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**'74 Youth Conservation Program is Expanded**

The U. S. expects to place nearly twice as many young men and women in the Youth Conservation Corps program as were employed last year.

Plans for the fourth summer of this youth program were announced recently by Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz and Secretary of the Interior Rogers C.B. Morton. Approximately 5,500 youths will be employed for eight weeks this summer, starting in mid-June, in 178 conservation corps camps on the U. S. Department of Agriculture's National Forests and on lands managed by the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, and the National Park Service.

In addition, for the first time since its inception, the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) program will be expanded to include state as well as federally operated

camps.

The \$10 million available for the 1974 YCC program is an increase of \$6.5 million and almost triple the amount for previous years. Thirty percent (\$3 million) of the money will go to states as matching grants to conduct state YCC projects.

The combination of state and federal YCC projects will provide camps in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Trust Territories.

The Secretaries stressed that the YCC program is designed to fill the following

basic needs: (1) accomplish needed conservation work on public lands; (2) provide gainful employment for young citizens from all walks of life; and (3) develop an understanding and appreciation in participating youth of the nation's natural environment and heritage.

There will be coeducational camps, all female camps, and all male camps. The camps will be residential (live in), or nonresidential (live at home, commute to work). The capacity of residential camps will vary from 24 to 50 enrollees each in facilities ranging from tents and rough bunkhouses, to large

barracks type buildings, to college dormitories.

As in previous years, youth participating in the program this summer will be paid a fixed sum of approximately \$300 for the season plus the value of food and lodging.

Eligibility requirements include age (15 thru 18), interest in conservation of the nation's natural environment, no history of serious criminal or anti-social behavior, possession of work permits in states where required, and a social security number. Applicants, in general, are expected to be in good physical condition, although opportunities for the handicapped will be available in some of the camps. Enrollees will, for the most part, be selected for camps as close to their residences as possible.

A single contact has been designated for each state to receive and process applications for both the federal and state YCC projects. Application forms may be obtained by writing to the United States Youth Conservation Corps, P.O. Box 2975, Washington, D. C. 20013, or by writing to the state recruiting agent: Eleanor Bennet, Advisor, Environmental Ed., Dept. of Ed., Box 911, Harrisburg 17126. Youth must submit applications to the recruiting agent by April 15, 1974, to be considered for employment.

**Grange Sets Youth Speaking Contest**

Plans for a public speaking contest for young people have been announced by the Pennsylvania State Grange.

