
Visualizing the Loss of the American Climate Corps

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Introduction

President Joe Biden announced the American Climate Corps (ACC) during Climate Week NYC in September 2023. The ACC was expected to create 20,000 jobs that employed young people.¹ Later that year, an inter-agency memorandum of understanding was published that outlined the program's goals, which included "[training] the next generation of clean energy, conservation, and climate resilience workers" and "[serving] all of America's communities by improving climate resilience, reducing climate pollution, and by creating economic opportunity in our urban, rural, suburban, and wilderness remote areas."² On Earth Day 2024, the administration officially launched the website for the program, which was a formal partnership between AmeriCorps, the US Forest Service, and several other agencies. The initial ACC website listed a few hundred climate corps jobs across the US.³ It served as a clearinghouse where young people looking for environmental service-related jobs could find positions and apply for them. Although the White House reported that the program included thousands of positions in its first year, because the program did not have formal funding, the ACC jobs listed on the program's website were almost entirely made up of pre-existing positions that had been brought under the unifying umbrella of the American Climate Corps.⁴

The Workforce Development and the 4Rs project began in 2023 with support from AmeriCorps, the National Park Service, and the USDA US Forest Service. In summer 2024, our research team began to study three separate corps programs that were being run through the AmeriCorps State & National program and were considered a part of the ACC: the California Conservation Corps' Watershed Stewardship Program (WSP), the ECO AmeriCorps Vermont, and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). When asked what it was like to serve in these corps, many members expressed that they were attracted by the opportunity to work on environmental issues with and for their local communities. Many described working on building community resilience through conservation projects, water quality issues, fish population monitoring, and environmental education. One WSP participant explained: "I grew up nearby and was most excited to engage with my community through the volunteer and educational components [of the corps]" (focus group, 22 November 2024). Another member, from ECO AmeriCorps in Vermont, explained the appeal of the work: "the connection between environment and community is very strong—you can't have one without the other" (focus group, 15 October 2024).

After the Republican victory in the 2024 election, the American Climate Corps was officially canceled. In the aftermath of the election, the ACC website was taken down and massive cuts were made across AmeriCorps and the other agencies that had been involved with the program.⁵ In April 2025, the administration froze \$400 million in funding for AmeriCorps programs, forcing 32,000

¹ Ella Nilsen and Donald Judd, "Biden Administration Launches First-of-Its-Kind American Climate Corps Program," CNN, September 20, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/09/20/politics/american-climate-corps-biden>.

² US EPA, "Biden-Harris Administration Announces New Agreement Between Seven Federal Agencies To Implement The American Climate Corps," News Release, December 19, 2023, <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-announces-new-agreement-between-seven-federal-agencies>.

³ Kate Yoder, "Have Climate Anxiety? The American Climate Corps Could Help.," *Grist*, May 16, 2024, <https://grist.org/health/american-climate-corps-mental-health-anxiety-action/>.

⁴ Kate Yoder, "The American Climate Corps Is over. What Even Was It?," *Grist*, January 15, 2025, <https://grist.org/politics/american-climate-corps-biden-jobs-program-trump/>.

⁵ Yoder, "The American Climate Corps Is over. What Even Was It?"



corpsmembers serving in communities across the country to pause or stop their work.⁶ During this period, all three of the programs we were studying experienced some kind of funding cut or pause that caused the program to be interrupted or cancelled altogether. Although some of the cuts to funding and personnel were restored by judicial order, there are broader consequences to those who serve, as well as the communities and states where they serve.⁷ For example, of the three ACC programs that we were studying, only the program in California continued as expected thanks to funding from the state of California. One of the programs in Vermont redirected its focus away from climate, and the other was completely shut down.

In this report, we use geographic data collected from the ACC website to visualize the loss of the Climate Corps. Although some of these positions may have survived the cancellation of the program and the cuts to funding, the Trump Administration's Executive Orders have effectively stopped efforts to integrate climate into federally coordinated service work, which was the real strength of the ACC as it was designed.

Methodology

The ACC website provided a composite list of positions that were considered a part of the American Climate Corps. Data were collected using the Wayback Machine's archived webpage of the American Climate Corps, scraping all positions that were listed on the website between April 22nd and October 25th, 2024 (the last day the webpage was archived before the 2024 election). This process provided a list of all positions that were posted as part of the ACC from the time it was launched until the 2024 presidential election on November 4th. We chose this period because the program was presumed to be over once Donald Trump won the election. In the lead up to the inauguration, agencies began removing words like "climate" from their programs in anticipation of the new administration and what they expected from its policies. We recorded the location of each position, and the program and affiliated agency (when available). In total, geographic data were collected on 245 different positions listed on the ACC website.

The positions were manually geographically coded to nearest city (or if statewide, the capital of the state) and run through geocod.io's geocoding platform to tie each position's location to coordinates, demographics, as well as congressional district. This database of positions was spatially joined to the shapefile of the 119th Congressional Districts from the Census.gov database.

Results

Figure 1 presents a map with the count of all positions posted to the ACC website over the period of its existence by congressional district.

⁶ Jennifer Ludden, "Trump's Gutting of AmeriCorps Hits Hard, for Both Volunteers and Communities," Politics, *NPR*, May 9, 2025, <https://www.npr.org/2025/05/09/nx-s1-5383188/trumps-gutting-of-ameri-corps-hits-hard-for-both-volunteers-and-communities>; Dana R Fisher, "What We Lose When America Loses AmeriCorps," *Rolling Stone*, April 25, 2025, <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/political-commentary/trump-ameri-corps-leave-what-america-loses-service-disaster-1235324839/>.

⁷ Conor Hughes, "After Cuts by Trump, AmeriCorps Funding Was Restored. SC Nonprofits Are Hesitant to Work with Them.," *Post and Courier*, November 12, 2025, https://www.postandcourier.com/greenville/news/south-carolina-ameri-corps-cuts-nonprofit/article_7eb28cd2-ec09-4729-b957-6056e6310411.html.



Figure 1. Positions posted on the ACC Website (4/22/2024-10/24/2024) by Congressional District

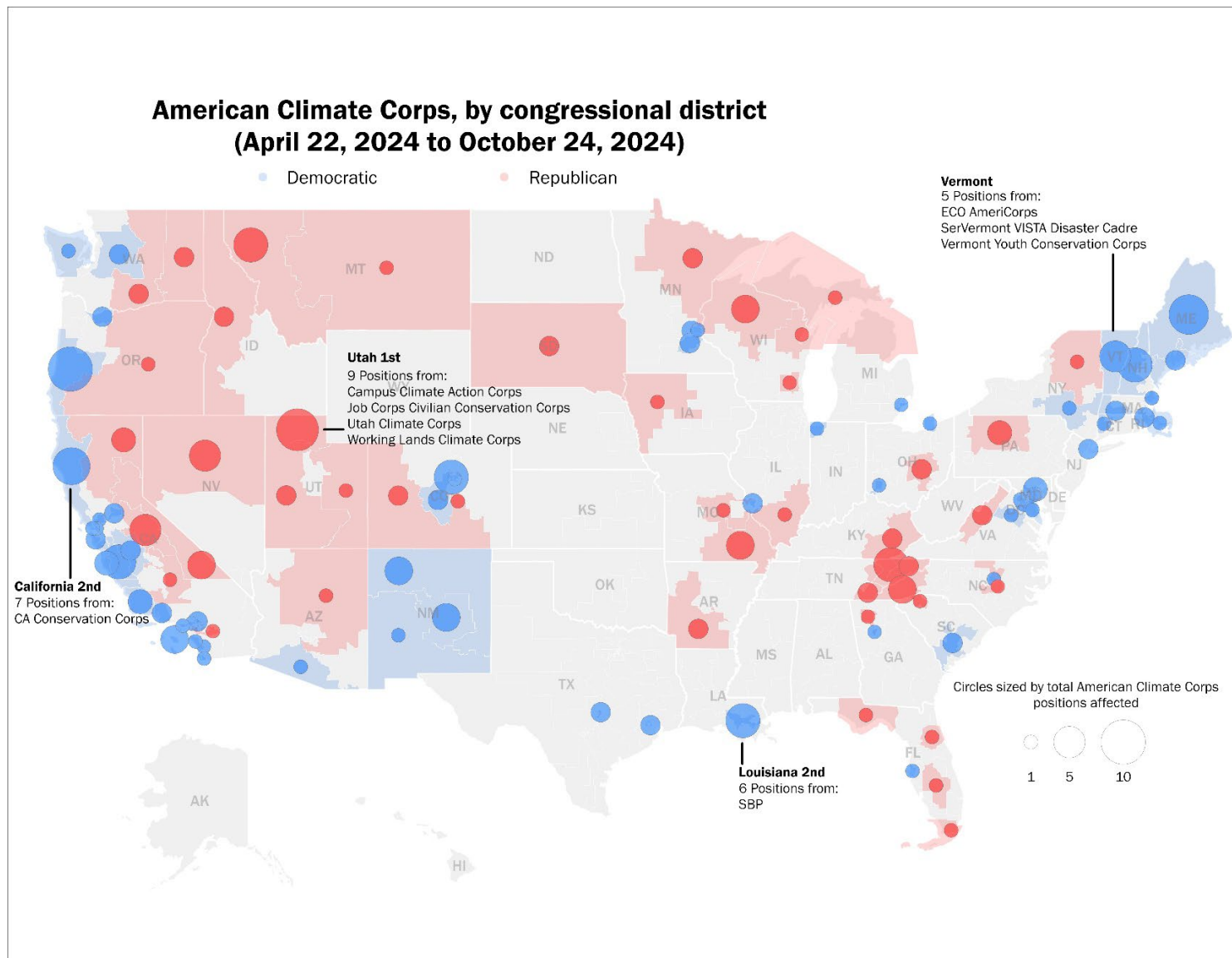


Table 1 lists the 22 congressional districts that had 4 or more positions posted over the course of the website's existence. In total, 145 of the positions (59%) posted on the website were in congressional districts represented by Democrats in the 119th Session of Congress, while 100 districts (41%) were in districts that are currently represented by Republicans.

Table 1. Top 20 Congressional Districts by positions posted

Congressional District	Positions Posted to ACC Website
OR04	10
UT01	9
ME02	8
CA02	7
CA18	6
CO01	6
LA02	6
MT01	6
NH02	6
TN02	6
CA05	5
NV02	5
VT00	5
CA03	4
CA42	4
MO08	4
NC11	4
NM01	4
NM03	4
PR00	4
WI07	4

Positions included on the ACC site represented a range of programs sponsored by the federal government, states, non-profit organizations, and partnerships between multiple entities. National programs such as Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center (41), the Working Lands Climate Corps (16), the Campus Climate Action Corps (13), and USDA Forest Service Job Corps (4) all had jobs posted over several districts. Even Regional and State level programs like California Conservation Corps (38), SBP⁸ (9), and the Mile High Youth Corps (7) had programs listed across multiple sites.

⁸ SBP was formally the St. Bernard Project



Discussion and Conclusion

Based on our research on three case studies from the ACC, we know that a number of the sites included many more positions than the ACC Website data indicated. These programs represented the promise of the American Climate Corps and the climate work that they undertook, which was canceled after the 2024 election. Although it is difficult to determine which programs were directly affected by the funding cuts, based on the programs that we have directly studied, as well as the broad cuts to environmental programs that were initiated by DOGE, we can infer that many programs on this map experienced some level of disruption, if not complete termination. This map also helps to visualize the areas across the US where support was needed around environmental issues. With the cancelation of the ACC, many of these communities likely lost corpsmembers who were doing important work to build climate resilience, as well as addressing a range of other environmental issues, leaving them potentially vulnerable to the effects of extreme events and other environmental disturbances. Not only did communities lose workers who were available to address critical environmental issues, but the young people who were serving in these corps also lost the opportunity to develop skills, gain experience, and make a difference in their communities and to the environment.

In summary, this map and the accompanying data help us understand the geographic scope of the loss of the American Climate Corps, as well as the likely impacts of its loss on the programs that were a part of it and the communities in which they served.





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