

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Contact: Marilee Eckert  
Executive Director  
415-246-3248  
meckert@conservationcorpsnorthbay.org

### **GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER SAYS “HASTA LA VISTA, BABY” TO RECYCLING**

**JANUARY 14, 2010** – Since 1982, Conservation Corps North Bay (CCNB) has successfully trained and engaged thousands of local youth primarily ages 18 through 28 in green jobs. Many of these green jobs are now at risk because of state financial woes. CCNB sustains its program through public and private environmental contracts as well as through private funding that provide meaningful employment, job training and education to our population of underserved youth.

State funding distributed through the “Bottle Bill” – which distributes the unclaimed 5- or 10-cent deposits Californians pay on bottles and cans to local youth conservation corps such as CCNB – has for years provided CCNB with the opportunity to operate an important recycling program collecting recyclables from park lands, schools and community events, creating hundreds of jobs for youth and diverting tons of recyclables from the waste stream.

The Bottle Bill doesn’t require a tax on beverage purchases. Since 1986 California has had a deposit-style recycling program. Under this existing program, a consumer is charged a deposit and collects his deposit once he returns the bottle for recycling. In this way, the consumer has an incentive to keep bottles out of the landfill. The unredeemed deposits are used to support a variety of recycling programs

including the local conservation corps. These funds are not part of the general fund and should have been immune from annual budget reductions. Unfortunately the state has “borrowed” more than \$450 million in the form of loans from the Beverage Container Recycling Fund since 2002 - including \$99 million this fiscal year - to help balance the state budget. This has dried up the once ample fund forcing the California Department of Conservation to pull 100% of this important funding, amounting to a loss of \$1.5 million in funding in the case of CCNB. Thankfully, the Legislature was able to find another source of funding to help the corps keep from totally shutting down their recycling programs and retain a minimal level of recycling services in the very short-term.

Lawmakers tried last summer through SB 402 to come up with a longer term solution to increase deposits and impose new ones to replenish the recycling fund, to bar future raids on the account and require that money raised by deposits go only to recycling programs. SB 402 enjoyed broad support and would have provided a medium-term, balanced packaging of solutions that would have created jobs and saved California’s recycling program. Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed the bill, stating that the package didn’t create a long-term solution and that he wanted to put forth his own solution in 2010. He further chastised lawmakers for trying to expand the deposit program without including liquor and wine bottles. Requiring deposits on those items would pit lawmakers against the powerful alcohol lobby, a major source of political contributions that has scuttled similar efforts in the past.

An alliance of recycling companies has since sued the state, demanding that the loans be reimbursed and handling fees restored. Without those payments, the lawsuit said, about 1,100 recycling stations near major shopping centers statewide are in jeopardy. A lengthy and expensive lawsuit isn’t the answer for conservation corps. Conservation corps need the Governor to take action to save their

programs now. After 27 years of service to the North Bay's youth and environment, CCNB is facing cutting additional staff and corpsmember positions as well as eliminating its recycling program. For many of the youth in our program, without CCNB they'd be back on the streets where the odds are they would turn back to their alternate support system of gangs or engage in other destructive behaviors.

It is CCNB's hope that the Governor will take immediate action to remedy this problem and that any solution the Governor puts forth will continue the corps recycling program and won't further damage communities already suffering from unemployment by leaving out these successful jobs programs.

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Founded in 1982 as the nation's first local nonprofit conservation corps program, Conservation Corps North Bay (CCNB) is a recognized leader in youth service. CCNB's mission is to develop youth and conserve natural resources for a strong, sustainable community. For the past 27 years, CCNB organization has helped thousands of young people, while improving local parklands and communities, cultivating strong environmental leaders, and promoting environmental sustainability. Each year CCNB provides more than 120 young adults, primarily ages 18-28, with the job training, education, and social services needed to transform their lives.

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