrounds; learned traditional and regenerative agriculture at eight sites; inventoried natural resources while learning GIS technology and digital mapping skills; designed, fabricated and installed public art at six sites; and improved or built numerous miles of trails.

Corps members were overwhelmingly positive in their review of the program, remarking on how they learned to work as a team and made friends with people outside their normal social circle. Many corps members spoke of improved self-confidence and increased pride in their community.

Thank you for your continued support of this important program that provides lasting benefits to our communities and youth.

Amanda Getchell Stevenson
YCC Commission Chair

YCC PROGRAM SUMMARY

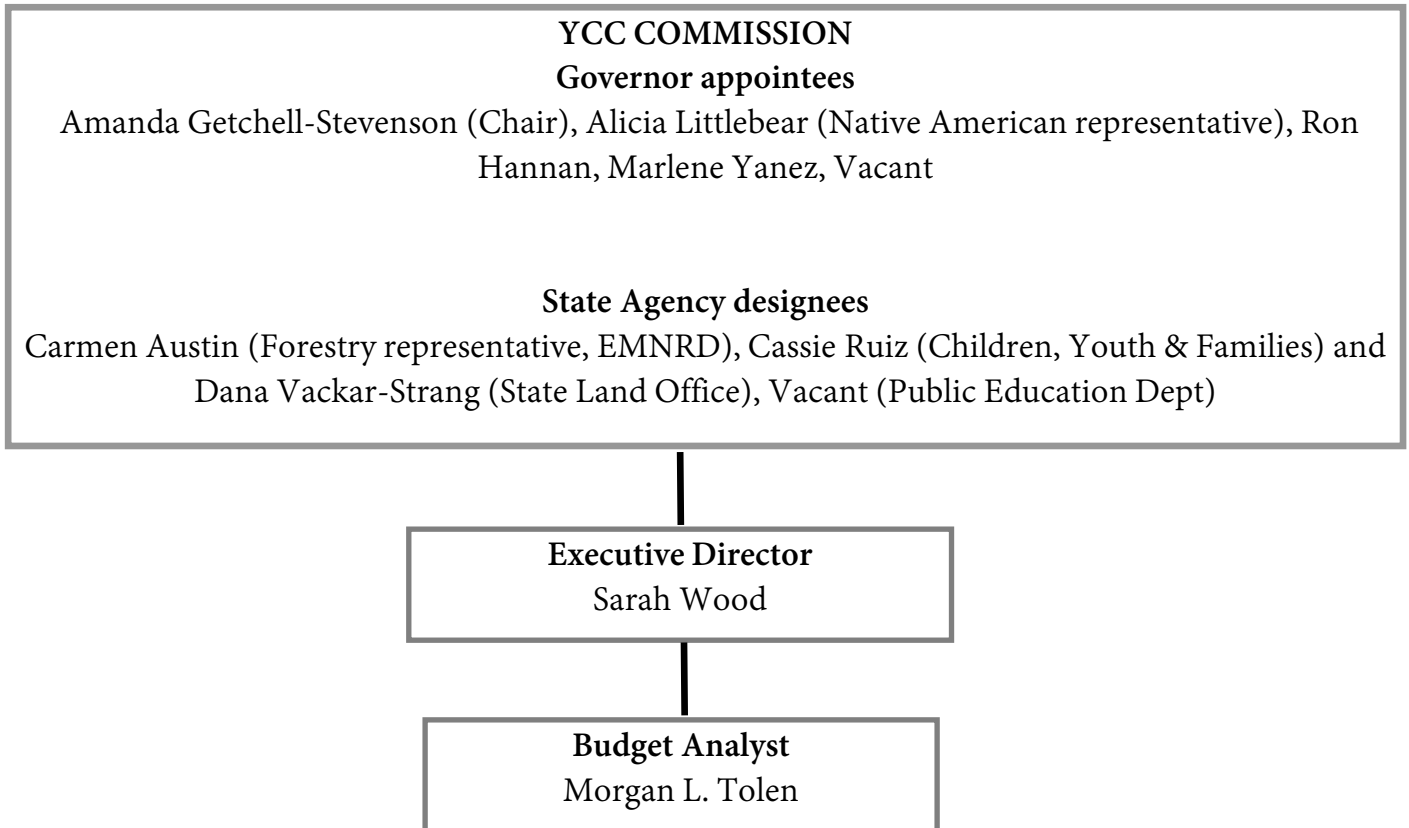
The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) was established in 1992 to provide a process to employ youth in public projects that provide lasting community benefits. The YCCC is authorized by 9-5B-1-10 NMSA 1978.

YCC funding is available to units of local government, tribal governments and 501c non-profits operating within the state. Eligible projects may occur on public and tribal lands or private lands that result in a broad regional benefit. Projects include conservation, restoration and preservation projects, facility and infrastructure improvements, public art fabrication and installation and emergency assistance and preparedness.

Grantees employ and pay New Mexicans between the ages of 14 and 25, and provide a training program that encompasses job, career and life skills as well as natural and cultural resources. Seventy percent of each grant is allocated to corps member wages, and grantees provide a 20% in-kind match. Corps members who have served for 32 to 48 months in the YCC are entitled to an additional cash reimbursement or an educational voucher for expenses at a New Mexico college or vocational school.



ORGANIZATION, MISSION & VALUES



Appendix A contains bios of the Commission and staff.

Mission:

Promote the education, success and well-being of the youth in our communities and provide benefits of lasting value through the conservation and enhancement of New Mexico's natural, cultural and recreational resources.

Values:

YCC strives for

- Meaningful, community-based employment for young New Mexicans.
- An educated, skilled and environmentally aware young work force.
- Improvements to natural, cultural, recreational and community facilities and resources.
- Tax dollars returned to communities.

2023 ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Funding awards: YCC received forty-one proposals and funded forty in 2023. Approximately 543 youth were hired to perform \$4.6M in projects, with \$921K in match contributions. Projects are still wrapping up as of late 2023.

Cooperative Agreements: YCC budgeted and the legislature approved, funding for cooperative agreements with other state agencies. The agreements extend to FY27, with EMNRD receiving up to \$500,000 annually and the State Land Office \$200,000 annually. The Mining & Minerals Division (MMD) of EMNRD is using funds to pay a subcontractor skilled in STEM disciplines to hire and train youth to conduct a hard-rock mining inventory state-wide. Youth are learning valuable skills such as orienteering in remote areas, GIS software and data management, hard-rock geology and job interview skills. The State Land Office will use their funds for projects on recreational lands throughout the State and have also contracted with a non-profit to carry these out. Work will start on the Golden Open Space in Spring 2024 and at Capulin during the summer.

