



New Jersey Youth Corps of Phillipsburg

State of New Jersey
Department of Environmental Protection, Natural & Historic Resources
Office of Leases & Concessions, Mail Code 501-04C
PO Box 420
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420

January 30, 2022

RE: Letter of Support for the Friends of the NJ School of Conservation RFEI

To Whom it may concern-

I am pleased to write a letter of support for the Friends of the NJ School of Conservation (FNJSOC, 'Friends') in its Expression of Interest proposal for use of the former New Jersey School of Conservation building complex at Stokes State Forest in Sussex County, NJ. The Friends group and NJ Youth Corps of Phillipsburg (NJYCP) share a common interest in the use, maintenance, and preservation of the facility as the complex's history and the history of the NJ Youth Corps are both rooted in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the 1930's and 1940's.

NJ Youth Corps of Phillipsburg provides an alternative pathway to education through service to the community for 16 to 25-year-olds that do not complete high school. We balance an approach of academic instruction with service-learning opportunities to foster growth and independence. Honoring our own roots in the CCC, the bulk of the service work performed by NJYCP is in the field of conservation and ecological restoration. Like the CCC, NJYCP provides support services to youth in need of education, while providing wraparound support services such as counseling, career development, financial support and further training to advance one's personal and professional development. Established in 1998, NJYCP has worked with over 1,100 young adults, providing over 290,000 hours of service to the community.

In 2021, NJYCP was awarded a grant from the William Penn Foundation to establish one of ten regional Delaware River Climate Corps, building off of partnerships and collaborations we have developed over our 24 years. Our focus will be to further develop our Corpsmembers in the field of conservation and provide hands-on opportunities to serve and learn, earning credentials and building their skillsets toward careers in the green sector.

Our intention is to make NJSOC the base of the NJYC Delaware River Climate Corps group. At the NJSOC, we see a unique opportunity to look back to the past, preserve and maintain the work done there, and embark on a new path invoking the ideas of equity, diversity, and inclusion in performing conservation work, thereby breathing new life into the old campus as we develop the capabilities of a new generation of conservation leaders.

We fully support the FNJSOC proposal for use of the NJ School of Conservation. Please do give it every consideration.

Sincerely-



Michael J. Muckle, *Director*
New Jersey Youth Corps of Phillipsburg

CC: *File*

