



# FS Job Corps CCC Advanced Wildland Firefighter Program



## Overview: Advanced Wildland Firefighting Program

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### Program Overview

The Forest Service (FS) Advanced Wildland Fire Management Program within the Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers (CCC) is an opportunity of a lifetime where you will be pushed physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually to limits that you have never experienced. You will be subjected to very rigorous, harsh, and hazardous work environments while being exposed to extreme elements and weather conditions daily.



The program is 100% free to participate in. You will earn the opportunity of a lifetime while learning new skills in Wildland Fire Management. Students are expected to come into the program in excellent physical condition and willing to have their limits put to the test on a daily basis. Additionally, the programs require students to work independently as well as part of a cohesive team to achieve mutual goals and the mission of the US Forest Service. Applicants need to understand, they are only as good as the people around them and their success in the program is directly related to their ability to push themselves past their limits, to work as a member of a team, and maintain a positive attitude.

When students arrive on Center they will begin a Physical Training (PT) program almost immediately. This PT program is designed to get each student into firefighting condition as well as build Crew cohesion and teamwork.

Students will have a short introduction and orientation to the Center and once orientation is complete, the formal training will commence.





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The training will consist of numerous National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) fire courses as well as informal training in leadership, team building, medical emergencies, resume building, navigating through [USAJOBS](#), and job interviewing.



Perspective applicants do not need to possess a Red Card (basic wildland firefighter certification) to apply for these programs since you will be taught the Basic Wildland Firefighting Courses. Every student will go through the Basic Fire Training to place every Crewmember on the same page with training, values, and general expectations for every member of the Fire Program.

Upon completion of the classroom training students will be made available for fire assignments across the country. This will require you to be away from the center for weeks at a time. While on assignment you will be working and living with your Crew or on your own under often highly intense and stressful conditions. Some of these situations may include camping outdoors, 16 hours of rigorous physical work, and working in steep, rugged terrain.

You are required to ensure that all your personal affairs are in order to eliminate any kind of logistical complications while on fire assignment.

Students in the advanced trades can earn some privileges that basic students do not have, however they are still Job Corps enrollees. They are subject to the same Job Corps rules and regulations including sign in/sign out, quiet hours, dorm room inspections, etc. Advanced students are expected to perform at a higher level than basic students due in part to their prior success in the Job Corps program. Prospective advanced fire management/dispatch students should

be prepared for another 10 to 12 months in Job Corps and abide by these rules.

Because of the balance of mental and physical training, it is important that potential applicants have both the mental and physical abilities to succeed. The minimum TABE score for entry into the program is 580 in both Math and Reading. Students with TABE scores of less than 580 may still apply, but priority is given to students who meet the minimum TABE score.

Students are required to have their Center submit detailed medical information to the Job Corps CCC's Health & Wellness staff for review prior to entry into the program. This is to identify any potential health issues that may pose a health or safety risk for the students or crew. Applications submitted without proper medical documentation will not be considered.

While enrolled in the Advanced Fire Management CTT, students will receive the standard Job Corps stipend every two weeks in addition to a completion payment upon graduation from the course. No other financial benefits are guaranteed. When you get ordered as part of a crew or as a dispatcher in support of a wildland fire or other incident, students will be hired as Administratively Determined (AD) employees and will be paid an hourly wage that varies depending on their qualification. Going out on a fire assignment may or may not happen, therefore, students should be prepared to subsist on the Job Corps stipend or other savings for the duration of their stay. Going out on fire assignments is dependent on the severity and duration of the fire season across the country.

Students who are selected into the Job Corps CCC Advanced Wildland Firefighter Training Programs will gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities to compete for a position as a Wildland Firefighter or an Initial Attack Dispatcher, either as a 1039 seasonal federal employee, or a permanent federal position as a Wildland Fire Apprentice.





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### Wildland Firefighter Apprenticeship Program

The [Wildland Firefighter Apprenticeship Program](#) (WFAP) is a pathway for students, after completion of the Advanced Fire Management Career Technical Training (CTT) Program, to begin full-time careers with the United States Forest Service and other Federal Land Management Agencies. The Wildland Firefighter Apprenticeship Program is an accredited educational program designed to enhance and develop students as future Fire and Aviation Managers. The intent of the program is to provide career entry firefighters with higher level education, training, and paid work experience. Upon completion of the Apprenticeship Program, the apprentice will achieve and receive a senior Wildland Firefighter certification.



### Information for Prospective Advanced Fire Management Candidates:

After completing the initial training along with passing the pack test, each crewmember will earn their Red Card. From this point forward, students will learn how to function as a crewmember on a fully functional Type 2 Initial Attack (IA) Crew, Type 2 Crew, Type 6 Fire Engine Crew, Initial Attack (IA) Module, or as an Expanded Dispatch Recorder or Initial Attack Dispatcher.

In addition to passing a medical review, students need to understand that wildland firefighting and field work demands a high level of muscular and cardiovascular fitness to perform safely in physically demanding environments. Western wildfire conditions require crewmembers to work in steep, uneven terrain, extreme temperatures, at high altitudes and in thick smoke while maintaining a reserve work capacity to meet unforeseen emergencies. This level of fitness is critical for wildland firefighters. Students who have never hiked outdoors through steep, uneven, terrain are encouraged to try this at a fast, steady pace with a heavy pack prior to applying. If you find this is too difficult or unpleasant, wildland fire may not be an appropriate career path.





