



# Media Advisory

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Midewin 02-04  
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## **MIDEWIN SEEKS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR SUMMER JOBS**

Are you between the ages of 15 and 18, and currently enrolled in high school? Are you wondering how you will spend the summer? Would you like to spend part of your summer working and learning in the outdoors, and get paid to do it? Would you like to help restore a prairie at the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie? If you answered YES to these questions, the Youth Conservation Corps may be what you are looking for.

(Wilmington) January 31, 2002 -- The Forest Service is now accepting applications for the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) program at the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. YCC is a summer employment program for young men and women ages 15 through 18, who work, learn, and earn together by doing projects on public land. The goals of the program are to accomplish needed conservation work on public lands, provide gainful employment for America's youth, and provide an opportunity for participants to develop an understanding and appreciation for the nation's natural environment and heritage.

Candidates must:

- 1) Be between the ages of 15 and 18, and enrolled in school.
- 2) Be permanent residents of the United States, its territories or possessions.
- 3) Be able to work outdoors.
- 4) Have transportation to and from the Midewin headquarters located 4 miles north of Wilmington on Illinois Highway 53.

- 5) Possess a Social Security card and have a work permit (if required) prior to the first working day of the YCC program (June 17, 2002).
- 6) Have a bank account for automatic deposit of paychecks.
- 7) Have no history of serious criminal or other anti-social behavior that might jeopardize their safety or that of others.
- 8) Have the consent and permission of a parent or legal guardian to apply.

The eight-week YCC program will begin on Monday, June 17, and end on Friday, August 9. Participants will work 40 hours a week for \$5.15 per hour.

Applications for the YCC program at Midewin may be obtained by calling Midewin at (815) 423-6370; by writing to the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie at 30071 South State Route 53, Wilmington, IL 60481; or by visiting Midewin's website at [www.fs.fed.us/mntp](http://www.fs.fed.us/mntp).

Applications must be received in the Midewin office by 4:00 p.m., Monday, April 15. Participants will be selected in a random drawing on April 22 and notified by April 30. A waiting list will be held on file in the event a vacancy should occur prior to start up of the program on June 17.

This is the sixth year for the YCC program at Midewin. Applicants have included students from Wilmington, Coal City, Gardner, Mokena, Lincoln-Way, Minooka, Joliet West, and Joliet Central high schools. The YCC crew has helped plant and maintain the native plant nursery, enhance grassland bird habitat, construct fence needed to manage cattle grazing, constructed trails to handicapped accessible hunting blinds, and assisted with an archeological dig. A portion of each work week is spent in educational activities. These include field trips to nearby natural areas and historic sites, and assisting resource professionals with various research activities. Participants are paid for the time spent in educational activities.

Additional information may be obtained by calling Pat Thrasher at (815) 423-6370.

The Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie was established in 1996 and is the first national tallgrass prairie in the country. It is administered by the USDA Forest Service, in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and with the support of hundreds of volunteers and partner agencies, businesses, and organizations. As the largest portion of the peacetime conversion of the former Joliet Army Ammunition Plan, Midewin remains largely closed to the public while the Army completes the clean up of contamination remaining from decades of TNT manufacturing and packaging. Although public access is restricted, activities at Midewin are gradually increasing to include interim hiking trails, escorted tours, volunteer work projects, and deer and turkey hunting in some areas.

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## United States Youth Conservation Corps

The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) is a well-balanced work-learn-earn program that develops an understanding and appreciation in participating youth of the nation's environment and heritage. It is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, and by the U.S. Department of the Interior--Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service. YCC offers gainful summer employment to youth, for approximately eight weeks, in a healthful outdoor atmosphere.

Enrollees will be paid the minimum wage for a 40 hour work week. Most projects will enroll an equal number of males and females.

Projects include building trails, maintaining fences, cleaning up campgrounds, improving wildlife habitat, and thinning timber stands. Participants will do hard physical work and may be exposed to insects, poison oak and ivy, adverse weather, and difficult working conditions.

### Eligibility Requirements

Young men and women, 15 through 18 years of age, who are permanent residents of the United States, its Territories, or possessions, are eligible for employment without regard to social, economic, racial, or ethnic backgrounds. Handicapped youth who can effectively participate in most YCC activities are eligible. Youth must have no history of serious criminal or other antisocial behavior that might endanger their safety or that of others; have or be able to obtain a work permit as required under the laws of their State; have a Social Security number or have made application for one; be willing and able to work hard and participate in most work projects. Employment is without regard to Civil Service or classification laws, rules, or regulations.

### How You Can Enroll

To apply, youth meeting these qualifications should complete this YCC application form and return it at the earliest possible date to the nearest unit of a National Park, National Forest, or national Fish and Wildlife Refuge or Hatchery.

Applicants will be selected on a random basis and will be notified of selection. Demographic information such as age, race, and family income is not used in the selection process.

#### PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT FOR THE YCC APPLICATION (FS-1800-18) 10/94

The following information is provided to comply with the Privacy Act of 1974 (PL-579). 5 U.S.C 301 and 7 CFR 260 authorize acceptance of the information requested on this form. The data will be used in the selection process of applicants for the YCC Crews, and for contacting the selected applicants. Furnishing your name and social security number is voluntary. However, your application cannot be processed without this information.



According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no agency may conduct or sponsor, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. The OMB approval number for this collection is 0596-0084. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 3 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

YCC complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. (29 U.S. Code 794). Under this Act and implementing Regulations, handicapped persons "who, with reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions" of the YCC are eligible. (7 CFR Part 15b and 43 CFR Part 17).