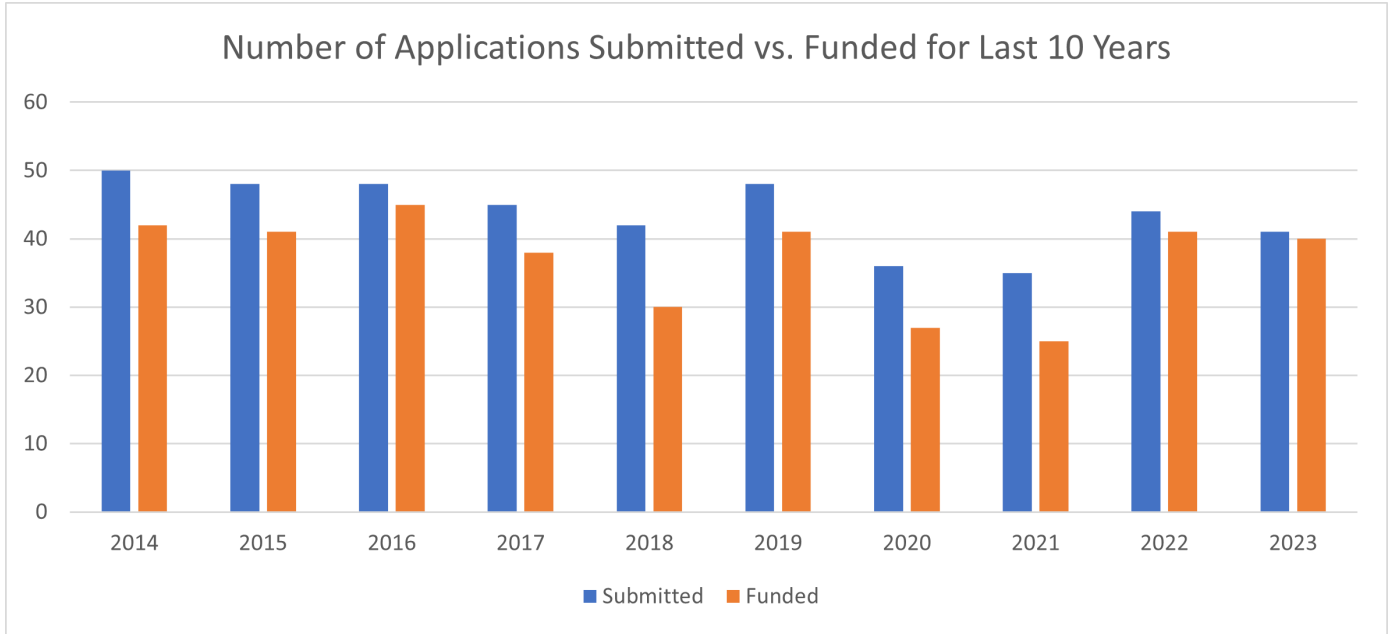
The Commission has directed staff to prepare a Rule change that codifies how YCC enters into cooperative agreements.

Project Audits & Field Visits: YCC caught up with all delinquent field inspections and file audits from the past three years, and staff visited projects in progress in Chloride, Ruidoso, Silver City, Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon fire scar, Bloomfield, Espanola, Albuquerque South Valley, and Santa Fe.

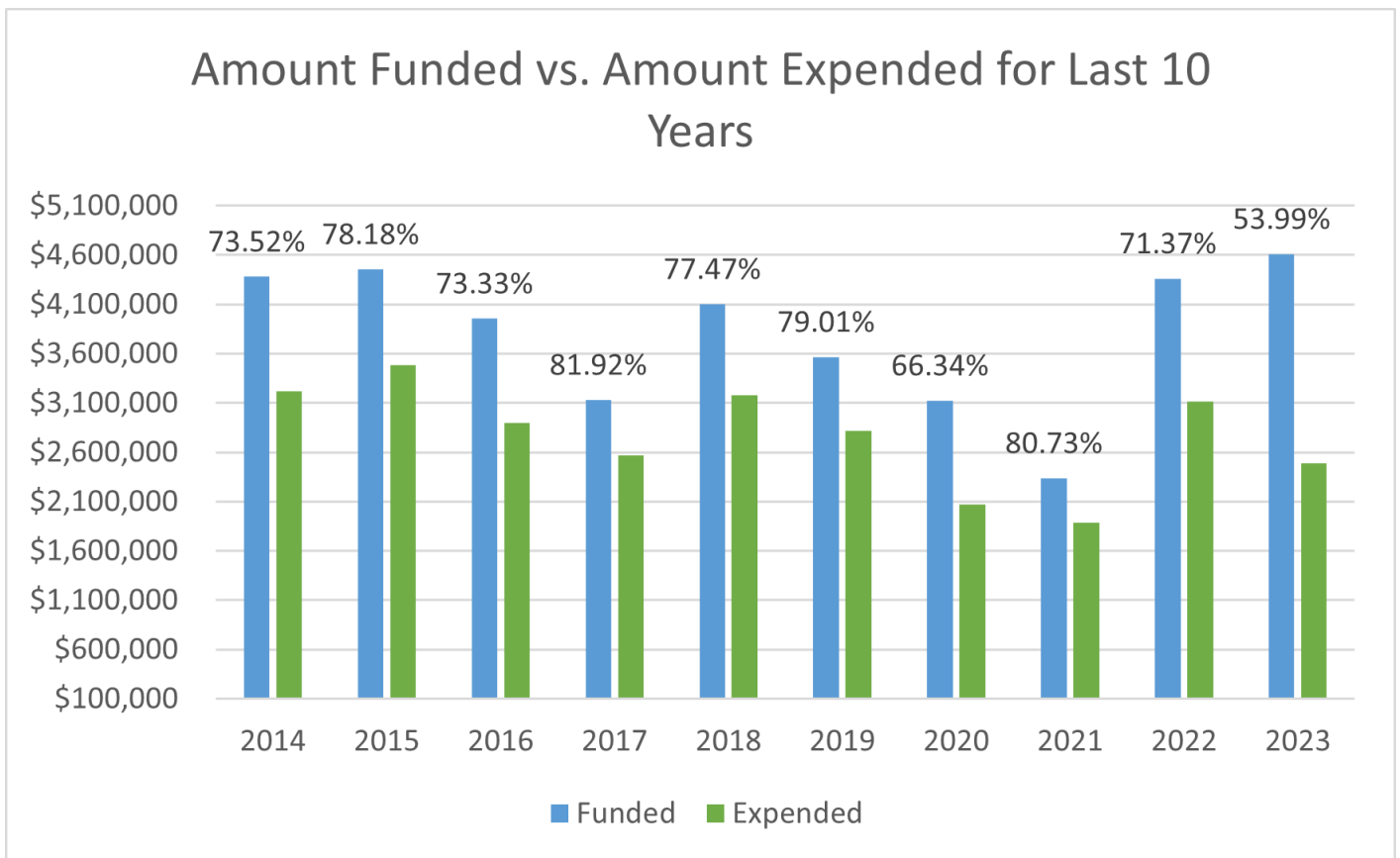
Outreach: The ED tabled a booth at two events in Albuquerque, delivered in-person presentations to the Rio Grande Water Fund, State Parks, the annual statewide meeting of Soil, Water & Conservation Districts; and presented a class to WNMU students virtually. YCC staff also attended the Outdoor Economics Conference in Santa Fe.

Career resources: A QR code on the shirts and water bottles provided to all corps members scans to our Job webpage, [Job Postings - EMNRD \(nm.gov\)](https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/jobs) where corps members can find links to job postings, job boards, and help with resume building, interviewing and career choice. Links lead to sites or resources at the State Personnel Office, the Department of Workforce Solutions, the NM Outdoor Recreation Division as well as other sites that advertise state and regional conservation jobs.

FUNDING SUMMARY



YCC funds about 36 projects per year. Projects not funded are mostly due to being non-responsive to the RFP.



Averaged over the last decade, projects spent about 74% funds awarded. The returned money goes into the fund balance. Data for 2023 is incomplete.

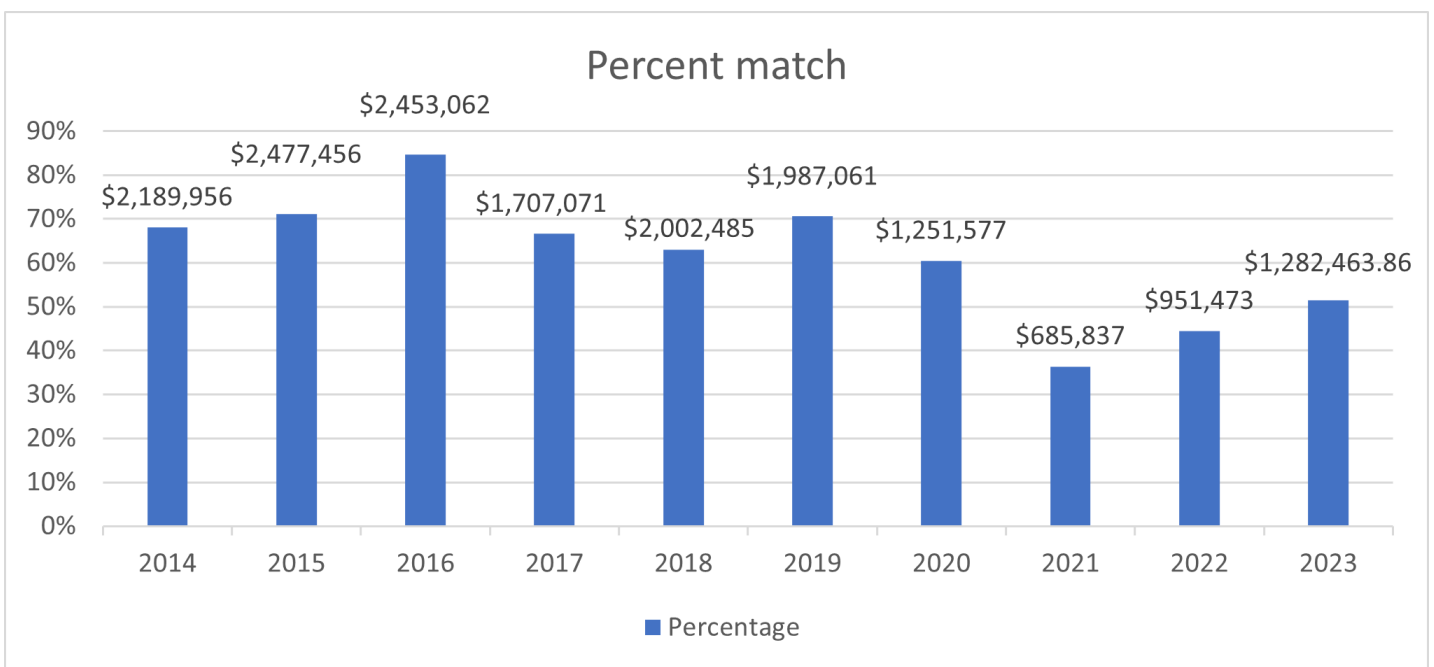
IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS



In 2023, the overall match is 52% of funds disbursed, equivalent to a value of \$1.28M.

The match percentage has decreased slightly since lowering the match requirement to 20% in 2021, but most projects still contribute well above that.

