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NRCS [Natural Resources Conservation Service] Application 1995 [2]

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SCS

24-33

We asked for 45 positions

I count

28 positions -

20 - Maine

3 - VT

5 - NY

That makes us 12 short
for our 20 in New England

1

**Individual Site Application #24
Rural Development
New England (ME, VT, NY)**

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 45

NEEDS TO BE MET

Early efforts at water quality improvement in the Northeast states produced remarkable results that fell into disuse when single-resource solutions of the federal system came into vogue. Now that years have passed and the holistic management techniques have been rediscovered (and discovered to have been quietly working all this time), it is time to reintroduce these water quality techniques in concert with a new philosophy of federalism. Water quality is critical to Northern New England's natural resource-based economy which has been severely impacted with high unemployment rates. Northern New England's key rural economies impacted by water quality are its aquaculture and fishing industries, agriculture, drinking water supplies, new crop development, forestry, forest management practices, tourism, and recreation. If Northern New England's water quality concerns are not addressed, the present bleak state of the economies that depend on this resource will continue. Rural communities in this region, spreading as far as Northwestern New York State, also have other unique resource and fire problems.

THE AMERICORPS RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM SOLUTION

Northern New England's AmeriCorps water quality proposal will address the needs of numerous individual projects throughout the region under the umbrella of Northern New

England USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) programs of technical assistance.

An unified AmeriCorps team will be established and trained individually to continue serving the water quality needs of the region and the nation throughout their careers long after their AmeriCorps experience.

In one project area, participants will work under the administration of Northern New England USDA Soil Conservation Service team with assistance from the Quebec Labrador Foundation's (QLF) Atlantic Center for the Environment. The QLF will be responsible for selection, screening, training, employee evaluation, monitoring, and employee workshops. Other administrative duties will be provided through and by Maine SCS state and field office professionals in local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDS) and Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) areas.

In Vermont, a three person technical team (the Americorps Rural Fire Protection Technical Team) will be established to provide assistance to Vermont communities to help prevent the type of fires that can devastate rural communities.

In Northwestern New York State, five participants will provide aid and assistance to the Seneca Nation in improving natural resource management decisions.

Some of the individual project descriptions already identified follow this section and cover efforts from water quality and water supply to economic diversification and data base construction.

MAINE WATER QUALITY PROJECTS

These projects will work with communities to enhance water quality and fisheries in the State of Maine, and to increase and protect water-based industries in the State of Maine.

The projects will promote awareness of water quality problems and solutions for Maine's citizens through education and resource management demonstration projects, enhance the state's soil and water based economy by providing rural development leadership in management and development of the state's resources, and assess water quality resources.

The specific needs which this project will meet will be environmental in that water quality preservation and enhancement will be the common thread and concern of each of the twenty positions in fifteen individual projects. Water quality is critical to Maine's natural resource-based economy which has been severely impacted with unemployment rates ranging from 15.81 in Aroostook County to 21.9% in coastal Washington County during the month of March 1994.

One participant will serve at a Cranberry water Quality Coordinator. The council is currently involved with the Maine Department of Agriculture, the University of Maine, the Maine Cranberry Grower's Association, USDA agencies, EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in a program to promote wise development of Maine's new cranberry farming enterprises. This participant will serve as a coordinator to address growers' needs and coordinate appropriate available agency programs to one-on-one farmer assistance for water quality monitoring and pest management.

One participant will be a Lakes Coordinator for the St. John Aroostook RC&D who will assist the Shin Pond Association conduct a sanitary survey of 250 camps, utilizing a form developed by the RC&D and Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Once the surveys are complete, the participant will develop a sanitary survey report (similar to others developed by the RC&D. Next, the coordinator will assist the Shin Pond Association implement its recommendations. The surveying will begin in May and be completed by October. From October through May, the incumbent will implement a work plan that has been developed by the Fish River Lakes Water Quality Association.

One participant will serve as a Trails Coordinator who will assist four local communities in administering Land and Water Conservation funding and National Recreational Trails Act funding received for the development of 18.5 miles of abandoned railroad right of way into a year-round multi-use recreational trail. The coordinator will be responsible to oversee development by working with personnel from local communities, working with a labor force provided by a local employment training agency, recordkeeping, and documenting and inspecting work as it proceeds. This trail system will improve water quality throughout Aroostook County by removing All Terrain Vehicles from highly eroded areas, placing them on trails designed to prevent erosion and sedimentation.

