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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

October 28, 1994

TO: USDA AmeriCorps Project Managers
From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service 
Subject: AmeriCorps and Non-Duplication of Work

In recent days, I have received a great number of requests to clarify the non-duplication and non-displacement provisions which govern our AmeriCorps programs.

Attached is a page from the regulations of the Corporation for National and Community Service that govern our AmeriCorps programs. Please read sections "e" and "f" carefully.

As you will read, there are broad prohibitions against both displacement and duplication. AmeriCorps Members may not be used to perform service or duties performed by employees who have left the agency for any reason whatsoever, and may not even be used to perform duties when an employee is on leave or a position is left vacant.

Additionally, AmeriCorps Members "may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality in the program." In other words, if your office is already performing a certain function, AmeriCorps Members can not be used to perform more of that function. Thus, AmeriCorps Members can not be used to relieve any backlog of normal USDA work.

On the other hand, the service performed in each USDA AmeriCorps project must carry out both the general mission of the Department and the specific mission of the USDA agency funding that project. Consequently, all of our projects face a certain paradox: our AmeriCorps projects must be similar to USDA work, but never identical to USDA work.

The best way to deal with this paradox is to ensure that all our AmeriCorps Members are engaged in creative new projects which our Department would not normally be able to support, but nevertheless directly meets critical community needs.

(a) Supplantation. Corporation assistance may not be used to replace State and local public funds that had been used to support programs of the type eligible to receive Corporation support. For any given program, this condition will be satisfied if the aggregate non-Federal public expenditure for that program in the fiscal year that support is to be provided is not less than the previous fiscal year.

(b) Religious use. Corporation assistance may not be used to provide religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in any form of proselytization.

(c) Political activity. Corporation assistance may not be used by program participants or staff to assist, promote, or deter union organizing; or finance, directly or indirectly, any activity designed to influence the outcome of a Federal, State or local election to public office.

(d) Contracts or collective bargaining agreements. Corporation assistance may not be used to impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.

(e) Nonduplication. Corporation assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless the requirements of paragraph (f) of this section are met, Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.

(f) Nondisplacement. (1) An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.

(2) A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.

(3) A participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.

(4) A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that—

(i) Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or

(ii) Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.

(5) A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any—

(i) Presently employed worker;

(ii) Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;

(iii) Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;

(iv) Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or

(v) Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

§ 2540.110 Limitation on use of Corporation funds for administrative costs.

Not more than five percent of the amount of assistance provided to the original recipient of any grant or any transfer of assistance from the Corporation in any fiscal year may be used to pay for administrative costs incurred by—

NATIONAL BULLETIN NO. 360-4-

SUBJECT: PER - AmeriCorps Applications for FY 96

TO: State Conservationists
Director, Pacific Basin
Director, Caribbean Area

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ACTION REQUIRED BY: January 13, 1995

Purpose. To announce the request for applications for 1996 AmeriCorps projects. AmeriCorps USA was established by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, Public Law 103-82. It is a program designed to meet the critical needs in communities in the areas of environment, public safety, education and human needs.

Expiration Date. September 30, 1995

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the support they have given to the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) AmeriCorps Program for FY 95. I am aware of the tremendous effort you have put into this program, and I deeply appreciate your commitment.

I am now asking for your commitment for the FY 96 AmeriCorps Program. We are asking for project applications to be submitted by January 13, 1995. All States are encouraged to participate. In fiscal year 95 NRCS sponsored 571 AmeriCorps participants in 32 different States. I hope to be able to increase that number next year, but the number of positions will be determined by our appropriations. The total number of AmeriCorps Members sponsored by USDA was 1200.

Attached you will find all the pertinent information needed to apply for the AmeriCorps Program.

I whole heartedly support the AmeriCorps Program. It presents us with an opportunity to provide direct service to communities we are pledged to serve. It provides us with the opportunity to make an investment in the young people in this country. It provides NRCS an opportunity to showcase our skills, our technical excellence and our commitment to work with the citizens of this country to preserve our natural resources.

Project applications should be submitted to Lloyd Wright, Director, Community Assistance and Resource Development Division.

PAUL W. JOHNSON
Chief

Attachments

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Program Summary

Program Overview:

The AmeriCorps Program is at the center of President Clinton's National and Community Trust Act of 1993. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and other agencies are working with the Secretary of Agriculture to put the second round of AmeriCorps teams in place for fiscal year 1996.

The purpose of the AmeriCorps Program is to provide a bridge for people to go from unemployment into the work place through service that addresses the unmet needs in communities across the United States. The program combines the success of the GI Bill in providing opportunity for upward mobility, with the success of the Peace Corps in building a connection to community and a commitment to service.

The Corporation for National and Community Service administers a range of national service programs including AmeriCorps. To support AmeriCorps, USDA is planning to prepare the following three proposals:

1. National Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Corps
2. Public Lands and Environment Corps
3. National Rural Development Corps

The latter two programs are where NRCS can have the most impact.

These initiatives focus on young people but are broad enough to include people of all ages. All corps participants can earn credit towards college tuition or repayment of college loans.

