



Public Lands Corps Human Resources Procedures Frequently Asked Questions

- Q1: What is the Public Lands Corps?**
- Q2: What types of projects do PLC members accomplish?**
- Q3: Are there age and other eligibility requirements for PLC members?**
- Q4: What is the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?**
- Q5: What are the objectives of the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?**
- Q6: How can former PLC members be eligible for the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?**
- Q7: If this authority did not exist when my PLC member completed their PLC project, and they are no longer within the 120-day timeframe for appointment to the Federal service, can they be considered under the PLC authority?**
- Q8: Do outreach activities apply to filling positions under this noncompetitive hiring authority?**
- Q9: Does the Agency's order of consideration provisions apply when filling positions under this non-competitive hiring authority?**
- Q10: What documentation must a PLC eligible candidate submit in response to a vacancy announcement for consideration under this noncompetitive hiring authority?**
- Q11: Who is the approval authority responsible for signing the PLC Certificate of Eligibility?**
- Q12: Must individuals be U.S. citizens?**
- Q13: Does Veterans' Preference apply when issuing referrals under the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?**
- Q14: Are there any restrictions on the type of positions (occupational series and grade) that may be filled using the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?**
- Q15: Can this authority be used to fill temporary or term positions?**
- Q16: Must a vacancy announcement be posted for use of the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?**
- Q17: Must an individual meet the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) requirements?**
- Q18: How are individuals appointed under the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?**
- Q19: Does the 640 hours of satisfactory service count toward the competitive service requirement for career tenure or probationary period?**
-

Q1: What is the Public Lands Corps Program?

The PLC is a work and education program involving the nation's conservation and service corps that contributes to the rehabilitation, restoration, and repair of public land resources and infrastructures. PLC projects provide opportunities for community and national service, work experience and training to men and women, and veterans who are unemployed or underemployed persons. The PLC is authorized by the Public Lands



Corps (PLC) Act of 1993 as amended by the Public Lands Corps Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2005.

Q2: What types of projects do PLC members accomplish?

PLC members perform a wide range of services ranging from maintaining and restoring the many thousands of miles of trails to coordinating volunteers and special events on National Forests and Grasslands. Members create healthy and safe environments for recreation and exercise, support visitor experiences, and preserve historic structures. They assist with prescribed burns, may be red-carded firefighters, serve in leadership roles as team or crew leaders, conduct research and needs assessments, and support hydrology programs. PLC members perform many of the functions that contribute to Forest Service mission accomplishment.

Q3: Are there age and other eligibility requirements for PLC members?

PLC members are either participants between 16 and 25 years of age or resource assistants ages 17 and up.

Q4: What is the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?

The PLC hiring authority is a noncompetitive recruitment source that may be used along with other recruitment sources to consider eligible candidates when announcing positions under merit procedures (FSH 6109.12 Employment and Benefits Handbook, Chapter 10- External Recruitment, Section 13-Public Lands Corps Hiring Authority). After successful completion of a PLC project which includes 640 hours of work on a project that furthers the conservation, restoration, construction or rehabilitation of natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, or scenic resources, PLC members may be considered noncompetitively for not more than 120 days from date of completion of their service (FSM 1800 Youth, Volunteer, and Hosted Programs, Chapter 1820 Public Lands Corps).

5Q: What are the objectives of the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?

The objectives of the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority are:

1. To provide flexibility and opportunities for the Forest Service to hire current and former members of the PLC;
2. To meet the employment needs of the Forest Service and members of the PLC; and
3. To assist the Forest Service in its progress towards a workforce reflective of the nation's diverse population.

Q6: How can former PLC members be eligible for the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?

To be eligible for the PLC noncompetitive hiring status, the candidate must meet the following criteria:

1. 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 PLC; **and**
2. Meet OPM Qualification Standards and any other qualification requirement(s) stated in the vacancy announcement for the position for which they are applying (including



any selective placement factors, positive education requirements, physical requirements, etc).