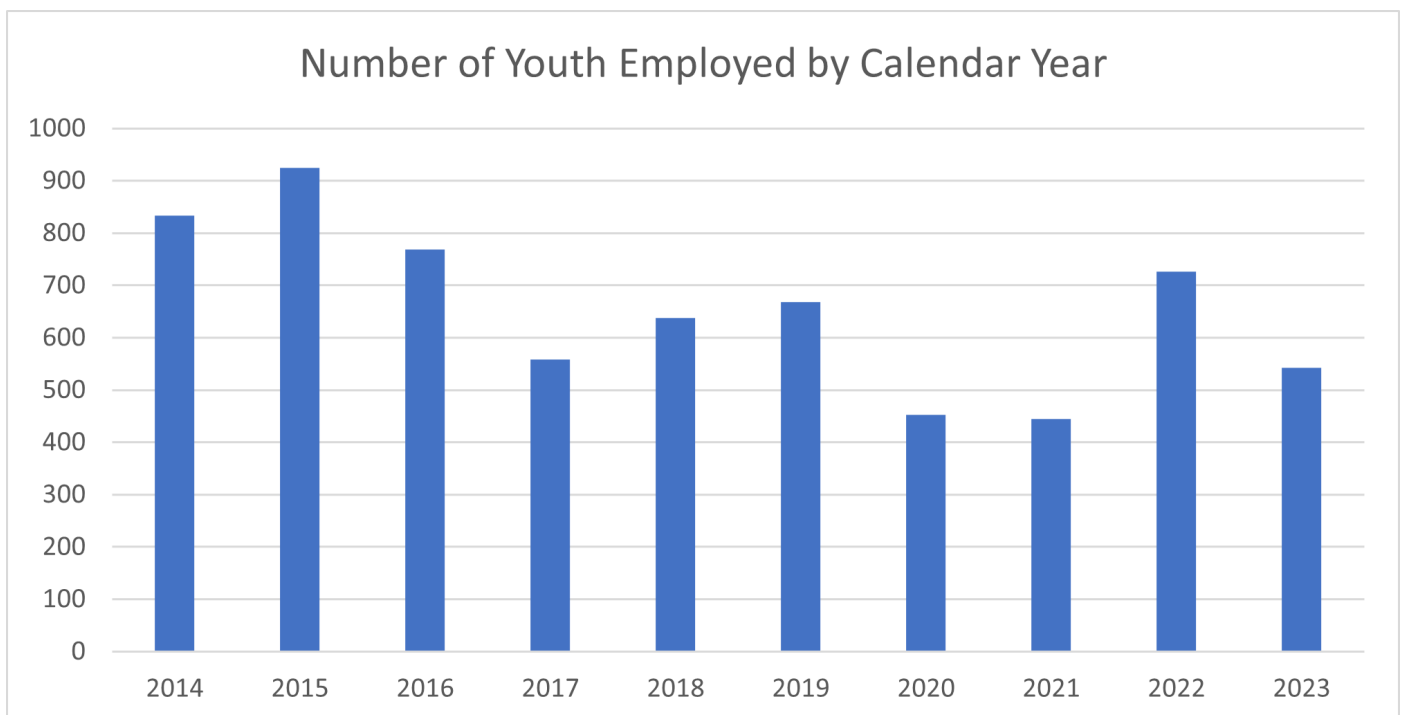
Matching contributions include staff time, trainings, volunteers, equipment purchase and rental, and transportation.



YOUTH EMPLOYED



There is a broad trend towards higher wages and smaller crews. In 2023, our records show 543 youth were employed; however, this number is likely to increase as projects are finalized. The final number of youth employed for 2022 is 726, 124 over the 602 reported last year.



CORPS MEMBER BENEFITS

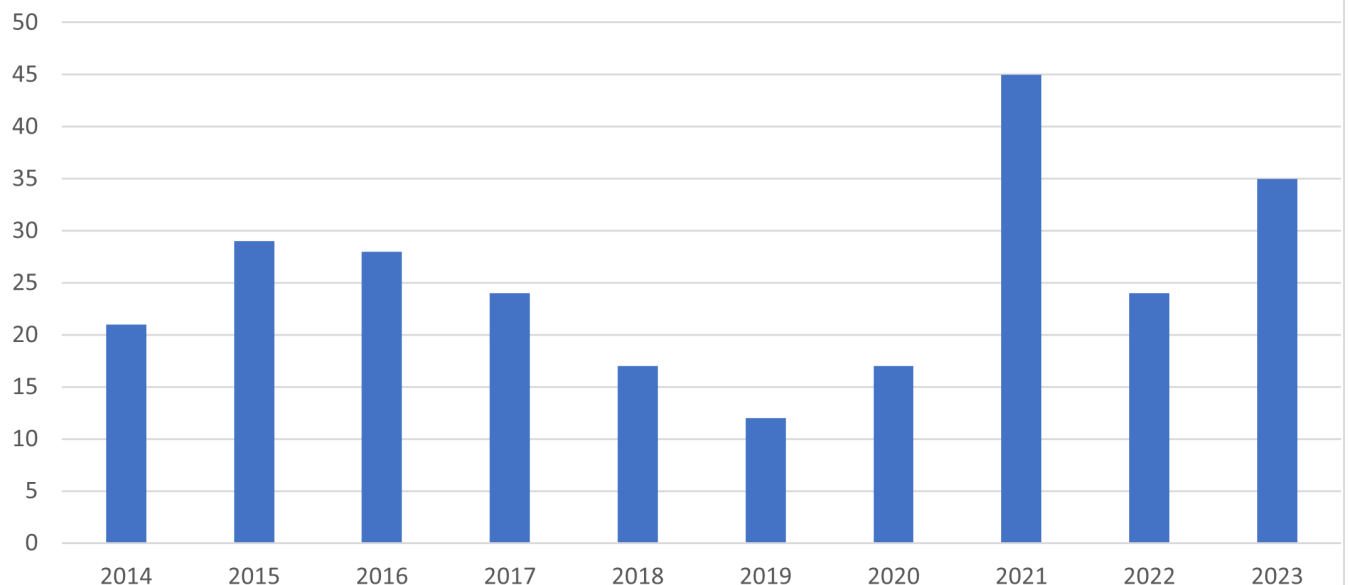


Sixty-four corps members were eligible in 2023, and 35 received benefits, the second highest number for any year since the YCC program started in 1992. The remaining did not respond to our notifications.

Corps members may choose between a \$1,500 educational tuition voucher at an NM institution OR a \$500 cash compensation. Eligible corps members are those who have worked on a YCC project for 12 months (48 weeks) within a 48 month period (4 years). Corps members who work at least 32 weeks may receive a pro-rated benefit.

YCC added this program as a performance-based budget measure in 2020 with a target of 85%. This year, we had 55% of corps members receiving benefits. When the target was set, the impact of a low response rate from corps members and out-of-date contact information was not anticipated.

Number of Corps Members Receiving Benefits for Last 10 Years



DEMOGRAPHICS AND CORPS MEMBER SURVEYS

2022 Survey

Gender	Age Ranges	After YCC
Male: 64%	14-15: 27%	Middle or High School: 52%
Female: 36%	16-17: 29%	Community College: 15%
	18-19: 22%	Four-year college: 4%
	20+: 22%	Trade or vocational school: 6%
		Military or Other: 6%
		Job (includes part-time): 14%

2023 Survey (Incomplete Data)

Gender	Age Ranges	After YCC
Male: 62%	14-15: 15%	Middle or High School: 50%
Female: 38%	16-17: 37%	Community College: 12%
	18-19: 26%	Four-year college: 9%
	20+: 24%	Trade or vocational school: 6%
		Military or Other: 1%
		Job (includes part-time): 22%

What Corps Members say:

YCC created so many wonderful friendships, connections, skills, opportunities, and memories for me.

I am proud to show people that we made something that isn't just structural or pretty but has real meaning to the issues happening within that community.

I got to work with different agencies and gained contacts in my field of study.

