Memorandum

To: Office and Bureau Human Resource Directors

From: Raymond A. Limon
Director, Office of Human Resources

Subject: Distribution of Public Lands Corps Hiring (PLC) Authority Personnel Bulletin 17-03

This memorandum transmits the updated policy regarding the PLC Hiring Authority, PB 17-03. The PB supersedes PB 12-13 and provides further clarification and provides changes implemented by the National Park Service Centennial Act (PL 114-289).

Major changes implemented in the attached PB include:

1. Extended the age for eligibility to participate in the PLC to include individuals between the ages of 16 and 30 inclusive.
2. Extending the period of non-competitive hiring status for former PLC members, who meet the eligibility, from 120 days to 2 years from the completion of their most recent Corps service.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) can be found on the Human Capital Crossroads Google Site under FAQs at this link https://sites.google.com/a/ios.do.gov/human-resources-community-of-practice/external-resources/faqs

Additional information or questions may be directed to the Office of Human Resources, Strategic Talent Programs Team, Ms. Akia West-Butler at akia_west-bu tler@ios.do.gov.

Attachment
PERSONNEL BULLETIN NO. 17-03

Subject: Departmental Policy on Public Lands Corps Hiring Authority

1. Purpose.

This Bulletin supersedes Personnel Bulletin (PB) 12-13 and establishes the policy and procedures for providing former members of the Public Lands Corps (PLC) non-competitive hiring status for competitive service positions in the Department of the Interior (DOI). The primary focus of this re-issuance is to provide additional guidance and instructions for utilizing the hiring authority outlined in the Public Lands Corps Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2005, P.L. 109-154 and as amended in the National Park Service Centennial Act, P.L. 114-289.

The PLC program expands youth services opportunities and serves important conservation and societal objectives. Individuals who are economically, physically, or educationally disadvantaged may receive preference for enrollment in the Corps.

NOTE: The changes pertaining to participant age and length of noncompetitive status eligibility are effective December 16, 2016. PLC members and former-members who completed their service and whose 120 day eligibility expired prior to December 16, 2016 are not covered by these changes.

2. Scope. This PB applies to all bureaus and equivalent offices of the Department.


4. Definitions.

   a. Corps and Public Lands Corps means the Public Lands Corps (PLC) established under section 1723 of title 16, United States Code. The Corps consists of individuals between the ages of 16 and 30, inclusive, who are enrolled as participants in the Corps by the Secretary for projects referenced in 16 USC 1723(d), and satisfy the requirements of section 12591(b) of title 42. Corps members are not civil service Federal employees during their time of service in the Corps.
b. **Qualified Youth or Conservation Corps** means any program established by a State or local government, by the governing body of any Indian tribe, or a nonprofit organization that:

(1) is capable of offering meaningful, full-time, productive work for individuals between the ages of **16** and **30**, inclusive, in a natural or cultural resource setting;

(2) gives participants a mix of work experience, basic and life skills, education, training, and support services;

(3) provides participants with the opportunity to develop citizenship values and skills through service to their community and the United States; and

(4) provides the individual with a living allowance, stipend, or wages.

c. **Appropriate Conservation Project** refers to any project for the conservation, restoration, construction or rehabilitation of natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational or scenic resources. For purposes of this bulletin, for an appropriate conservation project to be creditable, it should have been accomplished by the participant while serving as a member of a qualified youth or conservation corps.

d. **Former PLC Member** means an individual who meets the criteria in 4(e) below and has completed their service with the PLC. An individual may serve in the PLC multiple times: thus, he/she becomes a former member of the PLC each time he/she completes their service within the PLC.

e. **Eligible Youth** means an individual who may be enrolled in the Corps program, having satisfied the following criteria as specified in section 12591(b) of title 42:

(1) Meets such eligibility requirements, directly related to the tasks to be accomplished, as may be established by the program;

(2) Is selected by the program to serve in a position with the program;

(3) Will serve in the program for a term of service specified in section 12593 of this title [Title 42] to be performed before, during, or after attendance at an institution of higher education;

(4) Is between the ages of 16 and 30, inclusive, at the time the individual begins the term of service;

(5) Has received a high school diploma or its equivalent, agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent (unless the requirement is waived based on an individual education assessment conducted by the program) and the individual did not drop out of an elementary or secondary school to enroll in the program, or is enrolled in an institution of higher education or an ability to benefit basis and is considered eligible for funds under section 1091 of

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1 16 USC 1723(b), as amended by P.L. 114-289
5. Policy

a. **Bureau Responsibilities.** It is the responsibility of every bureau to establish a program coordinator for their respective PLC program. The PLC coordinator will establish bureau procedures for administering the program. The PLC coordinator will serve as the bureau point of contact on the PLC program and be responsible for determining which qualified youth or conservation corps and appropriate conservation projects are creditable or meets service requirements. Bureaus may use the sample Participant Work Hours Verification (Attachment 1) and Certificate of Non-Competitive Eligibility Form (Attachment 2) or create their own documents. Bureau created documents must include, at minimum, all the information on the sample forms provided. Each bureau PLC Coordinator will ensure that participants are provided with Participant Work Hours Verification. Each bureau PLC coordinator, or their designee, will provide a Certificate of Non-Competitive Eligibility to participants who have satisfactorily completed all the service requirements and meet eligibility for non-competitive hiring status.