Please note: Eligibility for noncompetitive hiring status under this authority continues for 120 days after completion of PLC service. **The 120-day timeframe cannot be extended. Appointment to the Federal service must be within 120 days of completion of the program.**

Q7: If this authority did not exist when my PLC member completed their PLC project, and they are no longer within the 120-day timeframe for appointment to the Federal service, can they be considered under the PLC authority?

No, the PLC member's eligibility for appointment into the Federal service utilizing the PLC authority must occur within 120 days after completion of the PLC service.

Q8: Do outreach activities apply to filling positions under this noncompetitive hiring authority?

Yes, outreach activities must be conducted in accordance with the direction set forth in Forest Service Manual 1720, Public Notification, and applicable negotiated agreements (BUE positions only).

Q9: Does the Agency's order of consideration provisions apply when filling positions under this non-competitive hiring authority?

Yes, all appointments are subject to the provisions of the agency order of consideration; to include, clearance of the Reemployment Priority List (RPL), Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP), Workforce Restructuring and Placement System (WRAPS) and Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) provisions and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Q10: What documentation must a PLC eligible candidate submit in response to a vacancy announcement for consideration under this noncompetitive hiring authority?

Use the applicant's resume, Certificate of Eligibility for Noncompetitive Hiring Status Based on Public Lands Corps Service (ex. 01) or approved equivalent, and transcripts (if the applicant is using education to qualify) to verify the qualifications of the applicant for the grade level being filled. (Note: if applicant does not have the Certificate of Eligibility for Noncompetitive Hiring Status Based on Public Lands Corps Service or approved equivalent included in their application package, consider them ineligible).

Q11: Who is the approval authority responsible for signing the PLC Certificate of Eligibility?

The line officer for overseeing the work for a Forest Service Unit.

Q12: Must individuals be U.S. citizens?

Yes, an individual appointed under the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority must be a U.S. citizen or legal resident.

Q13: Does Veterans' Preference apply when issuing referrals under the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?



Yes, **within the PLC eligibles**, a non-preference eligible cannot be selected over a preference eligible.

Q14: Are there any restrictions on the type of positions (occupational series and grade) that may be filled using the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?

No, managers may consider this noncompetitive recruitment source along with other recruitment sources when filling permanent General Schedule and Federal Wage System positions under merit procedures.

Q15: Can this authority be used to fill temporary or term positions?

No, this authority cannot be used to fill temporary or term positions. It may only be used when filling permanent positions under merit procedures.

Q16: Must a vacancy announcement be posted for use of the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?

Yes, a merit vacancy announcement must be posted to the USAJOBS website.

Q17: Must an individual meet the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) requirements?

Yes, individuals must meet OPM qualification standards for competitive service positions and any other qualification requirement(s) stated in the vacancy announcement for the position for which they are applying (including any selective placement factors, positive education requirements, physical requirements, etc.).

Q18: How are individuals appointed under the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority?

Individuals are selected from a certificate for employment into the competitive service. Although the PLC noncompetitive hiring authority is a noncompetitive recruitment source, **individuals are appointed into the competitive service.** Compliance with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations, Merit Promotion Plan, collective bargaining agreements (if applicable) and other requirements regarding competitive service employment apply.

Q19: Does the 640 hours of satisfactory service count toward the competitive service requirement for career tenure or probationary period?

No, although time served in the PLC is creditable experience for qualification purposes, it is not creditable for purposes of computations for retirement, time-in-grade, leave or the Thrift Savings Plan; does not count towards probationary period or career tenure; and does not accrue adverse appeal rights.



Exhibit 01

**Certificate of Eligibility for Noncompetitive Hiring Status
Based on Public Lands Corps Service**

(Use Agency Letterhead)

**Certificate of Eligibility for Noncompetitive Hiring Based on
Public Lands Corps Service**

Smokey Bear II
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 Corps as of

February 29, 2016
Date

He/she is eligible for noncompetitive hiring until 120 days
after the date shown above as provided by the Public Lands Corps
Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2005, Public Law 109-154.

Certified by:

Line Officer

Name: Smokey Bear

Title: Line Officer

Phone Number: (555) 555-5555

Organization (Region, Station, Area): Region3, Lincoln National Forest, U.S. Department of
Agriculture/Forest Service