

**84.991 MINNESOTA CONSERVATION CORPS.**

Subdivision 1. **Transfer.** (a) The Minnesota Conservation Corps is moved to the Friends of the Minnesota Conservation Corps, an existing nonprofit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, doing business as the Minnesota Conservation Corps under the supervision of a board of directors.

(b) The expenditure of state funds by the Minnesota Conservation Corps is subject to audit by the legislative auditor and regular annual report to the legislature in general and specifically to the house of representatives and senate committees with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources policy and finance.

Subd. 2. **Staff; corps members.** (a) Staff employed by the Minnesota Conservation Corps are not state employees, but, at the option of the board of directors of the nonprofit corporation and at the expense of the corporation or its staff, employees who are in the employ of the Minnesota Conservation Corps on or before June 30, 2003, may continue to participate in state retirement and deferred compensation that apply to state employees.

(b) Employment as a Minnesota Conservation Corps member is noncovered employment for purposes of eligibility for unemployment benefits under chapter 268.

(c) The Minnesota Conservation Corps is authorized to continue to have staff and corps members participate in the state of Minnesota workers' compensation program through the Department of Natural Resources. Staff and corps members' claim and administrative costs must be allocated and set annually by the Department of Natural Resources in a manner that is consistent with how these costs are allocated across that agency's operations. The Friends of the Minnesota Conservation Corps shall establish and follow loss-control strategies that are consistent with loss-control activities of the Department of Natural Resources. In the event that the Friends of the Minnesota Conservation Corps becomes insolvent or cannot otherwise fund its claim and administrative costs, liability for these costs shall be assumed by the Department of Natural Resources.

(d) The Minnesota Conservation Corps is a training and service program and exempt from Minnesota prevailing wage guidelines.

Subd. 3. **State and other agency collaboration.** The Departments of Natural Resources, Agriculture, Public Safety, Transportation, and other appropriate state agencies must constructively collaborate with the Minnesota Conservation Corps.

Subd. 4. **Equipment and service purchases; state contracts.** The Minnesota Conservation Corps may purchase or lease equipment and services, including fleet, through state contracts administered by the commissioner of administration or the Department of Natural Resources.

Subd. 5. **Limitations on Minnesota Conservation Corps projects.** Each employing state or local agency must certify that the assignment of Minnesota Conservation Corps members will not result in the displacement of currently employed workers or workers on seasonal layoff, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours of nonovertime work, wages, or other employment benefits. Supervising agencies that participate in the program may not terminate, lay off, reduce the seasonal hours, or reduce the working hours of any employee for the purpose of using a corps member with available funds. The positions and job duties of corps members employed in projects shall be submitted to affected exclusive representatives prior to actual assignment.

Subd. 6. **Joint powers.** Section 471.59 relating to joint exercise of powers applies to the Minnesota Conservation Corps.

**History:** 2003 c 128 art 1 s 35