b. **Crediting Time Served.** In accordance with Public Law 109-154, a member of the PLC may use time satisfactorily on an appropriate conservation project (where creditable) to count towards meeting OPM qualification requirements for federal employment. Former PLC members who use time served to meet job qualifications requirements need to clearly state the duties performed under the PLC in their application(s) for federal employment, so that they may be afforded credit at the appropriate grade level. Although time served in the PLC is creditable experience for qualifications purposes, it is not creditable for purposes of computations for retirement, time in grade, leave or Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Time served does not count towards probationary period or career tenure. Former PLC members do not accrue adverse action appeal rights based on PLC service.

c. **Implementation.**

(1) **Eligibility:** In order to be eligible for PLC non-competitive status, a former member of the PLC must provide documentation, as part of their application, verifying their eligibility and that they meet the following criteria:

(a) Served as a qualified youth on an appropriate conservation project completing a minimum of 640 hours of satisfactory service that included at least 120 hours through the PLC;
(b) Applied to a vacancy announcement for which applications are being accepted from individuals with non-competitive status;
(c) Meet the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) minimum
qualification standards and any other qualification requirement(s) stated in the vacancy announcement for the position for which they are applying; and

(d) Completed his/her most recent Corps service, which provided him/her with a total of 640 hours, inclusive of 120 hours on a PLC project as defined in 16 USC 1723(d), within the last two (2) years.

(2) Appointments must be effected within the two (2) years requirement.

(3) The two (2) year time-frame cannot be extended.

(4) Selectees will be subject to a probationary period consistent with other competitive service positions.

(5) This authority may be used for General Schedule and Federal Wage System positions.

(6) Competitive service appointments may be made for temporary, term or permanent positions.

d. Announcement, Application and Competition. Individuals who meet the OPM minimum qualification requirements may be non-competitively referred to the selection official in accordance with established competitive hiring procedures (delegated examining and/or merit promotion). Job opportunity announcements must clearly state that non-competitive status applicants may apply and how to be considered using non-competitive status. Bureaus are encouraged to utilize language within job opportunity announcements that solicits former PLC members to apply, such as Former Public Land Corps (PLC) members eligible for non-competitive hiring status (16 USC 1726(c). The candidate must provide a copy of the “Certificate of Eligibility for Non-competitive Hiring Status (PLC),” signed by a bureau PLC coordinator, to be considered under this authority. Servicing human resource offices must also ensure that agency and interagency career transition programs are appropriately cleared prior to appointment.

e. Appointment. Appointments under this authority must be effective within 2 years of the candidate's' completion of PLC service. Candidates selected under this PLC appointing authority will be appointed under the authority of P.L. 109-154. Such appointment will be in accordance with requirements governing appointment to the competitive service. All appointments will be subject to DOI Reemployment Priority List, Career Transition Assistance Plan and Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan provisions.

f. Legal Authority Code. The servicing Human Resources Offices must use "ZLM" as the legal authority code and reference P.L. 109-154 as the primary and/or secondary code as appropriate.
Please contact Akia West-Butler at 202-208-6754 or by email at akia_west-butler@ios.doi.gov.

Raymond A. Limon
Director, Office of Human Resources

Attachments
Attachment 1

Verification of Participant Work Hours for Conservation Projects (Sample)

Participant Name: ______________________  Last Four SSN: __________

Date of Birth: ______________________  Email: __________

Primary PLC Organization: ______________________  Address: __________

Phone Number: ______________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start and End Dates of Project</th>
<th>PLC Organization</th>
<th>Org. Phone Number</th>
<th>PLC (Yes/No)</th>
<th>Location of Project</th>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Project Duties</th>
<th>Performance Satisfactory (Yes/No) (Notes)</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
<th>Supervisor’s Signature</th>
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I certify that these hours accurately represent the work I conducted on the listed projects

Participant Signature and Date

I certify that these hours accurately represent the work the participant conducted on the listed projects

Certifier Signature and Date
Certificate of Eligibility for Non-competitive Hiring Status (PLC)

Name of Individual

has satisfactorily served a minimum of 640 hours on an appropriate conservation project, that included at least 120 hours through the Public Lands Corp as of

Date

and I certify he/she is eligible for noncompetitive hiring status until 2 years after the date shown below as provided by the Public Land Corps Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2005, P. L. 109-154.

Date of Completion of Last PLC Project: ____________________________

Certified by: ________________________________________________

Signature

Name: 
Title: 
Phone Number: 
Bureau: