

Civilian Conservation Corps Time Machine:



Use the QR Code below to watch an introductory video on the CCC. After you have watched at least the first 5 minutes of the 6:44 minute clip you may see your teacher to gather your Break Out box and begin to escape.



Civilian Conservation Corps Time Machine:



Civilian Conservation Corps, New Deal Project: Virginia Still Enjoys Projects Today



Franklin D. Roosevelt

“Our greatest primary task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously. It can be accomplished in part by direct recruiting by the Government itself, treating the task as we would treat the emergency of a war, but at the same time, through this employment, accomplishing greatly needed projects to stimulate and reorganize the use of our national resources,”

–President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, March 1933

**Find 4-letter key word from FDR’s
famous quote about the mission
of the CCC.**

Civilian Conservation Corps Time Machine:



**Encyclopedia
Virginia**



Civilian Conservation Corps

Contributed by Ronald L. Heinemann

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was the most popular of United States president Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal programs, even winning the endorsement of Virginia's conservative U.S. senator Harry Flood Byrd Sr. (While Byrd was a fellow Democrat, he advocated a small federal government that did not spend ahead of means or interfere in state affairs.) Designed to alleviate the widespread

unemployment caused by the Great Depression, the CCC recruited unmarried, unemployed young men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five to spend six months in camps doing conservation work, primarily in the nation's forests. They were paid \$1 a day, most of which was sent to their parents in \$25 monthly allotments. The War Department ran most of the camps on a military basis, providing supervision and discipline. Although some critics saw a fascist-like militarism in such circumstances, the CCC had the positive, although unintended consequence of preparing men for service in World War II (1939–1945). At its peak, the CCC employed half-a-million men in more than 2,500 camps, and 2.5 million men enlisted during its nine-year existence.



The first camp, Camp Roosevelt, was set up at Luray in the George Washington National Forest in 1933. In its nine years of work, the CCC spent \$109 million in Virginia, the fifth-largest state expenditure in the country. The state ranked fourth in the number of camps (more than eighty, twelve of which were for black Virginians) and seventeenth in the total number of enrollees. The CCC employed 107,210 men statewide, 64,762 of whom were Virginia youth and 10,435 of whom were local camp officers and supervisors. The agency put most of its effort into controlling erosion and flooding and improving forest landscaping and wildlife conditions. Its contributions in Virginia were significant: 15.2 million trees planted in reforestation and erosion control, 986 bridges constructed, fire hazards reduced over

152,000 acres, 2,128 miles of new telephone line strung, and 1.3 million fish stocked. The conservationists also worked on the restoration of historical sites at Jamestown, Williamsburg, Yorktown, Fredericksburg, and Spotsylvania and combated floods along the James and Potomac rivers.



The development of a state park system was the most important legacy of the CCC in Virginia, which before 1933 had had no state parks. Providing labor and materials, the CCC created a \$5 million system that cost Virginia only \$100,000—"the biggest bargain of the New Deal." On June 15, 1936, six state parks—Westmoreland in Westmoreland County, Seashore (later First Landing State Park) in Princess Anne County, Fairy Stone in Patrick County, Staunton River in Halifax County, Douthat in Bath and Alleghany counties, and Hungry Mother in Smyth County west of Marion—were opened. CCC workers also labored on the federal projects of the Shenandoah National Park, the Skyline Drive, and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The war and dwindling unemployment caused the termination of the CCC in 1942. The final Virginia report summarized its work: "In no State did the CCC make a greater or more lasting contribution to the well-being of its citizens than it did in Virginia."

How much money did the CCC spend in Virginia?

Civilian Conservation Corps Time Machine:



Monuments to the New Deal can be Found Here



Civilian Conservation Corps workers based at Yorktown transformed the landscape with plantings during the construction of the Yorktown-to-Williamsburg leg of the Colonial Parkway in the 1930s. (Courtesy of Colonial National Historical Park)



Mark St. John Erickson,
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A legacy of New Deal landmarks

Seventy-five years after the New Deal began to wind down, many of the public works projects the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration brought to Depression-era Hampton Roads through such programs as the Works Progress Administration and Civilian Conservation Corps are still big parts of the Hampton Roads landscape.

