



NEWS RELEASE

**USDA Forest Service Job Corps National Office
1617 Cole Boulevard, Building 17
Lakewood, CO 80401**

For Immediate Release
Date: February 5, 2021

Contact: Alicia D. Bennett
Phone: 208-731-9331
E-mail: alicia.d.bennett@usda.gov
Release No. #004-20210205

Trapper Creek Job Corps Civilian Conservation Begins Phased Reopening

Lakewood, Colo., February 5, 2021 - The Trapper Creek Job Corps Civilian Conservation (CCC) in Darby, Montana, welcomed back its first cohort of 18 Job Corps students on January 12, 2021, under a policy of phased readmission. The resumption of center operations was carefully planned with close adherence to COVID-19 safety guidance from the Department of Labor, the Forest Service, and local health officials to minimize the risk to students and staff.

Since Trapper Creek Job Corps closed in mid-March 2020, to ensure the health and safety of its students, teachers were forced to pivot to Distance Learning during the pandemic. On-center and off, Trapper Creek Job Corps staff are heavily invested in the health and welfare of students and staff made sure that even after students left the center, they had access to a social service support network. Trapper Creek staff are ecstatic to have their students back on campus allowing them to return to their mission of training and educating youth in-person.

Trapper Creek Job Corps staff are committed to ensuring a safe, healthy environment for both students and staff. Safe reopening in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic has required a reconfiguration of the Trapper Creek campus and all aspect of the daily lives of Job Corps students, along with how center staff carry out their mission of educating and training students.

The lives of the students, how they eat, sleep, learn, and recreate, have been adjusted to incorporate wearing masks, social distancing, frequent handwashing and use of personal protective equipment to ensure the campus remains safe. In addition to these and other rigorous safety precautions, upon arrival on-center returning students are tested for COVID-19, quarantined for 14 days, and then retested before being allowed to enter the general student population.

Students enroll at the Trapper Creek Job Corps Center because they've made a choice to move their lives in a new direction. Staff are grateful for the opportunity to return to the mission of transforming these young people's lives through career development and natural resource and conservation training.

The USDA Forest Service operates 24 Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers with a capacity to serve over 4,000 students. For more information, on the unique conservation mission of the Forest Service Job Corps Centers, please visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/opportunities-for-young-people/forest-service-job-corps>

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The Agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to State and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world.

If you or someone you know is interested in joining Job Corps, please call (800) 733-JOBS or (800) 733-5627 or you can also explore Job Corps training opportunities by visiting <http://recruiting.jobcorps.gov/>.

###

Photos Attached:

20210127-FS-TrapperCreekPostQuarantine-GM-001

Each day, Trapper Creek Job Corps dormitory staff gather students at 6:00 PM every day for dormitory meeting. Students and staff discuss the events of the day and plan out dormitory work assignments and student schedules for the following day. Photo by Gary Mitchell

20210127-FS-TrapperCreekPostQuarantine-GM-002

On the day of their release from quarantine, Trapper Creek Job Corps students anxiously wait for their last classmate to be tested for COVID-19 before being released into the general student population. The students are unaware that when they walk out the door, Trapper Creek staff have gathered to cheer them on as they re-enter the general student population. Photo by Gary Mitchell.