What Project Managers say:

Corps members have been invaluable in helping us improve the City's park system and residents proudly share the results. – *City of Aztec*

YCC supports vital life and workplace training that benefits corps members for years to come. – *Harwood Art Center*

YCC enabled us to hire, train and empower seven local youth to help their community recover from the fire. – *Hermits Peak Watershed Alliance*

YCC PROJECTS FY23

YCC Projects FY23				
Project Manager	Youth Employed	Amount Funded	Amount Reimbursed	In-Kind Contributions
Albuquerque Sign Language Academy - Student Conservation	41	\$129,570.20	\$84,957.03	\$18,272.85
Aldo Leopold Charter School: Fall Project 2022 - Art, Trails, Garden, Ecology	107	\$129,989.00	\$66,885.20	\$20,614.27
Aldo Leopold Charter School: Spring 2022 - Art, Trails, Garden, Ecology	34	\$93,975.00	\$64,780.10	\$27,498.01
Aldo Leopold Charter School: Spring 2023 - Garden, mural, trail crews	88	\$174,045.00	\$124,144.61	\$46,351.98
ALMA 2022 Institute at Valle de Oro	8	\$76,147.36	\$76,147.36	\$31,709.36
City of Aztec - Tiger Park Improvements	8	\$44,541.10	\$24,339.82	\$31,712.19
City of Bloomfield - Russian Olive and Salt Cedar Eradication	5	\$63,691.32	\$28,247.60	\$17,756.12
City of Gallup - Trail Crews	15	\$149,999.04	\$102,394.75	\$40,931.15
City of Las Cruces - Empowering Youth Through Art & Community Forestry	5	\$82,301.80	\$29,538.50	\$6,898.89
City of Tucumcari - Beautification and Park Improvements	8	\$60,487.80	\$47,494.16	\$26,916.05
Ciudad SWCD - Public Open Space Restoration and Improvement	13	\$124,083.85	\$40,461.42	\$3,306.50
Commons Center for Food Sustainability & Security - Infrastructure Build	7	\$22,941.86	\$15,033.38	\$2,999.87
Conservation Legacy - Acoma Pueblo Traditional Farm Corps	7	\$60,005.61	\$58,794.07	\$53,648.68
Conservation Legacy - Pueblo of Zuni Springs and Trails	5	\$85,722.30	\$59,317.64	\$61,285.78
County of Bernalillo- Hubbell Open Space and East Central Ministries	4	\$44,108.12	\$14,918.70	\$16,723.51
East Rio Arriba SWCD - Surveying and Inventorying Project	5	\$46,215.33	\$38,837.05	\$12,180.00
EcoServants - Lincoln's Best Summer Job Ever	19	\$146,964.38	\$140,680.80	\$31,272.36
EcoServants -Otero's Best Summer Job Ever	16	\$146,964.38	\$130,820.97	\$31,032.77
GEM Environmental NFP - YCC Mine Feature Inventory - Chloride	8	\$304,733.14	\$173,114.70	\$41,398.31
Harwood Art Center - Sculpture & Community at Mesa Verde Park	10	\$50,862.96	\$50,862.96	\$17,183.22
Institute for Applied Ecology- Seed Collection & Habitat Restoration	5	\$91,773.34	\$70,581.78	\$18,379.62
Pueblo of Sandia - Pueblo of Sandia's Ranch Properties	4	\$114,024.24	\$24,311.81	\$122,093.03
Rio Arriba County - Precious Age Precious Water	16	\$138,841.96	\$100,980.94	\$34,102.14
Rio Arriba County - Therapeutic Healing Memorial Garden	17	\$129,249.76	\$107,338.75	\$38,636.38
RiverSource Inc. Watershed Resilience Academy 2022	20	\$59,411.62	\$52,285.24	\$30,539.70
Robert F. Kennedy Charter School - School to Farm	28	\$147,983.51	\$121,608.60	\$37,937.07
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps - Central NM Youth Dev't & Conservation	13	\$150,000.00	\$72,947.93	\$32,410.85
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps - Upper Rio Grande Youth Dev't & Conservation	12	\$150,000.00	\$71,063.97	\$69,588.85
Santa Clara Pueblo YCC Summer Traditional Resources Restoration	24	\$142,057.09	\$113,764.52	\$35,787.13
Santa Fe Children's Museum - Sardening & Cultural Preservation	7	\$86,940.27	\$25,213.40	\$10,068.35
Southwest Educational Partners in Training - Shadyside Farm	24	\$149,957.99	\$103,470.48	\$31,909.54
Taos Land Trust - Young Farmers and Ecologists at Rio Fernando Park	29	\$149,313.35	\$60,360.40	\$7,838.53
The Family YMCA - Los Alamos Y Trails YCC 2022	14	\$67,861.56	\$67,861.56	\$20,554.27
Forest Stewards Youth Corps: Summer 2022	25	\$149,962.82	\$145,684.43	\$40,279.84
Forest Stewards Youth Corps Fire and Fuels Program: Fall 2022	13	\$149,957.04	\$147,732.34	\$55,354.98
Town of Mountainair - Recreational Rehabilitation Project	6	\$32,693.40	\$16,084.78	\$3,322.16
Valencia County - Wildland Fire Youth Corps Crew	6	\$86,843.84	\$78,250.63	\$42,979.26
Valencia SWCD - Whitfield Fire Mitigation, Trails & Habitat	4	\$52,653.90	\$24,802.80	\$5,098.14
Village of Angel Fire - Apprentice Firefighter Program	4	\$149,894.15	\$72,924.72	\$19,946.51
Village of Columbus - Public Facilities Improvement	13	\$22,813.76	\$20,736.29	\$4,166.23
Village of Santa Clara - Fort Bayard 18 Hole Disk Golf Course	8	\$31,301.06	\$31,301.06	\$19,331.55
Western New Mexico University - Sustainable Future and Outdoor Programs	5	\$149,999.99	\$61,979.24	\$40,651.17
YouthWorks - Santa Fe Youth Conservation Corps	22	\$149,999.40	\$149,999.40	\$63,195.00
Grand Total	732	\$4,590,883.60	\$3,113,055.89	\$1,323,862.17