Principles for all AmeriCorps/USDA Programs

- Reunite the interest of the middle class and the poor by allowing young people from all socioeconomic backgrounds to earn their way through post-secondary education.
- Give the participants at least a minimum-wage living expense, as well as adequate supervision, training, and education.
- Allow young people to perform service either before, during, or after attending post-secondary education.

Provide valuable service to the community by systematically filling unmet social needs.

- Ensure that none of the work performed duplicates existing programs.
- Limit the work performed to tasks that fulfill significant

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missions of USDA and are generally acceptable to our main farming, consumer, environmental, and rural development interest groups.

- Reinvent government by promoting opportunity, responsibility, and community.
- Provide models for how the Federal government can manage national service programs.
- Ensure that projects are based on local community needs. Projects will be expected to build effective partnerships between community, State, and local groups and the Federal government.
- Build a distinct identity for the AmeriCorps Program.
- Expand dramatically in the next few years as a full-scale national program is phased-in.
- Forge links to other key Administration initiatives such as empowerment zones, youth apprenticeship, welfare reform, micro enterprise, and health care reform.

The Public Lands and Environment Corps

The Public Lands and Environment Team will have both urban and rural components. This team will be more like traditional youth corps, allowing participants to join the program before, during, or after post-secondary education or job training. Each group of 8-12 members must have a full-time crew leader. This person can be an NRCS staff person, a person from a partner, or a Rural Development Corps person. In developing your proposals, you should account for this position and indicate how it will be staffed. If it is to be a Rural Development Corps Member, be sure to include that in your request.

The Rural Development Corps

The Rural Development Team will be a professional corps consisting of members who have at least some college, preferable a BA/BS Degree or a graduate degree. These teams will consist, as a minimum, of at least five members and will not need the intense supervision that an environmental corps team would need.

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AmeriCorps members will receive an education award and a living allowance.

Education Award

The Corporation for National and Community Service will provide grant funds to pay a \$4,725 voucher for each participant to use for tuition in college or vocational institutions. At the end of one year (1700 hours) term of service, participants will apply directly to the Corporation for the educational voucher to be transferred to the institution of their choice.

Living Allowance

NHQ will fund the living allowances and benefits, including FICA, health insurance, child care, and a percentage for support (i.e. travel) for AmeriCorps Members. We encourage you to establish local partnerships with USDA agencies and other organizations to provide other support needed for your projects. It is not our intent to fund anything except as stated above.

The following information regarding application format and requirements will enable you to complete your proposal. However, if you have any questions, you may contact Paula Cole Jones, Program Manager, (202) 720-1853.

RENEWALS

Project renewals will not be automatic. Those projects that were approved the first year of the program can apply for renewal by submitting the following:

- 1) A letter of intent to participate.
- 2) The first quarterly report.
- 3) Clear articulation of problems encountered in Year One and how they will be addressed during the remainder of year One and/or Year Two.
- 4) Clear and well thought-out program objectives for Year Two that are consistent with Year One.
- 5) Three community service objective for each Rural Development Team Member working on a distinct issue and five community service objectives for each Public Lands and Environment Team site.

NEW APPLICANTS

New AmeriCorps project proposals should follow the attached guidelines. It is important for you to understand the program formats so that your proposed sites and management plans meet the intent of the AmeriCorps programs. The AmeriCorps application form will be mailed to all States. A major component of the application is the program objectives. Please make sure that your objectives are complete and that they clearly describe community service results that will be achieved (see attached samples). A teleconference will be scheduled to answer questions for new applicants.

Joint commitments from partners will strengthen your proposal. Partners should bring some type of assets to the project; if not cash, at least some in-kind service such as space, telephones, supplies, vehicles, etc. A formal agreement should be written that specifies the responsibilities of each party in the agreement. We have available, upon request, a sample agreement.

We are planning to begin recruitment in spring of 1995, to allow enough time to build a broad applicant pool. The program start up will be in September 1995.

Diversity is a major element of program approval. The diversity of your teams must reflect the make up of the population in your project area. You should include in your proposal your recruitment strategy that will ensure diversity. Projects that do not show a plan to achieve diversity will not be approved.

objectives
Please remember that AmeriCorps Members must provide direct service to their communities that produces concrete and measurable results each year. They can not spend the bulk of

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their year performing office work, data entry, mapping, or inventory work, or planning for long-term projects that will not at least begin implementation in the first year. On the other hand, the service performed in each NRCS project must carry out the general mission of the agency. Consequently, all of our projects face a certain paradox: they must be similar to NRCS work, but not identical to routine NRCS work. The best way to deal with this paradox is to ensure that all our AmeriCorps Members are engaged in creative new projects which our agency would not normally be able to support, but nevertheless directly meets critical community needs.

Format for Individual Site Application

(This application may be up to 10 pages plus your budget page(s))

1. **Title Page** Includes title of project and name of organization

2. **Summary Page**

On one page, provide an overview of the following items:

The **specific needs to be met**, particularly as they relate to the national priorities in the four issue areas. The four issue areas are: Education, Human Needs, Environment, Public Safety.

The key elements of the **site design**.

The **number of participants**.

A description of the administering organization and identification of primary program partners.

- organization
- identification of primary program partners.

3. **Mission and Objectives.** Answer the following questions:

What is your mission statement?

What are your annual objectives in the issue area? (list at least three)

4. **Narrative:** (not to exceed 7 pages)

In approximately seven pages, organized and labeled in the stipulated categories, Provide the following information in a narrative form with as much specificity as possible.

(a) **Needs to be met** and appropriateness for national service. Identify the nature of the specific need(s) to be met by the proposed national service program, including how and why these needs are appropriately or uniquely addressed by a national service program. Give a detailed description of the environmental problems to be solved.

Needs. What specific needs will the program address and how do these needs relate to the national priorities? If they do not relate to the national priority areas, please explain why they were selected. Explain the direct benefit of the project to the community.

Process. What was the process by which the needs were identified? Who was involved identifying the needs and to

Format for Individual Site Application

(This application may be up to 10 pages plus your budget page(s))

1. **Title Page** Includes title of project and name of organization

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On one page, provide an overview of the following items:

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Process. What was the process by which the needs were identified? Who was involved identifying the needs and to

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See Attached Example

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what extent were residents of the community in which the service will be provided involved in any needs assessment activities. Explain in detail the role of each partner in the project: how each partner participated in the assessment and start up phase and how each partner will participate during the year.

b. **DESIGN.** Describe the concept and design for the program, including the nature of specific service activities to be performed by participants and how these activities address the identified needs and meet the program objectives. Describe how the project will be evaluated and monitored during the year. Explain how your success will be measured at the end of the year.

Concept. What is the basic concept for the design of the program? How will the program be structured? Where will it be located? Describe any institutional or programmatic collaborations or partnerships that will be involved in operating the program, including the extent to which the program builds on existing service programs.

Service Activities. What activities will participants engage in, and how will these projects or activities result in direct and demonstrable service that addresses the identified needs? Describe a typical week in the life of program participants, giving concrete examples of the types of activities or duties participants will perform.

Relation to Need. How do the service activities respond to the identified needs?

Participant Training and Support. How will participants be trained, supported, or otherwise prepared for their assignments or placements. Describe the key elements of the participant training, in-service education, or service-learning curriculum employed to improve participants' skills, prepare them for placement, and foster positive civic values.

Participant Placement and Supervision. How will participants be placed (in teams, small groups, or individually) and matched with assignments? How will service sponsors or host-sites be oriented and prepared for that placement? How will participants be supervised within the program?

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The following information was taken from the Federal Register and may be helpful in completing your application.

Subpart E - Application Review

How does the Corporation review the merits of an application?

(a) In reviewing the merits of an application submitted to the Corporation under this part, the Corporation evaluates the quality, innovation, replicability, and sustainability of the proposal on the basis of the following criteria:

(1) **Quality**, as indicated by the extent to which -

(i) The program will provide productive meaningful, educational experiences that incorporate service-learning methods;

(ii) The program will meet community needs and involve individuals from diverse backgrounds (including economically disadvantaged youth) who will serve together to explore the root causes of community problems;

(iii) The principle leaders of the program will be well qualified for their responsibilities;

(iv) The program has sound plans and processes for training, technical assistance, supervision, quality control, evaluation, administration, and other key activities; and

(v) The program will advance knowledge about how to do effective and innovative community service and service-learning and enhance the broader elementary and secondary field.

(2) **Replicability**, as indicated by the extent to which the program will assist others in learning from experience and replicating the approach of the program.

(3) **Sustainability**, as indicated by the extent to which,

(i) An SEA, Indian tribe or grant making entity applicant demonstrates the ability and willingness to coordinate its activities with the State Plan under part 2513 of this chapter and with other federally assisted activities;

(ii) The program will foster collaborative efforts among local educational agencies, local government agencies, community based agencies, business, and State agencies.

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(iii) The program will enjoy strong, broad-based community support; and

(iv) There is evidence that financial resources will be available to continue the program after the expiration of the grant.

(b) The corporation also gives priority to proposals that -

(1) Involve participants in the design and operation of the program;

(2) Reflect the greatest need for assistance, such as programs targeting low-income areas;

(3) Involve students from public and private schools serving together;

(4) Involve participants of different ages, races, genders, ethnicities, abilities, and disabilities, or economic backgrounds serving together;

(5) Are integrated into the academic program of the participants;

(6) Best represent the potential of service-learning as a vehicle for education reform and school-to-work transition;

(7) Develop civic responsibility and leadership skills and qualities in participants;

(8) Demonstrate the ability to achieve the goals of this part on the basis of the proposal's quality, innovation, replicability, and sustainability, or

(9) Address any other priority established by the Corporation for a particular period.

(Note: Items 3, 5, and 6 are related to the Serve America program which is designed for the educational setting.

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CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE
COMMUNITY SERVICE OBJECTIVE

GRANTEE: USDA Soil Conservation Service SITE: Portland, Oregon

COMPONENTS OF OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS: To restore and enhance the aquatic habitat, riparian zone, and neighboring uplands to former natural state.