Here's a checklist exploring that legacy:

Historical Park and Yorktown National Battlefield, Yorktown. CCC workers based at what was then Colonial National Monument in 1933 transformed the west bank of the York River between Yorktown and Williamsburg, reshaping the landscape, clearing a path for the road and planting thousands of trees to form a "natural canopy" for the parkway. They also restored the Revolutionary War earthworks and built tour roads on the battlefield.

First Landing State Park (formerly Seashore State Park), Virginia Beach. Virginia's first-planned and most-visited state park was built by a small army of more than 600 African-American CCC workers beginning in 1933 and features an extensive network of trails and cabins constructed during the New Deal era.

Aberdeen Gardens, Hampton. Initiated in 1934 by Hampton Institute — now Hampton University — and constructed with a \$245,000 grant from the federal Resettlement Administration, this 440-acre subdivision provided 158 homes, a school and a vital commercial center for local black families in a landmark project that received national recognition during a 1938 visit by Eleanor Roosevelt.

Former Hampton City Hall, Hampton. Completed in 1939, this \$77,193 Art Deco structure was constructed with the help of \$25,545 from the Public Works Administration. It later served as a court building before being converted into extended-stay apartments in the early 2000s.

Phoebus Post Office, Hampton. This brick Colonial Revival structure was built on Mellen Street with WPA funds in 1938. Three years later, its interior was decorated with "Chesapeake Fisherman," a mural painted by William H. Calfee for the Treasury Section of Fine Arts program.

Smithfield Post Office, Smithfield. Completed in 1941, this brick Colonial Revival building was decorated the same year with "Captain John Smith Trading with the Indians," a mural painted by William Abbot Cheever and commissioned by the Treasury Section of Fine Arts program.

Norfolk Botanical Garden, Norfolk. The 155-acre garden began in 1938 with a \$76,278 WPA grant, which paid more than 200 African-American women and 20 African-American men 25 cents an hour to clear dense vegetation, build a levee and plant 4,000 azaleas, 2,000 rhododendrons, several thousand miscellaneous shrubs and trees and 100 bushels of daffodils. A second grant of \$138,553 added still more plants and trails in 1939, completing the core of the modern garden.

Ocean View Elementary School, Norfolk. Public Works Administration funding helped complete this two-story reinforced-concrete structure in March 1939, replacing a hazardous fire-trap with 22 modern classrooms, an auditorium, lunchroom, playground and new instructional equipment.

Cary Field (now Zable Stadium), College of William and Mary, Williamsburg. Constructed in 1935, the college landmark was partly designed as an agricultural exposition ground in order to secure \$138,395 in PWA funding. But no cattle ever walked through the entrance that ate up so many of the mid-field seats.

