

March 31, 1933

On this day in 1933 Congress passed the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). This act brought together two of FDR's most deeply held values: Work and Conservation.

FDR always had a great interest in conservation. Starting on his own estate in Hyde Park **“in 1912, FDR planted his first forest crop from stock sold by the New York State Conservation Commission, and over the next 4 decades, he planted almost one –half million trees”**.

As President, this passion, along with his desire and need to put young people to work created the foundation for his program that would be known as the CCC.

At first, it was only FDR who believed that mobilizing a mass number of young men to areas of the country to fix dams, clear trails, plant trees, build roads, and structures within the National Parks and Forest could be done immediately.

Few people within his administration and in Congress believed it could be done saying it was impossible. FDR persisted. **“His message was: 250,000 men working in the Forest by summer. Do it now and I won't take any excuses!”**

In the end, the bill passed easily. By April 7 the first corps members were enlisted and by July 1 over 275,000 men were enrolled in 1,300 camps across the country. This all, accomplished less than four months after the bill was signed.

The CCC became one of the most popular programs of the New Deal. Between 1933 and 1941 it employed more than 2,000,000 people. Those employed received \$30.00 weekly, \$25.00 of which was sent back to their families.

Today, many of the CCC projects are still in use. Go to almost any National Park, Forest, or public lands area in this country and you still will see the mark of FDR in the buildings, roads, trails, walls and dams that were built by the CCC.

First Quoted text from *Land-Use History Summary of the Roosevelt Estate Lands between Routes 9 and 9 G* prepared by John Auwaerter

Second Quoted text from *The Defining Moment: FDR's Hundred Day Triumph of Hope* by Jonathan Alter.

To read FDR's Three Essentials for Unemployment Relief to Congress on March 21, 1933, please go to our website www.nps.gov/hofr and click *On With History*.