1. What work will be done? What service activities will your participants engage in?
Channel modification, remove pest plants and solid waste, plant new native vegetation in Columbia Slough. Approximately 30 acres of wildlife habitat will be enhanced or restored. Approximately 19 acres are infested with reed canarygrass and Himalayan blackberry, which will be restored to forest scrub/shrub plant communities. This will increase riparian habitat that will connect with the larger wildlife corridor system of the Columbia Slough, providing connectivity with the larger natural areas, such as Smith and Bybee lakes natural area. Importantly, water quality improvements in the Columbia slough are expected due to increase shading (i.e. algal population reduction).

2. What is the hoped for result of the work/activities described above?
Three riparian areas will be restored, working with local groups.

3. How will you measure the quality of your product or impact of your service?
100% habitat restored and water quality improved.

4. By what standard will you gauge success?
SCS Technical Field Guides and judgment of other professionals.

5. How many individuals will receive the benefit of the work your participants perform?
Regional watershed population of 48,000

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CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE
COMMUNITY SERVICE OBJECTIVE

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GRANTEE: USDA Soil Conservation Service SITE: Webster, Texas

COMPONENTS OF OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS: Protect shoreline from erosion along the Texas coast.

1. What work will be done? What service activities will your participants engage in?

Members will establish vegetative covers to protect 5280 feet of Texas Shoreline from erosion.

2. What is the hoped for result of the work/activities described above?

Slow down erosion of shoreline, which usually averages 3 to 4 feet per year. This will protect property and benefit water quality.

3. How will you measure the quality of your product or impact of your service?

Successful establishment of grass and reduction in erosion rates.

4. By what standard will you gauge success?

90% reduction in active shoreline erosion rate.

5. How many individuals will receive the benefit of the work your participants perform?

All citizens of Texas, but in particular residents of the Texas Gulf Coast Region.

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CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE
COMMUNITY SERVICE OBJECTIVE

GRANTEE: USDA Soil Conservation Service **SITE:** Louisiana

COMPONENTS OF OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS: Plan and install, as appropriate, 35 dry fire hydrants in each receptive parish within the respective areas of responsibility and perform required evaluation.

1. What work will be done? What service activities will your participants engage in?

Members will make an accounting of material shipped to central locations; monitor and document (photo) installation; work closely with parish representative to schedule installation; document and solicit volunteers to assist in the installation; coordinate local media coverage; write at least one news article with approval to publish; assist in quality control; and prepare monthly progress reports.

2. What is the hoped for result of the work/activities described above?

The activities will result in the planned installation of 35 dry fire hydrants in each receptive parish within the respective area of responsibility. AmeriCorps members are responsible for planning the installation of 1,435 dry fire hydrants in 41 parishes.

3. How will you measure the quality of your produce or impact of your service?

Quality will be measured by each dry fire hydrant being inspected and certified. Quality will also be measured by the good working relationships established with parish representatives, quality control inspections, and successful use of community volunteers to complete the tasks to install the dry fire hydrants.

4. By what standard will you gauge success?

Success will be gauged on 80 percent of the dry fire hydrants installed passing inspection.

5. How many individuals will receive the benefit of the work your participants perform?

Thousands of rural homeowners will benefit by receiving fire protection. Many communities will receive an economic benefit through reduced fire insurance rates.

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CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE
COMMUNITY SERVICE OBJECTIVE

GRANTEE: USDA Soil Conservation Service SITE: Marion, Arkansas

COMPONENTS OF OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS: Identifying socially disadvantaged households who do not have safe drinking water in the county, and working with organizations, local, state, federal agencies to provide safe extension of rural water for needy households.

1. What work will be done? What service activities will your participants engage in?

Members will identify limited resource and socially disadvantaged individuals who do not have safe household drinking water within Crittendon County, Arkansas. Members will work with local rural water districts, county governments, state legislature, and state governmental units for extension of lines to the needy households. Members will work with affected residents in preparing and submission of applications to FmHA for assistance in installation of needed plumbing facilities for applicant households. Members will identify available labor force to install plumbing fixtures as funds are secured.

2. What is the hoped for result of the work/activities described above?

Water lines extended to all needy residents. All limited resource and socially disadvantaged residents will have the necessary plumbing installed in their homes to allow for a better quality of life.

3. How will you measure the quality of your product or impact of your service?

All water lines installed will meet Arkansas Rural Water Association standards.

4. By what standard will you gauge success?

By determining the percentage of house holds who are furnished a safe supply of drinking water. The target is 100% with a minimum target of 80%.

5. How many individuals will receive the benefit of the work your participants perform?

An estimated 24 households are without drinking water. This equates to an estimated 100 individuals.

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources
Conservation
Service

1844 Hwy. 18, Suite 195
Apple Valley, CA. 92307
Phone (619) 242-2906

002

CA

Subject: PER-AmeriCorps Program Objectives Date: November 30, 1994
Clarification-Apple Valley

File Code: 360

To: Tim Catron
Information Systems Director
Davis State Office

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This is in response to the E-mail message that I received requesting clarification to my objectives. I am not sure if Joel Berg was referring to my objectives as I do not have any acres noted in either one of my objectives.

Regardless if he was correct or incorrect in his reference to my goals, he would still like to know how the information that the AmeriCorps Members gather will be used to improve our natural resources or cause conservation practices to be implemented.

I am not sure if I can answer his question adequately, as our project is not one that will be completed within a year that can show that conservation practices were installed and "X" number of acres were protected or improved. Our soil survey activity will take several years to be completed. The AmeriCorps Members input will be part of the overall soil survey process, with the end product being a soil survey that will be used by resource planners, cattlemen, landowners, engineers, wildlife specialists, environmentalists, and military specialists.

The soil survey will be the fundamental tool that all of these end users that I have noted above, will be able to use to help them determine what conservation practices will be needed to either improve the resources or protect them. The soil survey will also assist the end users to determine the best use of the rural lands that is available to them. Once the soil survey is completed, the end users will be able to determine which area would be suitable for grazing, which areas are environmentally sensitive for endangered species, which areas need erosion control practices to control fugitive dust from wind erosion, and which areas would be suitable for new building development. All of these land use decisions will carry with it, best management practices that will need to be implemented to either protect or improve the land.

Our AmeriCorps Members will be working with other agencies, groups, landowners, and other interested individuals on how to use the soils, vegetative, and wildlife data that has been collected. This will require them to make presentations, interact with other groups, individuals, and other agencies in order to insure that the data collected will be used properly.

I hope that this answers Joels' questions, if we need to discuss this further please do not hesitate to call me.

Rick Aguayo
District Conservationist
Apple Valley FO



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Soil
Conservation
Service

P.O. Box 2890
Washington, D.C.
20013

November 21, 1995

SUBJECT: Oklahoma AmeriCorps Project

TO: Joel Berg, Director
Office of National Service, USDA

Nothing

In an effort to improve on the diversity of our AmeriCorps team in Oklahoma, we approved two additional positions.

Oklahoma had difficulty recruiting for diversity due to the location of the AmeriCorps work. The windbreak restoration project is in the western part of the state. Our employees have worked directly with community leaders to recruit but efforts have been unsuccessful because people are unwilling to relocate to this area. We are proposing that the two additional positions be converted to five part time positions. This will enable us to have a diverse five member team in another area of the state. We can also take advantage of the end of semester which gives us a chance to recruit college students. Part time AmeriCorps members will be able to complete the required 900 hours of service between now and summer.

The Project Director in Oklahoma is preparing details of the proposed change. Please contact me with your reply.

Paula Cole Jones

PAULA COLE JONES
Program Manager

OPTIONAL FORM 99 (2-90)

FAX TRANSMITTAL

of pages 1

To	Joel Berg	From	Paula Jones
Dept./Agency	USDA	Phone #	720-2847
Fax #	720-4614	Fax #	690-0639

NSN 7540-01-317-7000

5039-101

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



The Soil Conservation Service
is an agency of the
Department of Agriculture



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

December 1, 1994

To: Lloyd, Dee

From: Joel

Subject: **Problem Projects in the Midwest**

Since our discussion last Wednesday, I have received "revised" objectives for Kansas and Missouri, two of our most problematic states. Unfortunately, only minor changes were made in the objectives and they still are not even close to meeting the direct service requirements of the law.

In addition to Kansas and Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin have not provided suitable objectives. You will recall that senator Daschle specifically complained about our projects in South Dakota.

As we agreed, attached is a sample letter to the filed, along with a copy of a flood relief objective that comes much closer to what we are seeking.

I would hope you can get such letter out to all the states affected in the next two days so we can immediately obtain objectives revised to our satisfaction. Thanks.



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

December 1, 1994

To: Lloyd, Dee
From: Joel *JB*
Subject: Fixing Problem

*To Dee:
690-0639*

Since our discussion last Wednesday, I have received "revised" objectives for Kansas and Missouri, two of our most problematic states. Unfortunately, only minor changes were made in the objectives and they still are not even close to meeting the direct service requirements of the law.

In addition to Kansas and Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin have not provided suitable objectives. You will recall that Senator Daschle specifically complained about our projects in South Dakota.

As we discussed, I would review all the flood relief objectives and provide you with the one I believe to be the "best," so that you could distribute it to the field. This objective from Iowa is attached, and I have already provided Dee with non-flood relief examples of excellent objectives.

Even outside the Midwest flood states, we still have significant problems. For instance, the Apple Valley, California, Members will simply be collecting data for a soil survey, which even your district conservationist admits will take "years to complete." This is clearly not acceptable AmeriCorps service. Additionally, this service has almost no relation to the description in California's original AmeriCorps application which SCS produced and I and the Corporation approved: "This project will protect and heal watershed ecosystems in areas damaged by the 1993-1994 wild fires, the earthquake, and also in areas for a high potential for fires."

Some good news is that I had an extended conversation with Craig, your project manager in Nebraska, and the revised objectives he subsequently submitted were significantly improved. **I would like to follow-up on that model by joining you on conference calls in the next few days with all the states that still need to revise their objectives.** Thank you for your help in this regard.

TIME-LINE OF OBJECTIVES REQUESTS

February, March, April: Agencies notified by USDA that objectives would be required as part of each application due to the Corporation in the application due April 29

August 8: Agencies notified by USDA and the Corporation that revised objectives would be required before the launch of the program on September 12

Late August: USDA gave a limited approval for some sites to begin work without acceptable objectives on the explicit understanding they would be provided immediately

September 9: Agencies asked to provide community service objectives by September 20 to submit them to the Corporation by September 30

September 21: USDA gave an extension to rural development team sites until September 23

October 21: Objectives received from SCS

October 24: Memo to SCS asking for immediate revisions

October 26: Meeting to discuss immediate revisions; promise of immediate help

November 13: Request for missing objectives



September 9, 1994

To: AmeriCorps/USDA Working Group

From: Joel Berg JB

Subject: Pre-Launch Update

- 1) The Corporation has asked that we provide them with our final, revised objectives by September 30. Therefore, please submit to me all your revised community service and community building objectives --- in one document --- by September 20. Even if you have already sent me objectives for individual sites, please provide them to me in that master document. Attached are the two forms the Corporation requires. We already have participant development objectives for all our sites.
- 2) Attached is the AmeriCorps Pledge, which should be used for swearing-in Members.
- 3) The Corporation has produced a draft Member handbook. Most of its information is included in our Member handbook, but it does include a very useful section on the education awards. This section is attached: I urge you to use it in recruiting and provide a copy to all our Members.
- 4) The Corporation has produced an excellent nine minute-long orientation video. I am working to obtain copies for all our sites.



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

September 21, 1994

To: USDA National Service Working Group
From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service *JB*
Subject: Urgent Issues

Thank you for suffering through the endless administrative meeting yesterday. I also thank you for your continued patience and enthusiasm as we continue to ride the bumpy road of reinventing government.

There are a few pressing issues which we must all address immediately:

1) Community Service and Community Service Objectives -

As you know, all community service and community building objectives were due to my office yesterday. Since many Rural Development sites are having continuing difficulties, I will allow the agencies to deliver my office those site objectives by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 23. All other site objectives must be delivered to my office by 5:00 p.m. today.

Our original community service and community building objectives were due to the Corporation for National and Community Service April 29. After initial grant negotiations, our revised objectives were due to the Corporation on June 7. Given that some USDA agencies missed both of those deadlines for some of their sites, I asked all agencies to immediately submit revised objectives. At our August staff training, I again repeated to all agencies that they could not start their site service until the objectives were completed and accepted. Many of you asked me for an extension so that your sites could participate in the launch, and I granted that exemption; however, in a September 8th memo, I indicated, that since our revised objectives were due to the Corporation by September, we needed your revised objectives by September 20th.

It is absolutely critical for us to receive your objectives now so that we can review them, revise them if necessary, and ensure that your office and your field offices all agree upon our final objectives.

Objectives should be provided for each environmental site and each Rural Development Team Member. Each agency should provide my office all the objectives compiled together in one file on one diskette for environmental projects file and one file on one disk for rural development projects.

If your agency's AmeriCorps staff cannot meet these extended deadlines, please let me know immediately so that I can speak with your Administrator, Chief, Assistant and/or Under Secretary to request more short-term staff resources for this task.

2) Diversity in Recruitment -

Some people have indicated to me that our projects may not be diverse "this first year" because of tight timeliness. This is unacceptable. Agencies have had permission to begin recruiting since June. Moreover, the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 mandates diversity.

Please work with Katherine Gibney, at 720-4369, if you need additional help in fulfilling this requirement.

Per our mutual agreement, I will not review each application, but I will hold each agency coordinator personally responsible for achieving diversity at every site our first year.

3) Administrative Help -

Due to the complexity of our administrative issues --- as well as continuing last minute budget changes made by agencies ---- Ron DeMunbrun, who is handling all our administrative issues, is in need of some expert assistance.

In the next two weeks, he has to finalize all issues relating to budgets, liability, accounts, travel reimbursement, contracts and cooperative agreements for all our 42 projects in 32 states. This work really requires five people --- not one.

Ron desperately needs help. Please seriously investigate whether you have a member of your budget or administrative staff who could work full-time with Ron on these issues for the next two weeks. Your help in this matter will benefit all of us.

4) Site Visits -

Attached is a schedule of site visits I am planning to make in September and October. Please inform me if you sites in that area will be running by the time of my visit. Please ask your local project and/or public affairs staff to work with Denise Bennett to arrange specific times of my visits, transportation to those sites from the cities in which I will be overnighting, time I might be able to meet with local newspaper editorial boards, and times I might be able to meet with all the USDA staff involved at each site.

For the Forest Service residential sites, please let me know if I will be able to spend a night at each camp (I would pay the appropriate fees).

5) Project Changes-

I have learned from a variety of sources that some agencies are attempting to make serious changes in certain projects without consulting me. Please consult me **before** you make any major changes regarding the number of AmeriCorps Members at each site, the locations of sites, the use of Rural Development Team members as crew leaders, project objectives, project launch dates, etc. Please consult Ron immediately if you have any budget changes. All such issues need to be negotiated by us with the Corporation.

6) Press Releases and Other Public Materials

Despite the Department's policy that the USDA Office of Communications must approve all releases on projects relating to the Office of the Secretary, and despite my repeated requirement that I approve all such materials on AmeriCorPs, some field offices continue to send materials to the media that my office has never seen. Some of this material is factually incorrect and some of this material is simply poorly written or unprofessionally produced. Please ask your offices of public affairs to stress this approval policy to field offices. Katherine and I have kept our word in ensuring record-breaking speed in the approval process. In return, we ask for your cooperation in this matter.

7) Liability Insurance

Ron and I are continuing to focus on this matter and hopefully will have a resolution within a few days.

Proposed Travel and Site Visit Schedule for Joel Berg

Thursday, September 22, Fly DC to Topeka, KS,
Friday, September 23, Visit SCS sites in Northeast Kansas
Saturday, September 24, Free time in Topeka, KS
Sunday, September 25, Free time in Topeka, KS
Monday, September 26, Drive to Omaha, NB
Tuesday, September 27, Drive to Des Moines, IA
Wednesday, September 28, Drive to Davenport, IA
Thursday, September 29, Drive to Hannibal, MO
Friday, September 30, Drive to East St. Louis, IL (Objectives due to Corporation)
Saturday, October 1, Drive to Kansas City, free time in Kansas City
Sunday, October 2, return car, Fly back to DC in morning

Monday, October 3, Office time in DC, meet with working group
Tuesday, October 4, Office time in DC
Wednesday, October 5, office time in DC
Thursday, October 6, Office time in DC

Friday, October 7, Fly to Oakland or Fresno, CA
Saturday, October 8, Speak at CA Rural Development Conference, Fresno, CA
Sunday, October 9, Free time in San Francisco, CA
Monday, October 10, Columbus Day, Free time in San Francisco
Tuesday, October 11, Visit Pentaluma site, overnight in San Francisco,
Wednesday, October 12, Rent car, Drive to Sacramento, CA
Thursday, October 13, Drive to Redding, CA
Friday, October 14, Drive to Medford, OR
Saturday, October 15, Drive to Ukiah, CA
Sunday, October 16, Drive to Oakland, Return rental car, fly back to DC

Monday, October 17, Office time in DC, meet with working group
Tuesday, October 18, Office time in DC

Wednesday, October 19, Fly into Boston, MA, rent a car, Drive to Lewiston, ME
Thursday, October 20, Drive to Lewiston, ME
Friday, October 21, Drive to Cherryfield, ME
Saturday, October 22, Drive to Bar Harbor, ME, Free time
Sunday, October 23, Drive to Montpelier
Monday, October 24, Drive to Green Mountain National Forrest, overnight at AmeriCopr camp
Tuesday, October 25, Drive to Rutland
Wednesday, October 26, Drive to Boston
Thursday, October 27, Return rental car, Fly from Boston to DC in morning
Thursday, October 27, AFTERNOON, Office time in DC
Friday, October 28, Office time in DC



November 13, 1994

To: Dee, Paula, Lloyd
From: Joel Berg
Subject: Information Still Needed

Following up on my memo of October 24 and our meeting two days later, I received only revised objectives for one site in Louisiana and one site in South Carolina.

I am still missing objectives for:

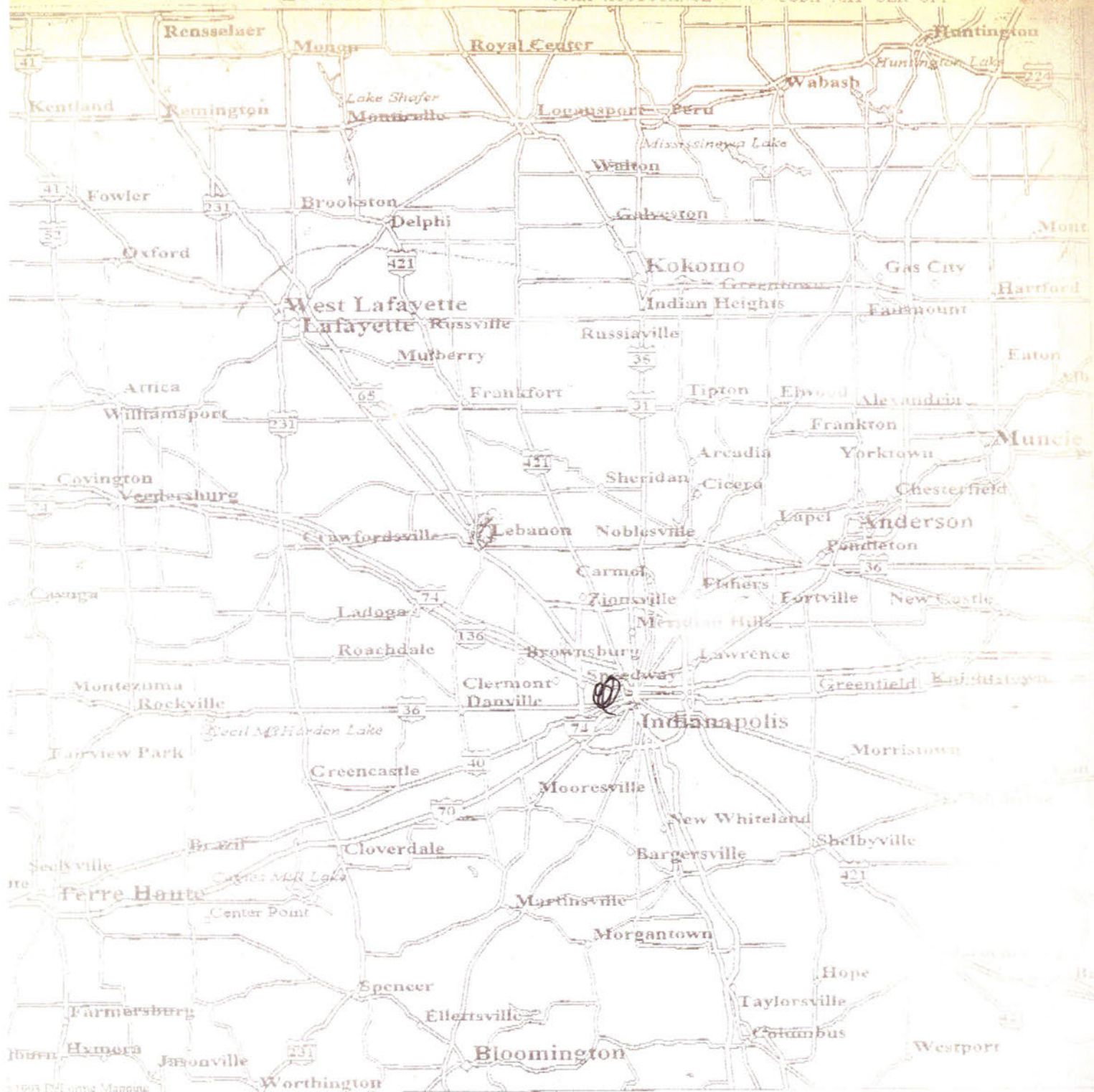
Kansas (some worksite objectives missing)
District of Columbia (no objectives)
Boston (no objectives)
New Jersey (no objectives)
South Dakota (no objectives)
Omaha, Nebraska (no objectives in binder)