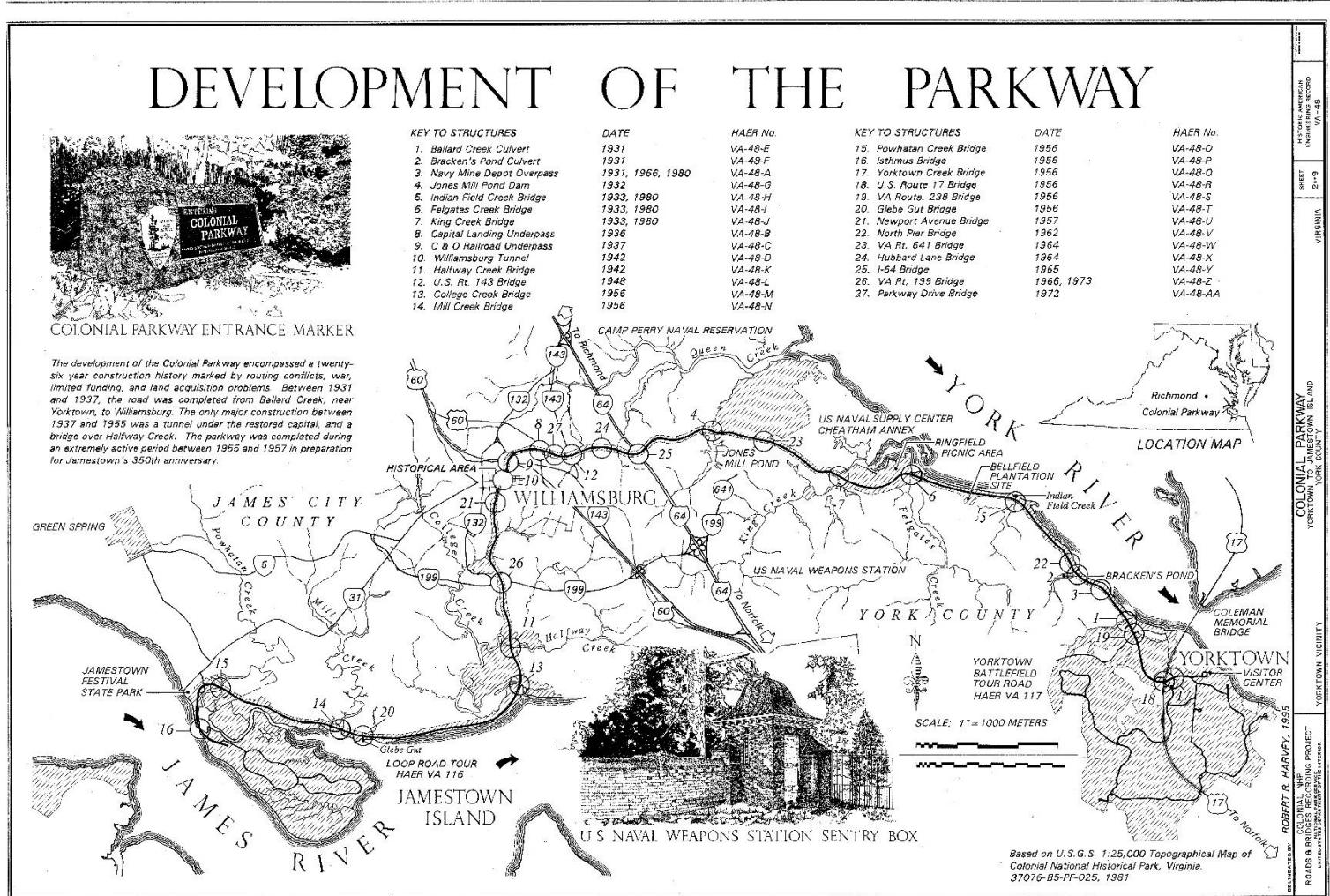
No longer standing is the **8-foot high-speed wind tunnel** completed at Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory in Hampton — now NASA Langley Research Center — in 1936 with the help of \$266,000 in PWA funding. The first large tunnel of its kind in the world, the facility played a key role in improving the design of military aircraft used in World War II. It was demolished in 2011.

When was the CCC established and work began at Colonial National Monument?

Civilian Conservation Corps Time Machine:



The CCC built the Colonial Parkway that connected all three points of the Historical Triangle, Jamestown, Williamsburg, and Yorktown. If you were to travel from Jamestown to Colonial National Historical Park in Yorktown, what cardinal directions would take?



Civilian Conservation Corps Time Machine:



The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, 1933-1942: An Administrative History

Chapter One: A Brief History of the Civilian Conservation Corps



ESTABLISHMENT

Franklin Delano Roosevelt took the oath of office as the 32nd president of the United States on March 4, 1933. He brought to that office a desire to conserve both the natural and human resources of the nation. In his inaugural address he only indirectly referred to the planned conservation program, but on March 9 he called a conference with the secretaries of agriculture, interior, and war, the director of the budget, the Army's judge advocate general, and the solicitor for the Department of the Interior to discuss the program's outline. The president wanted the Army to recruit 500,000 men and run the conditioning camps for them; the men were then to be transferred to work camps, where the Departments of Agriculture and Interior would oversee the actual work projects and camps. He asked that a draft bill be submitted to him for consideration by that evening. Edward Finney, the solicitor for the Department of the Interior, and Colonel Kyle Rucken, the Army's judge advocate general, worked all day and brought him an outline by 9:00 p.m. This unemployment relief bill called for the employment of men on public works projects and conservation tasks. On March 13, 1933, this bill was introduced in Congress, but it was immediately withdrawn because of opposition and the need for modifications.

Still determined to establish a conservation work program for unemployed youth, Roosevelt directed the secretaries of interior, war, and agriculture to meet on March 15 to work out the precise details of the program. The secretaries recommended that unemployment be eased by three methods: first, through direct relief grants to the states; second, by a large public works program; and third, by a carefully designed soil erosion/forestry work program. These ideas were accepted, for the most part, and incorporated into "an act for the relief of unemployment through the performance of useful public work, and for other purposes." This legislation was resubmitted to Congress on March 21. It stipulated that the unemployed could work for the prevention of forest fires and for soil erosion, flood control, removal of undesirable plants, insect control, and construction or maintenance of paths, tracks, and fire lanes on public lands. In return, those enrolled in this program would be provided with appropriate clothing, daily subsistence, medical attention, hospitalization, and a cash allowance.

This legislation was accompanied by Roosevelt's proposal for emergency conservation work. He believed that such work would not interfere with normal employment and that if the legislation was passed within two weeks, 250,000 men could be given temporary employment by early summer. He summed up the bill in the following manner:

This enterprise is an established part of our national policy. It will conserve our precious natural resources. It will pay dividends to the present and future generations. It will make improvements in National and State domains which have been largely forgotten in the past few years of industrial development.

More important, however, than the material gains will be the moral and spiritual value of such work. The overwhelming majority of unemployed Americans, who are now walking the streets and receiving private or public relief, would infinitely prefer to work. We can take a vast army of these unemployed out into healthful surroundings. We can eliminate to some extent at least the threat that enforced idleness brings to spiritual and moral stability. It is not a panacea for all the unemployment but it is an essential step in this emergency. I ask its adoption.

As President Roosevelt signed the bill, he commented that he would like to see the program begin in two weeks. On April 3, representatives of the Departments of War, Labor, Interior, and Agriculture gathered at the White House to discuss policy and implement the legislation, and President Roosevelt enumerated the duties of each agency. The Department of Labor was to initiate a nationwide recruiting program; the Army was to condition and transport enrollees to the work camps; and the Park Service and Forest Service were to operate the camps and supervise the work assignments.

During the April 3 meeting it was also decided that the initial enrollment for the conservation work would be limited to single men between the ages of 18 and 25 who were willing to send up to \$25 of their \$30 wage check to their families. The president insisted that each camp be composed of 200 men doing work programs designed to last for six months and that he personally approve the camp locations and work assignments. Both the Forest Service and the Park Service opposed the 200-man quota because many of their jobs required fewer men. But they modified their programs to conform with presidential wishes. Another stipulation was that the bulk of the funds spent be on labor costs relating to work projects and not for the procurement of expensive equipment--that is, a bulldozer was not to be purchased, because there were enough men to do the same work. The program was to be started in the East and extended to the rest of the country as quickly as possible. The Park Service would be allowed to hire a limited number of skilled local men known as locally employed men (LEM). For these men the marriage and age stipulations would be waived. The bulk of the work force, however, was to be taken from the unemployed in large urban population centers.