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### Physical Preparation - Arriving Fit for Duty:

The job of a wildland firefighter is very demanding, both physically and mentally, and it requires stamina and determination. To perform the job safely and efficiently, it is essential that you take your physical preparation and conditioning seriously. The more you prepare, the less likely you are to become injured during the fire season. Our physical training program is designed to enhance your fitness level as well as push you mentally and physically. Here are some simple guidelines to help you begin your preparation for the Advanced Fire Management Training Program. Remember, it takes months of hard work to perform at the level required to be a safe and fit wildland firefighter.

#### 90 Days before Arrival:

Start training aerobically at least 5 days a week. Leave at least one day per week to rest. As you surely know, running is a major part of our training, and the sooner you start, the better off you'll be. At a minimum, run 3 times a week and at least 3 miles each time out. To improve your cardiovascular fitness keep your runs at least 30 minutes in duration. If you are just starting to run, start slowly in order to avoid injury and soreness. Once you are ready, keep your exertion level high during the runs but not exhaustive. All crew runs are considerably hilly and are on varied your runs in distance and terrain. If you only run 3 times a week supplement your program with other aerobic exercise, e.g. biking, swimming, or hiking. If weather is a restriction for your workouts, get into the gym. Training on cardio machines (e.g. treadmill, stair master) is not a perfect substitute for the equivalent exercises outdoors, but nevertheless improves your aerobic capacity. Incorporate push-ups, sit-ups, and pull-ups into your daily plan. Be sure to follow up each Physical Training (PT) session with some stretching and a cool down session.

#### Sample:

- Run 1-3 miles 3 times a week Push-ups, pull-ups and sit-ups
- Power hike 3-5 miles 2 times a week Stretching and cool down

#### 60 Days before Arrival:

Continue training at least 5 times a week. Extend the duration of each run beyond 30 minutes in order to build endurance. Gauge your progress. If progress is slow, you may find that changing your training a bit will increase your progress. Also, begin to incorporate speed work into your program. Running intervals at a local track or sprinting hills are good examples of aerobic conditioning. This can be done on the same day as anaerobic (muscle strength) conditioning. Being aerobically fit allows your body to continue working even when your muscles can no longer use oxygen. It involves a very high level of exertion (85-95% of max heart rate) over a relatively short period of time. It is also important to start hiking. Get out at least once a week and take a lengthy hike. Keep a swift pace and carry a weighted pack, as hikes on the crew are typically fast and strenuous for those not prepared. Continue with push-ups, sit-ups, and pull-ups, continually increase your repetitions. Be sure to follow up each PT session with some stretching and a cool down process.

#### Sample:

- Run 3-5 miles 3 times a week Push-ups, pull-ups and sit-ups
- Power hike 5-7 miles 2 times a week Stretching and cool down

#### 30 Days before Arrival:

During the last 30 days before you arrive, you shouldn't have to change your program much. Increasing the distance and duration of your runs can only help your endurance. Take a longer run once or twice a week. Continue running 3-4 times a week, with intervals twice a week. If possible, power hike a couple times a week.

Hiking distances during the season will vary but can last hours, so prepare yourself accordingly. Any other cross-training will help but be careful not to over train. Continue with push-ups, sit-ups and pull-ups, continually increasing your repetitions. Be sure to follow up each PT session with some stretching and a cool down.

#### Sample:

- Run 5-7 miles 3-4 times per week Push-ups, pull-ups and sit-ups
- Power hike 7-9 miles 2 times a week Stretching and cool down



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### Hydration, Nutrition, and Rest:

Remember that physical training is only part of the equation. It is essential that PT is balanced with proper hydration, nutrition and rest.

Proper hydration is one of the most important aspects of healthy physical activity. Drinking the right amount of fluids before, during, and after physical activity is vital to providing your body the fluids it needs to perform properly. Replace fluids during exercise to promote adequate hydration. Drink water rather than pouring it over your head. Drinking is the only way to rehydrate and cool your body from the inside out. Rehydrate after exercise by drinking enough fluid to replace fluid losses during exercise.

Proper nutrition is another major aspects to maintaining proper fitness. Good dietary habits greatly enhance your ability to perform at your maximum potential. Eating a variety of

foods and maintaining adequate energy balance are basic guidelines for a healthy diet. In order to get enough energy from the food you eat and to obtain the variety of foods needed for nutritional balance, you should eat three meals a day. Even snacking between meals can contribute to good nutrition if the right foods are eaten.

Getting enough rest after exercise is essential to high-level performance but many still over train and feel guilty when they take a day off. The body repairs and strengthens itself in the time between workouts, and continuous training can actually weaken the strongest athletes. Rest days are critical to performance for a variety of reasons. Some are physiological and some are psychological. Rest is physically necessary so that the muscles can repair, rebuild and strengthen. In the worst-case scenario, too few rest and recovery days can lead to overtraining syndrome - a difficult condition to recover from.







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### Approved Fire Boots:

The boots must be at least 8" tall, all leather construction, with Vibram brand soles and no steel toe. Common brands include Nick's, White's, Drew's, LaSportiva, Scarpa, Danner, Lowa, JK, and Kenetreks. These boots can be expensive, but they are an investment that will last a season or two at least. It is important not to skimp in this area. Your feet are very important, and you must have good solid boots to support your feet through the long strenuous workdays. Also, you must have good wool socks. Purchase these boots as soon as possible once you receive our acceptance letter to start breaking them in.

### Arrival at the Advanced Fire Management Training Program:

We expect you to arrive physically fit and ready to start training. Failure to train prior to your arrival greatly reduces your chances for success in this program. The fire management training program is fast paced from the very first day. We will only have a short period of time to prepare you for the fire season. PT will be rigorous along with the coursework. So, be prepared. We also expect you to arrive with a positive attitude and to maintain a serious focus on your training.