In addition, I am still missing the 62 specific changes in objectives I requested in the October 24 memo.

Furthermore, I have discovered that there are additional objectives missing, including those for Maryland, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. Other selected counties are missing from states you have submitted.

Not to make matters even more confusing, the attached chart of project managers (prepared by Jim Coyle of FmHA based on information provided by the agencies), contains lists sites totaling over 1,4000 USDA AmeriCorps. I suspect we have double-counted certain members paid for by the Forest Service, but supervised by SCS. This is impossible to ascertain, since some objectives you provided were missing their exact location in each state.

In order to end this confusion, please re-submit all your objectives to me in one document --- on paper and on diskette --- in the exact format provided in the attached document. I have sworn to the Corporation that I will provide this information by the end of the week, so please submit it to me by COB Thursday, November 17.



LEGEND

- Lake Michigan Center
- Geo Feature
- State Capital
- Town, Sm. City
- Large City
- Interstate Turnpike
- US Highway
- State/Prov Boundary
- Major Street/Road
- State Route
- Interstate Highway
- US Highway
- Open Water

Scale 1:1,000,000 (at center)

20 Miles

20 KM

Map 9 20

Wed Nov 94

INDIANAPOLIS
NATIONAL
RESERVATION



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

November 13, 1994

To: Dee, Paula, Lloyd
From: Joel Berg *JB*
Subject: Information Still Needed Urgently

After I sent my memo of October 24 and we met two days later, I have only received revised objectives for one site in Louisiana and one site in South Carolina.

I am still missing objectives for:
Kansas (some worksite objectives missing)
District of Columbia (no objectives)
Boston (no objectives)
New Jersey (no objectives)
South Dakota (no objectives)
Omaha, Nebraska (no objectives in binder)

In addition, I am still missing the 62 specific changes in objectives I requested in the October 24 memo.

Furthermore, I have discovered that there are additional objectives missing, including those for Maryland, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. Other selected counties are missing from states you have submitted.

Not to make matters even more confusing, the attached chart of projects (prepared by Jim Coyle of FmHA based on information provided by the agencies), contains sites totaling over 1,400 USDA AmeriCorps, 200 more than we actually have. I suspect we have double-counted certain Members who are funded by the Forest Service but supervised by SCS. This is impossible to ascertain, since some objectives you provided were missing their exact location in each state.

In order to end this confusion, please re-submit all your objectives to me in one document --- on paper and on diskette --- in the exact format provided in the attached document. I have sworn to the Corporation that I will provide this information by the end of the week, so please submit it to me by COB Thursday, November 17. Than you for your help.

January

15 + 4

~~NA~~

NH Kick
off

MEMORANDUM
OF CALL

Previous editions usable

TO:

☐ YOU WERE CALLED BY-- ☐ YOU WERE VISITED BY--

OF (Organization)

☐ PLEASE PHONE ☐ FTS ☐ AUTOVON

☐ WILL CALL AGAIN ☐ IS WAITING TO SEE YOU

☐ RETURNED YOUR CALL ☐ WISHES AN APPOINTMENT

MESSAGE

RECEIVED BY	DATE	TIME
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