On April 5 the ECW advisory council convened for its first official meeting, and plans were developed for the enrollment of the first 25,000 youths. W. Frank Persons, the representative from the Department of Labor, had also contacted representatives from 17 of the country's largest cities to meet in Washington on April 5 to develop regulations for selecting enrollees. On April 7 Henry Rich of Alexandria, Virginia, was inducted as the first enrollee and sent to Camp Roosevelt near Luray, Virginia, which was under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service. By April 12 Colorado and Colonial national monuments, Sequoia, Yosemite, Hot Springs, Mesa Verde, and Great Smokies national parks, and the proposed Acadia and Shenandoah national parks notified the Park Service Washington staff that they were prepared to make work assignments for ECW enrollees. On April 25 Director Fechner announced that ECW camps would be placed in Skyland and Big Meadows in the proposed Shenandoah National Park.

President Roosevelt's goal to have 250,000 youths at work in the nation's parks and forests by July 1 worked a tremendous strain on the staffs of the administering agencies. The technical agencies, as the Forest Service and Park Service were referred to, were hampered by the overwhelming number of enrollees recruited, approval of work assignments, and restrictive policies regarding campsite selection. The NPS staff often worked 16 hours a day and seven days a week. By May 10 a crisis point had been reached, and it appeared that the president's objectives would not be met. The ECW advisory council worked up a program calling for more latitude of action and exemption from some government regulations. This program was brought before President Roosevelt on May 12 and received his concurrence.

During this early mobilization period, three new enrollment categories were opened. On April 14 enrollment privileges were extended to American Indians, who were generally allowed to go to their work projects on a daily

basis and return home at night. On April 22 enrollment was opened to locally employed men. On May 11 veterans of World War I were permitted to join the ECW. These enrollees, men in their 30s and 40s, were granted special camps, operated on a more lenient basis than the regular camps, and were selected by the Veterans Administration rather than the Labor Department.

By mid-May the Park Service was prepared for 12,600 men to be employed within national parks and monuments in 63 approved camps. On May 11 the first three camps officially began operation when young men were sent from Fort Monroe, Virginia, to the proposed Shenandoah National Park and to Yorktown in Colonial National Monument. Another 10 parks planned on opening their camps in May and June. By the end of May ECW enrollees were boarded on trains in Fort Monroe and Fort Meade, Maryland, for their camp destinations in the Rocky Mountain states. By June a total of 50 camps were authorized for NPS areas, and later another 20 camps were authorized and manned. Eight of these 70 camps were in military parks and monuments, which at that time were administered by the War Department. Before the end of the first enrollment period (June 1 to September 30, 1933), these areas became part of the national park system. By July 1 approximately 34,000 youths were enrolled in 172 emergency conservation camps in 35 states.

The nationwide quota of 250,000 recruits, which included the NPS quota, was achieved by this date, but the average number of enrollees in NPS camps during the first period was 36 below the presidential ideal of 200 workers per camp.

- 1. Where were the first three CCC camps that officially began operating on May 11 located?**

The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, 1933-1942: An Administrative History

Chapter Four: Contributions



ARCHEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL WORK

The CCC not only had an impact on conservation programs in natural areas, but also played an important role in the development of historical and archeological work. When the ECW began, NPS officials thought primarily of using the enrollees on park development and nature conservation projects. However, in the summer of 1933 the War Department transferred 11 national military parks, 11 national cemeteries, 10 national battlefields, 10 national monuments, three memorials, and two national parks to the Park Service, and this increased the magnitude of work to be accomplished. To staff, maintain, and develop these new areas, the NPS used the various emergency relief programs and funds.

- 2. The CCC worked on conservation and what other two types of work?**

Some park officials were concerned about the ability of ECW workers to accomplish archeological and historical projects, as was the War Department. In a letter to CCC Director Fechner, General Douglas MacArthur commented:

It must be borne in mind that the development of these parks has for its purpose the restoration of the battle fields and preserving historic locations, monuments and sites of battle. Consequently, such work as is done must be performed with this in view, in order that the trench system and other historic points may not be destroyed but retained in their present condition or restored to the condition they were in at the time of the battle. In other words, the Emergency Conservation Work to be performed must be in accordance with the plan of restoration already determined by the Commissions and approved by the Secretary of War.