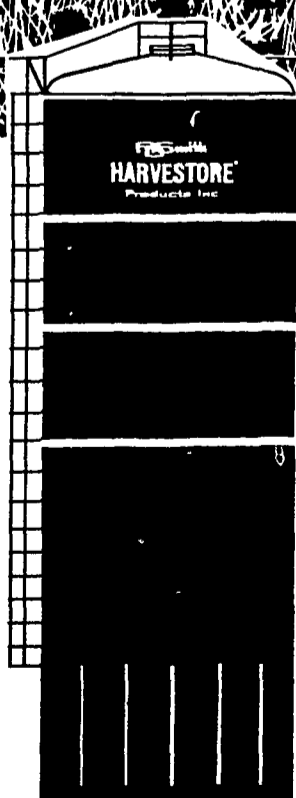
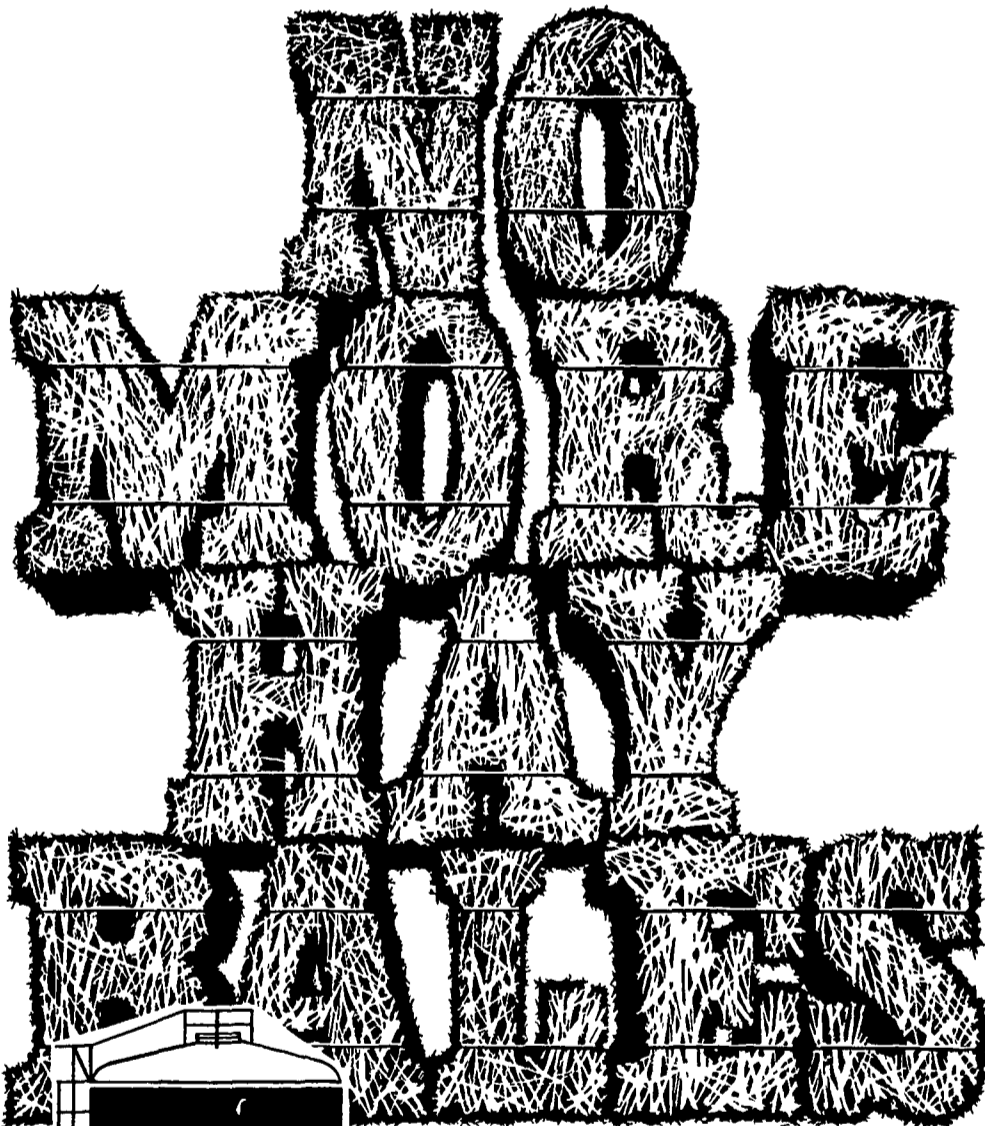
The contest will be open to any subordinate Grange member between the ages of 14 and 35, and the theme will be "The Role of Youth in Grange Growth," according to Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth L. Schlegel, youth committee chairmen.

Competition will be divided into two groups, one for 14 to 18 year olds and the other for the 19 through 35 age bracket. Contestants will be limited to four to six minutes speaking time, must develop their own material, and be prepared to answer three extemporaneous questions, the chairmen said. The entry deadline is June 1.

Preliminary contests will

be held in the eight regions of the State Grange and finalists will compete at the Grange Leadership School at Gettysburg June 25-27. Three awards will be presented in each age group - \$25 to the first place winner, \$15 for second place, and \$10 for third. Awards in the regional contests will be \$10.00; \$7.50 and \$5.00 in each age group.

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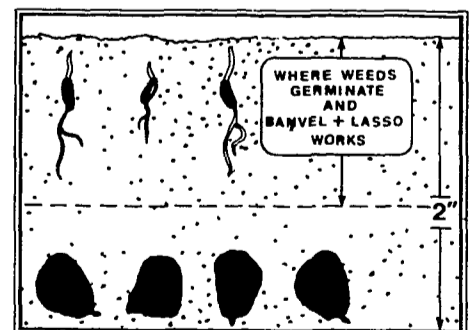
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