YCC PROJECTS FY24

Incomplete Project

Complete Project

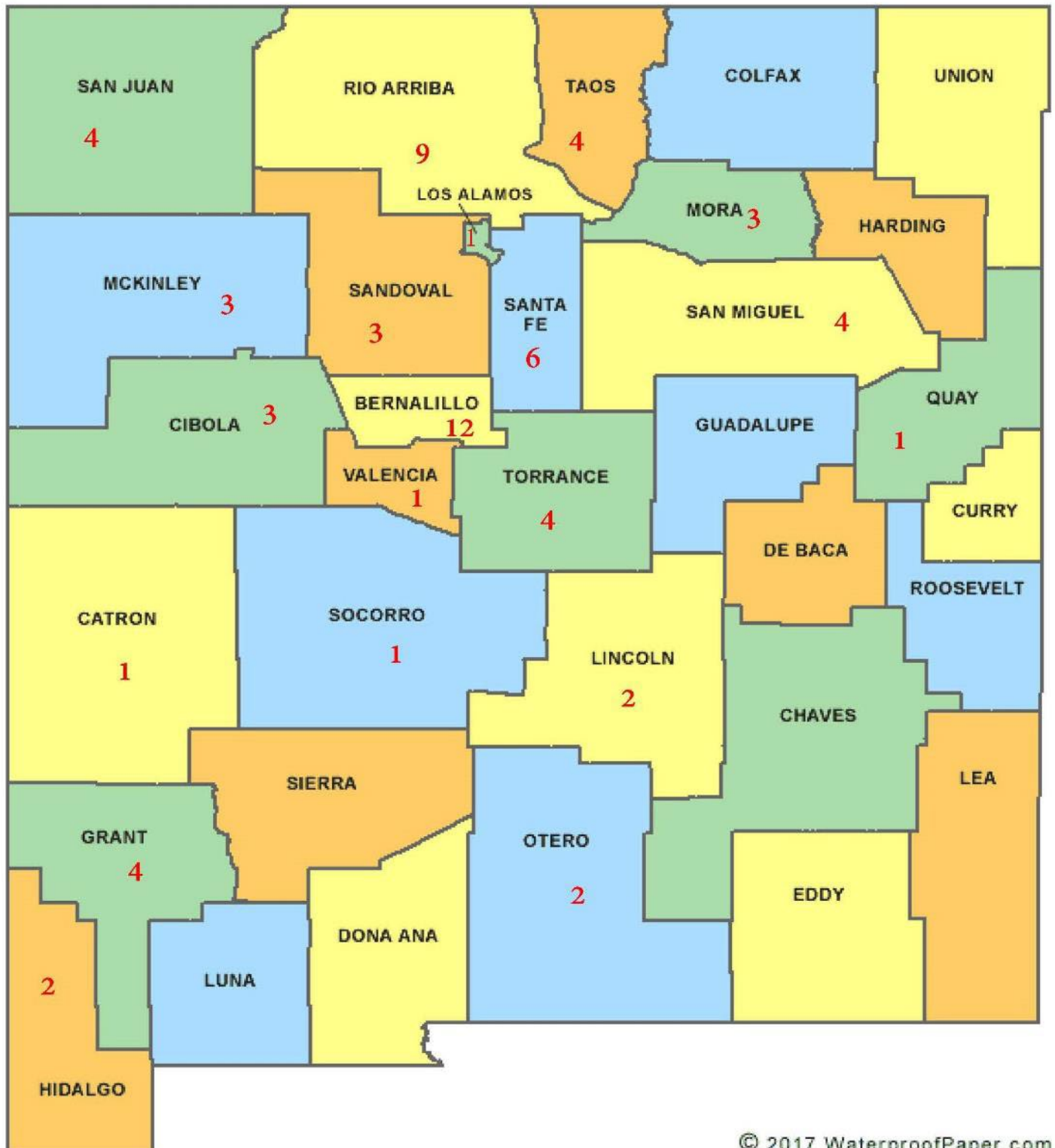
YCC Projects FY24

Project Manager	Youth Employed	Amount Funded	Amount Reimbursed	In Kind Contribution
Alamo Navajo School Board, Inc - Beautification & Restoration Project	10	\$109,111.38	\$22,709.01	\$0.00
Albuquerque Sign Language Academy - Honey Badger Conservation Crews	35	\$174,664.48	\$101,163.32	\$32,923.90
Aldo Leopold Charter School - Fall: Art Trails, Landscape, Monitoring	40	\$107,216.00	\$19,892.38	\$5,128.20
ALMA Summer Institute at Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge	7	\$79,559.33	\$79,559.33	\$24,343.36
Aztec Schools - Campus Beautification	19	\$146,387.50	\$54,555.74	\$15,734.32
City of Aztec - Riverside Park Improvements	5	\$42,923.97	\$14,684.16	\$49,043.03
City of Bloomfield - Vereda Riverwalk Improvement	10	\$82,233.12	\$77,467.46	\$118,517.37
City of Gallup - Gallup Trail Systems	15	\$174,990.89	\$27,651.51	\$5,709.29
City of Tucumcari - Open Space Revitalization	8	\$80,598.64	\$26,172.02	\$11,329.73
Commons Center for Food Sustainability & Security - Rooted Summer	7	\$20,756.57	\$7,542.00	\$2,558.33
Conservation Legacy - Ancestral Lands Bernalillo County	6	\$61,414.09	\$27,174.20	\$27,174.20
Conservation Legacy - Acoma Traditional Farm Corps	8	\$61,414.09	\$44,452.84	\$30,005.28
County of Bernalillo - County AgCorps	9	\$50,460.28	\$0.00	\$7,093.22
East Rio Arriba SWCD - Surveying and Inventorying Project	8	\$43,595.32	\$27,436.33	\$3,964.17
EcoServants - Lincoln County's Trails and Public Lands	17	\$165,169.29	\$131,260.33	\$36,408.38
EcoServants - Otero County's Trails and Public Lands	12	\$165,169.29	\$73,873.32	\$27,199.78
Harwood Art Center - Garden and Archway for Mesa Verde Park	10	\$59,259.79	\$57,164.72	\$33,047.51
Hermit's Peak Watershed Alliance - Restoration in Flood Mitigation	7	\$91,085.75	\$91,085.40	\$21,600.02
Jemez Mountain Public Schools - Reclamation & Preservation	11	\$79,580.81	\$58,421.13	\$14,844.75
Rio Arriba County - Healing Gardens	25	\$174,999.99	\$104,426.03	\$51,849.14
Rio Arriba County - Fairgrounds Improvements	13	\$174,999.00	\$154,524.01	\$46,813.36
RiverSource Inc. - Watershed Academy Youth Conservation Corps	30	\$121,889.52	\$121,889.52	\$30,415.50
Robert F. Kennedy Charter School - Farm to School	27	\$173,837.00	\$79,790.77	\$12,776.95
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps - Central NM Youth Dev't & Conservation	17	\$134,138.30	\$79,040.19	\$36,163.31
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps - Northern NM Youth Dev't and Conservation	10	\$165,065.08	\$57,146.89	\$39,967.98
San Juan College - Trail System & Disc Golf Improvements	15	\$175,000.00	\$131,388.91	\$60,455.50
Santa Clara Pueblo - Traditional and Ecological Resources Project	18	\$120,103.39	\$95,818.62	\$37,484.64
Santa Fe Children's Museum - Community & Conservation	5	\$74,298.92	\$27,917.92	\$16,245.25
Spirit of Hidalgo - Explore Hidalgo County Outside (EHCO)	10	\$60,140.00	\$60,140.00	\$20,678.31
Talking Talons Youth Conservation Crew - Trail Restoration	7	\$58,046.05	\$57,668.43	\$18,523.50
Taos Land Trust - Rio Fernando Park Emerging Farmers/Ecologists Program	11	\$135,206.64	\$89,647.13	\$18,544.66
The Family YMCA - Y Trails	12	\$76,169.88	\$59,407.07	\$14,708.68
The Forest Stewards Guild Youth Corps - Summer 2023	24	\$174,842.39	\$174,842.39	\$41,657.70
The Forest Stewards Guild - Fire and Fuels Program	14	\$174,667.32	\$142,831.79	\$70,056.60
Town of Estancia - Punkin Chunk Field Improvements	5	\$87,794.44	\$19,371.47	\$10,958.68
Town of Mountainair - Outdoor Space Rehabilitation Project	9	\$46,032.99	\$19,071.30	\$3,895.83
Valencia SWCD - Fire Mitigation and Conservation	6	\$61,678.91	\$37,852.10	\$0.00
Village of Santa Clara - Fort Bayard Disc Golf Completion	8	\$31,301.06	\$17,118.48	\$0.00
YouthWorks Santa Fe Youth Corps - Environmental Sustainability Project	27	\$174,998.89	\$141,931.28	\$54,123.11
Grand Total	537	\$ 4,190,800.36	\$ 2,614,089.50	\$ 1,051,943.54