Despite these concerns, the Park Service embarked on a bold experiment using ECW funds to hire students with backgrounds in history and archeology to act as technical supervisors and researchers in the park and monument areas. At Morristown National Historical Park, the ECW enrollees began their 1933 work by clearing underbrush and doing fire protection work; then they did historical research to determine chain of ownership and archeological investigation to uncover data for planning historic restoration. Historical technicians were also used as interpretive guides.

In 1934 ECW enrollees were given training in archeology and lectures on history before being put to work on cultural resource projects. In an address to a conference of park superintendents, NPS Chief Historian Verne Chatelain requested that before beginning work in historical areas superintendents consult with the historical technicians and the Washington Office to assure the best protection for the historical/cultural resources. Starting that year the historical technicians also wrote interpretive materials for the parks and planned park development.

Historical and archeological projects were initiated in 1934 in many parks, including Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, Colonial National Monument, Grand Canyon National Park, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park, Petersburg National Battlefield, Shiloh National Military Park, Vicksburg National Military Park, and Morristown National Historical Park. At Grand Canyon National Park the ECW enrollees were trained to do archeological excavations for Indian artifacts. After excavation, these relics were cleaned, restored, and placed on display. In military parks, the enrollees restored rifle-pits, rebuilt earthworks, excavated for relics, and readied these artifacts for display. Battlefields were also restored, and portions of ammunition dumps, soldiers' huts, dummy gun emplacements, and other items of military interest were reconstructed. The NPS policy was that restoration work would be limited to only those structures necessary to show the significance of the park. For example, the reconstruction of an entire fort would not be permitted, whereas portions might be reconstructed. At Colonial National Monument a major archeological excavation project was undertaken to conduct research on Jamestown. So much restoration and reconstruction work was undertaken at Colonial National Monument that a shop was established to make reproductions of colonial furniture and military equipment. Later, this shop constructed replica furnishings for other national and state park areas. It was hoped that this work would prepare the enrollees for carpentry jobs outside the ECW.

3. What four projects did CCC workers at Colonial National Park work?

In 1935 ECW Director Fechner praised the archeological work being done by enrollees at Morristown National Historical Park and the underwater archeological work at Colonial National Monument (salvaging two sunken British Revolutionary War frigates in the waters off Yorktown). He further commended the ECW for outstanding erosion control work at Vicksburg National Military Park, which helped preserve the site of Fort Nogales (Fort Hill), many monuments, and the historic battlefield topography. During that year enrollees undertook the reconstruction of historic siege lines at Colonial National Monument. To reduce the cost of maintenance for the reconstruction work, enrollees experimented with concrete made to resemble wood for wooden members of gun platforms and other features.

The increasing historical and archeological program brought on by the transfer of War Department areas to the National Park Service and the need to better administer the cultural resources programs resulted in the formation of the Branch of Historic Sites and Buildings on July 1, 1935. The new branch relied on ECW funds to hire staff and carry out administrative responsibilities. A major concern of the Park Service director was that, with the rapid expansion of the cultural resources program, historical and archeological projects would be undertaken without adequate professional supervision. This situation was partially alleviated the next year when only people who passed civil service examinations were given permanent field positions in history and archeology.

The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, 1933-1942: An Administrative History

Chapter Five: Overall Accomplishments, 1933-1942



Director Fechner talks to enrollee during inspection trip of camp NP-14 Rock Creek Park, Washington, D.C.
Courtesy of the National Archives.

