
SENATE BILL 5164

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senators Jacobsen, Hobbs, Shin, Rasmussen, Kilmer and Franklin

Read first time 01/11/2007. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation.

1 AN ACT Relating to expanding the veterans conservation corps
2 program; amending RCW 43.60A.150; amending 2005 c 257 s 1 (uncodified);
3 adding new sections to chapter 43.60A RCW; creating a new section; and
4 making appropriations.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 **Sec. 1.** 2005 c 257 s 1 (uncodified) is amended to read as follows:

7 The legislature finds that many Washington citizens are veterans of
8 armed forces conflicts that have important skills that may be employed
9 in projects that help to protect and restore Washington's rivers,
10 streams, lakes, marine waters, and open lands, and help to maintain
11 urban and suburban wastewater and storm water management systems. The
12 legislature further finds that such work has demonstrated benefits for
13 many veterans who are coping with posttraumatic stress disorder or have
14 other mental health or substance abuse disorders related to their
15 service in the armed forces. The legislature further finds that these
16 projects provide an opportunity for veterans to obtain on-the-job
17 training, leading to certification in specific skill sets and to living
18 wage employment in environmental restoration and stewardship.
19 Therefore, it is the purpose of this chapter to create ((a)) the

1 veterans conservation corps program ((that provides)) to assist
2 veterans in obtaining training, certification, and employment in the
3 field of environmental restoration and management, and to provide state
4 funding assistance for projects that restore Washington's waters,
5 forests, and habitat through the ((primary)) participation of ((such))
6 veterans.

7 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.60A.150 and 2005 c 257 s 2 are each amended to read
8 as follows:

9 (1) The Washington veterans conservation corps is created. The
10 department shall establish enrollment procedures for the program.
11 Enrollees may choose to participate in either or both the volunteer
12 projects list authorized in subsection (2) of this section, and the
13 training, certification, and placement program authorized in section 3
14 of this act.

15 (2) The department shall create a list of veterans ((with
16 posttraumatic stress disorder and related conditions)) who are
17 interested in working on projects that restore Washington's natural
18 habitat. ((The list shall be referred to as the veterans conservation
19 corps.)) The department shall promote the opportunity to volunteer for
20 the veterans conservation corps through its local counselors and
21 representatives. Only veterans who grant their approval may be
22 included on the list. The department shall consult with the salmon
23 recovery board, the interagency committee for outdoor recreation, the
24 department of natural resources, the department of fish and wildlife,
25 and the state parks and recreation commission to determine the most
26 effective ways to market the veterans conservation corps to agencies
27 and local sponsors of habitat restoration projects.

28 ~~((The department shall submit a report to the appropriate~~
29 ~~committees of the legislature by December 1, 2009, on the use of~~
30 ~~veterans conservation corps members by state agencies and local~~
31 ~~sponsors of habitat restoration projects.))~~

32 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 43.60A RCW
33 to read as follows:

34 (1) The department shall assist veterans enrolled in the veterans
35 conservation corps with obtaining employment in conservation programs
36 and projects that restore Washington's natural habitat, maintain and

1 steward local, state, and federal forest lands and other outdoor lands,
2 maintain and improve urban and suburban storm water management
3 facilities and other water management facilities, and other
4 environmental maintenance, stewardship, and restoration projects. The
5 department shall consult with the workforce training and education
6 coordinating board, the state board for community and technical
7 colleges, the higher education coordinating board, the employment
8 security department, and other state agencies administering
9 conservation corps programs, to incorporate training, education, and
10 certification in environmental restoration and management fields into
11 the program. The department may enter into agreements with community
12 colleges, private schools, state or local agencies, or other entities
13 to provide training and educational courses as part of the enrollee
14 benefits from the program.

15 (2) The department may receive gifts, grants, federal funds, or
16 other moneys from public or private sources, for the use and benefit of
17 the veterans conservation corps program. The funds shall be deposited
18 to the veterans conservation corps account created in section 6 of this
19 act.