PROJECTS BY COUNTY

Red numbers represent the count of projects in each county

Projects took place in 20 of New Mexico's 33 counties. Fourteen projects spanned more than one county.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Alamo Navajo School Board – Alamo Beautification & Restoration Project

Total youth hired: 10

Training sessions: 13



Albuquerque Sign Language Academy Honey Badger Conservation Crew

Total youth hired: 35

Training sessions: 8



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Aldo Leopold High School Spring / Late Summer
Public Art, Eco Monitoring, Trails and Gardening

Total youth hired: 88
Training sessions: 40



Aldo Leopold High School - Fall Project continued the work of the summer crew.

Total youth hired: 40
Training sessions: 10



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Apprenticeships for Leaders in Mosaic Art (ALMA) Sculpture at Valle de Oro

Total youth hired: 7

Training sessions: 11



Aztec Schools – Campus Beautification Total youth hired: 19 Training sessions: 6



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

City of Aztec - Riverside Park Improvement

Total youth hired: 5 Training sessions: 11



City of Bloomfield - Vereda Riverwalk Curb and Paver Remediation & Russian Olive Eradication

Total youth hired: 10 Training sessions: 7



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

City of Gallup Trails Crew

Total youth hired: 15

Training sessions: 14



City of Tucumcari Municipal Park Improvements

Total youth hired: 8 Training sessions: 5



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

The Commons Center for Food Sustainability – Rooted 2023 Summer Program

Total youth hired: 7

Training sessions: 3



Conservation Legacy – Ancestral Lands Bernalillo County

Total youth hired: 6

Training sessions: 9



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Conservation Legacy – Acoma Traditional Farming

Total youth hired: 8 Training sessions: 6



County of Bernalillo – AgCorps

Total youth hired: 9

Training sessions: 0



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

East Rio Arriba Soil & Water Conservation District – Surveying and Inventory Project

Total youth hired: 8

Training sessions: 15



GEM– Mine Inventory/Chloride Mining District (Cooperative agreement)

Total youth hired: 8

Training sessions: 20



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

EcoServants Lincoln & Otero Counties

Total youth hired: 29

Training sessions: 11



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Harwood Art Center Apprenticeship for Art & Social Justice at Mesa Verde Park

Total youth hired: 10 Training sessions: 12



Hermit's Peak Watershed Alliance - Hope Through Recovery: Restoration & Flood Mitigation

Total youth hired: 7

Training sessions: 1



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Jemez Mountain Public Schools– Reclamation & Preservation of Natural & Human Resources Total youth hired: 11 Training sessions: 17



The Family YMCA Los Alamos – Y Trails

Total youth hired: 12 Training sessions: 28



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Pueblo of Santa Clara Traditional & Ecological Resources Project

Total youth hired: 18 Training sessions: 4



RFK Charter School – Farm to School

Total youth hired: 26

Training sessions: 18



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Rio Arriba County STOP Program – Healing Gardens & Fairgrounds Improvements

Total youth hired: 24,13

Training sessions: 18, 19



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

River Source Watershed Resilience Academy Total youth hired: 30 Training sessions: 17



San Juan College- Youth Conservation Corps

Total youth hired: 15 Training sessions: 17



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps Upper & Middle Rio Grande Crews

Total youth hired: 10, 17 Training sessions: 55, 57



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Spirit of Hidalgo - Explore Hidalgo County Outside (ECHO)

Total youth hired: 10 Training sessions: 22



Santa Fe Children's Museum - Community & Conservation Projects to Improve Outdoor Recreation

Total youth hired: 5 Training sessions: 6



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Taos Land Trust Rio Fernando Park Emerging Farmers/Ecologists Program

Total youth hired: 11 Training sessions: 61



Talking Talons – YCC Crew 2023

Total youth hired: 7

Training sessions: 38



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Town of Mountain Outdoor Space Rehabilitation Project

Total youth hired: 9

Training sessions: 9



Town of Estancia- Punkin Chunk Field Improvement

Total youth hired: 5

Training sessions: 8



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Valencia SWCD

Total youth
hired: 6
Training
sessions: 18



Village of Santa Clara – Fort Bayard Golf Course

Total youth hired: 8 Training sessions: 8



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

YouthWorks Santa Fe Crew – Environmental Sustainability Project

Total youth hired: 24 Training sessions: 15



PROGRESS REPORT

2022 Goals and Recommendations	2023 Progress
Develop and implement a YCC conference	Conference will be in Spring 2024 for awardees. It will be structured as an administrative training / networking event.
Issue RFP for creating an orientation video for YCC and other marketing materials.	None
Develop and implement a “Career Kit” for corps members stratified by age.	Updated our jobs webpage to include this info and links to it are on our corps member shirts and water bottles.
Complete all outstanding project inspections.	Complete
Increase outreach efforts: presentations to community groups, cold calls, field trips with decision makers.	Ongoing - presentations to about 6 groups; fielded and made cold calls.