Throughout the existence of the ECW/CCC, the program provided work for 5 percent of the total United States male population. President Roosevelt's primary goal for the program was to take unemployed youths out of the cities and build up their health and morale while contributing to the economic recovery of the country. Not only would they receive wages for their work, but money would also be sent to their dependents so that the program would provide benefits to the greatest number of people. The work was to restore the enrollees to physical health and increase their confidence in themselves and the nation. A secondary goal of the program was to effect needed conservation measures on forest, park, and farm lands. A related goal was to provide the nation with increased recreational opportunities. The Park Service saw the program as a way to accomplish conservation and development within the national parks and to assist in the creation and enlargement of a nationwide state parks system.

The first accomplishment of the CCC was having 250,000 young men working within three months of its establishment--the greatest peacetime mobilization of American youth. The next major accomplishment came in the coordination and development of a nationwide state parks program, one that was instrumental in establishing the first state parks for Virginia, West Virginia, South Carolina, Mississippi, and New Mexico. In 1934, Oklahoma and Montana designated their first parklands. New parks were added or existing parks were expanded in 17 other states, including New York, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, California, and Michigan, as a direct result of the program. The state parks program also gave the Park Service an opportunity to set standards for park development and planning throughout the nation. Concerning national parks and monuments, the Park Service asserted that during the first few months of operation the ECW advanced the cause of forestry work dramatically. It was estimated that millions of dollars of annual losses caused by forest fires, tree diseases, insects, rodent infestation, and soil erosion were prevented by this conservation effort.

4. What was the first accomplishment of the CCC?

Beginning in 1933 a series of silent motion pictures was produced about the activities of the CCC in the national park areas. The motion pictures were part of a large campaign by the Roosevelt administration to gain support for

the New Deal programs. By 1935 more than 30 films had been made showing work at Morristown National Historical Park, Mesa Verde National Park, and Glacier National Park, among others. The films ranged in content and design from training films for enrollees in forest conservation work to educational films for the general public on the benefits of the program for local communities and the nation. In addition, Director Fechner encouraged the parks to keep the local press informed of program activities.

One sure way to focus local and national attention on the program was to have celebrities visit the camps, foremost of whom was President Roosevelt. The first presidential visit was made on August 12, 1933, to camps in the Shenandoah Valley. The presidential party included Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, ECW Director Robert Fechner, National Park Service Director Arno Cammerer, and other dignitaries. Roosevelt's inspection tour began in Harrisonburg, Virginia. By lunch time the party had reached the Park Service Big Meadows' camp on Skyline Drive, where the president stopped to have lunch with the youths--steak, mashed potatoes, green beans, salad, ice tea, and mock apple pie. Here a photograph session was held with reporters and a short motion picture was made in which Roosevelt talked about the progress of the program and how it had already benefitted the nation and American youth. He concluded by quipping, "The only difference between us is that I am told you men have put on an average of twelve pounds each. I am trying to lose twelve pounds." During the summer of 1934, the president and his family visited Glacier and Hawaii national parks, inspecting the camps. Earlier, Eleanor Roosevelt had visited several eastern camps, including the one at Acadia National Park.

In the summer of 1934, Director Fechner visited various CCC camps and was impressed with the amount of work accomplished in national parks. The work was becoming visible to the public in the form of new trails, campground facilities, and vista clearing. Within the national parks nearly 4,000 acres of campgrounds had been developed--ranging from primitive campsites to areas with fireplaces, parking spaces, and water systems. The Park Service estimated that the overall work in national parks and monuments amounted to more than \$9 million in permanent improvements, and the value of state park work was set at over \$27 million for the first two years.

In 1934 the Army conducted a contest to determine the finest company in each of the nine corps areas. The companies were given formal inspections and their records were reviewed by CCC officials to determine the winners. The black 323d company at Colonial National Monument won first place in the state of Virginia and second in the Third Corps area. That same year the black company from Colonial National Monument was invited to attend a William and Mary football game. Prior to the game the company marched out on the playing field, saluted the crowd, took their seats, and cheered for the home team. The William and Mary fans were delighted by the performance and sent complimentary letters to the superintendent.

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