20 (3) The department shall submit a report to the appropriate
21 committees of the legislature by December 1, 2008, on the status of the
22 veterans conservation corps program, including the number of enrollees
23 employed in projects, training provided, certifications earned,
24 employment placements achieved, program funding provided from all
25 sources, and the results of the pilot project authorized in section 4
26 of this act.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** During fiscal year 2008, the department of
28 veterans affairs may enter an agreement with a local government or
29 other entity for use of veterans conservation corps enrollees in a
30 project or projects, where the enrollees' work on the project or
31 projects will be commenced before June 30, 2008. Up to one million
32 dollars appropriated from the veterans conservation corps account in
33 the biennial budget act may be expended by the department for this
34 agreement.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 43.60A RCW
36 to read as follows:

1 (1) The department shall collaborate with the state agencies
2 implementing the Washington conservation corps, created in chapter
3 43.220 RCW, to maximize the utilization of both conservation corps
4 programs. The department shall invite the participation of the
5 Washington state commission for national and community service into
6 this collaboration. These agencies shall work together to identify
7 stewardship and maintenance projects on agency-managed lands that are
8 suitable for work by veterans conservation corps enrollees. The
9 department may expend funds appropriated to the veterans conservation
10 corps program to defray the costs of education, training, and
11 certification associated with the enrollees participating in such
12 projects.

13 (2) By September 30, 2007, the department shall provide to the
14 office of financial management and to the appropriate committees of the
15 senate and house of representatives a report that:

16 (a) Identifies projects on state agency-managed lands that are
17 currently planned for veterans conservation corps enrollee
18 participation;

19 (b) Identifies additional projects on state agency-managed lands
20 that are suitable for veterans conservation corps enrollee
21 participation and for which funding is currently in place for such
22 participation; and

23 (c) Identifies additional projects on state agency-managed lands
24 for which project implementation has been funded or is included in the
25 agency's multibiennial stewardship plans, and that are suitable for
26 veterans conservation corps enrollee participation in the event that
27 additional funding is provided to the department for associated
28 training, education, and certification.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 43.60A RCW
30 to read as follows:

31 The veterans conservation corps account is created in the state
32 treasury. All moneys appropriated to the account or directed to the
33 account from other sources must be deposited in the account. Moneys in
34 the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from
35 the account may be used only for purposes of the veterans conservation
36 corps program.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 43.60A RCW
2 to read as follows:

3 (1) The department shall seek to enter agreements with the national
4 park service, the United States forest service, the United States fish
5 and wildlife service, and other federal agencies managing lands in
6 Washington, for the employment of veterans conservation corps enrollees
7 in maintenance, restoration, and stewardship projects. Up to twenty
8 percent of the costs of the veterans conservation corps enrollees
9 participation in a federal project may be provided by the department,
10 including the costs of training provided on the project.

11 (2) By September 30, 2008, the department shall provide a report to
12 the governor and appropriate committees of the senate and house of
13 representatives regarding agreements entered with federal agencies to
14 employ veteran conservation corps crews on federal land projects, and
15 any revisions to the program needed to increase the number of these
16 agreements.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** A new section is added to chapter 43.60A RCW
18 to read as follows:

19 (1) During calendar years 2007 and 2008 the salmon recovery funding
20 board shall cooperate with the department of veterans affairs to inform
21 salmon habitat project sponsors of the availability of veterans
22 conservation corps crews to perform project work. From applications
23 submitted, the board and the department shall identify projects that
24 propose work suitable for corps crews and located near where crews are
25 based or may be created. The department may provide the project
26 applicants with information regarding the benefits of employing a
27 veterans conservation corps crew in the project, including funding that
28 the department may make available to assist with the project. Such
29 funding shall be considered by the salmon recovery funding board as
30 matched funding in evaluating the project for salmon recovery funding
31 board funding.

32 (2) As an element of the report required under section 3(3) of this
33 act, the salmon recovery funding board and the department shall jointly
34 report to the governor and the appropriate committees of the senate and
35 house of representatives regarding projects funded during the 2007 and
36 2008 grant cycles that employ veterans conservation corps crews. The

1 report shall include recommendations for increasing the use of corps
2 crews in salmon habitat projects that receive funding from the salmon
3 recovery funding board.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** (1) The sum of one million dollars, or as
5 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year
6 ending June 30, 2008, from the general fund to the department of
7 veterans affairs for the purposes of this act.

8 (2) The sum of one million dollars, or as much thereof as may be
9 necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009,
10 from the general fund to the department of veterans affairs for the
11 purposes of this act.

12 (3) Of the amounts appropriated in subsections (1) and (2) of this
13 section, the department of veterans affairs may allocate up to two
14 hundred thousand dollars in each fiscal year as state match for federal
15 funds that are provided to implement the veterans conservation corps
16 program.

17 (4) It is further the intent of the legislature to increase
18 appropriations to the veterans conservation corps in the 2009-2011
19 biennium, to a level of five million dollars for the biennium from
20 state appropriations, and to seek not less than fifteen million dollars
21 in federal funding for the program.

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