GOALS for 2024

- Implement the YCC conference
- Continue to expand outreach
- Continue to explore marketing options.
- Issue a 2nd RFP for FY2024.



Bernalillo County YCC learns about Beekeeping

Appendix A: COMMISSION & STAFF BIOS

Public Members Appointed by Governor Lujan Grisham



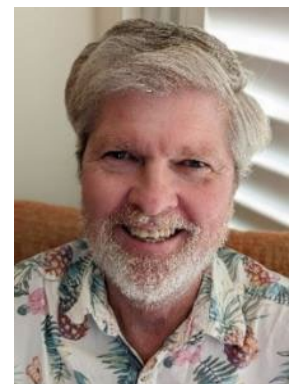
Amanda Getchell Stevenson , CHAIR is a New Mexico native, who graduated from the New Mexico State University Journalism and Communications Department. She's been a Communications Specialist for Strategies 360, a Seattle-based communications firm; a Marketing Assistant with Lavu, Inc., one of the largest tech companies in New Mexico; and a Marketing Manager with Canadian-based iAnthus Capital Management. Amanda owns and runs her own marketing consulting group, Middle Manda. She is an expert on social media strategy, compliance, and community management for various industries.

Alicia Littlebear is from Tamaya (Santa Ana Pueblo), Muskoke Creek, Absentee Shawnee, and Euchee Nations. She has resided in New Mexico her whole life. Alicia believes we can connect back to the land by running, and is an avid runner herself. She is thankful for the work that she gets to do everyday.



Marlene Yanez is a Fronteriza, a woman from the border, and good food advocate who lives in Sunland Park, NM. She has worked in the non-profit sector for over a decade and currently works at La Semilla Food Center as a Program Director for the Community Education Program. Her work endeavors to create innovative and culturally inclusive food justice programs for youth and adults in the Paso del Region in Dona Ana County and El Paso, TX.

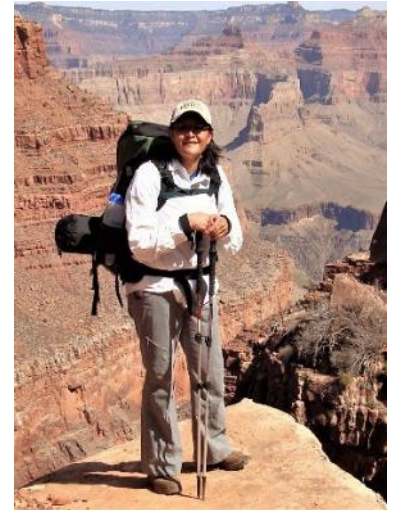
Ron Hannan received a formal education in natural resource management from Ohio State and Utah State Universities, providing the background for a satisfying 31 1/2 year career with the US Forest Service. As a child, he gained an informal outdoor education by roaming the hills and woodlots of south-central Ohio. Ron spent a summer on a YCC crew improving many Ohio State Parks. His crew ranged from Cleveland inner-city youth to Appalachian farm kids. His YCC experience helped him develop leadership and personal relationship skills, and guided him to pursue his education and career choices in natural resources. He is honored to be part of providing these same opportunities to the youth of New Mexico.



Appendix A: COMMISSION & STAFF BIOS

Agency Designees

Carmen Austin is Diné (Navajo Nation) from northern Arizona. She is the Climate Change Specialist for the New Mexico Forestry Division where she is responsible for implementing strategies of the Forest Action Plan that incorporate climate change science and adaptation and mitigation measures into forestry practices. These practices provide technical assistance to private forest landowners and allow the Forestry Division to participate with cooperators and collaboratives interested in natural resource management and watershed protection. Carmen has previously held positions as the Woody Biomass Program Manager in Santa Fe and District Forester on the Las Vegas District for the Forestry Division. Carmen also served as YCC Interim Director for a short duration. She is proficient on forest practices for the Commission. Carmen is a graduate of Northern Arizona University, School of Forestry and currently lives in Glorieta Pass with retired NM State Park Ranger Rick.



Cassie Ruiz has worked with Children, Youth and Families Department for seven years, both with Protective Services and Juvenile Justice. She is currently a Transition Services Coordinator with Juvenile Justice and is based in Carlsbad. She has worked with youth in various capacities for the majority of her adulthood. She practices and teaches yoga. She is passionate about the outdoors and runs, hikes, and paddle boards all over New Mexico.

Dana Vackar Strang Dana has a B.A. in Political Science from Colorado College and an M.A. from the University of New Mexico in Parks, Recreation and Environmental Education. Dana oversees the Surface Resources Division which manages watershed health, site remediation, illegal dumping, biological and cultural resources, investigations and compliance across 9 million acres of state trust land. The Division also manages over 3,500 active agricultural leases. Dana was Director of Education for Audubon New Mexico and the Randall Davey Audubon Center for six years. She is a former President and board member of the Environmental Education Association of New Mexico, a former Chair of the Youth Conservation Corps Commission, and is the statewide coordinator and teacher trainer for the national Leopold Education Project (LEP). Dana is a mother and wife, and enjoys horses, birding, hiking, and mountain biking.



Appendix A: COMMISSION & STAFF BIOS

YCC Staff



Sarah Wood, Executive Director. Sarah grew up in New Mexico where she studied biology and plant ecology. As a field biologist with the US Forest Service and New Mexico Natural Heritage Program, she lived and worked throughout New Mexico. She worked in four New Mexico State Parks over 17 years in a variety of positions. She volunteers with restoration and trail projects and will present nature programs to anyone who asks. She enjoys hiking, flash-flood watching and fixing things. She is thrilled to be with the YCC and supporting New Mexico's youth.

Morgan Tolen, Coordinator/Budget Analyst is originally from Southern California, and graduated from the California School of Culinary Arts Cordon Bleu. She worked as a chef in restaurants both in California and Santa Fe. She has been in Santa Fe for over 17 years and prior to joining the YCC, worked for the New Mexico Film Office. She is excited to be part of the YCC team. In her spare time, she loves spending time with her family and of course cooking.