One participant will serve as an Environmental Education Circuit Rider. There is an immediate need in Cumberland County to facilitate and promote teacher training in the use of curricula which addresses the goals for environmental education. Studies show that, in many areas, environmental education curricula are virtually nonexistent. Training opportunities and resource materials are not being used. As a result, young people are not growing up with the knowledge and information they need to make informed decisions and take action concerning their environment.

One participant will be an Atlantic Salmon Coordinator. With the soon to be built fish

ladder at Grand Falls, New Brunswick, Canada, Atlantic salmon will be introduced to the upper St. John in Aroostook County, Maine. The coordinator will develop a strategic business marketing plan with a descriptive benefit and cost analysis to establish private sector participation in the development of this fishery and the control of erosion and sedimentation on the United States side of this watershed. This fishery will provide economic development opportunities that will help offset the loss of Logging Air Force Base and the decline of the traditional agricultural economy.

Four participants will serve as Mid-Coast Fisheries Coordinators. These coordinators will be trained in fisheries and related skills to preserve and restore the historic sea fish runs to the Medomak River. The four coordinators will interact with community and industry leaders to establish a pilot demonstration hatchery for the culturing of shad and other anadromous species for enhancing absent or depleted runs. They will also inventory and monitor water quality as it relates to this reintroduction effort under the direction of the Time and Tide RC&D aquaculture specialist. 4

Five participants will serve as Marine Education Center Coordinators. Eighty percent of the clam flats along the coast of Maine are closed due to pollution and loss of the ability of the clams to maintain viable populations. The Beals Island Shellfish hatchery is designed to enhance the areas economic base through the production of baby seed shellfish (clams, scallops) and through educational training in the interrelationships of basic shellfish biology, resource management and the effects of varying water quality parameters. Individuals working with this program will develop community understanding between the relationship of good water quality to the biology and economics of the shellfish industry through a training 5

regime which includes conditioning adult shellfish broodstock to produce eggs, raising the young that develop from the eggs, growing in mass cultures the microscopic plants they feed on and treating all the water that is necessary for these activities in a variety of ways that affect water quality parameters.

Two participants will serve as Casco Bay Watershed Coordinators. They will plan, inventory, educate, and apply total resource management conservation solutions to improve water quality in priority SCS subwatershed units. They will be responsible for organizing the Ecosystem project, identifying conservation priorities, developing a team action plan, coordinating with SCS and Soil and Water Conservation District technical advisors, monitoring progress, completing technical components, recording any necessary documentation and supervising associate conservation volunteers to assure successful ecosystem goals achievement. 2

Two participants will serve as St. Croix River and Chandler River Coordinators. The St. Croix Watershed covers 1,640 square miles of northeastern Maine and southwestern New Brunswick, Canada. A preliminary plan has been developed by the Washington County Water Quality Team and the St. Croix International Waterway Commission using a multi-agency approach that involved many local community volunteers. The coordinators would help complete the assessment and help implement the plan. The coordinators will develop a community non-point source program to address the high coliform counts, protect large aquifer recharge areas used in agriculture, promote wise use of natural resources through best management practices, help maintain the sustainable natural resource based economy and build environmental awareness within the communities. The coordinator will assist in 2

promoting Integrated Crop Management on wild lowbush blueberries.

One participant will serve as an Agriculture Water Quality Viability Coordinator. The coordinator, working with local communities and the Southern Aroostook SWCD, will develop resource water quality information for the north branch of the Meduxnekeag River and Prestile Stream Watershed projects. The coordinator will interface with local agriculture businesses, agricultural and forestry processors, citizens and municipalities. Additionally, the participant will work with limited resource farmers and the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians to gather inventory data and develop draft reports that will lead to the development and implementation of water quality and rural development improvement practices for both of these watersheds.

One participant will serve as a MACD Conservation Education Coordinator. The participant, working with the Maine Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) and its Education Committee, will coordinate the conservation water quality education activities of Maine's 16 Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

For all the above-listed participants, USDA SCS will be a statewide leader and administrator of an AmeriCorps project that will tie together rural development water quality projects from Maine's 4,000 miles of coastline and estuaries to the state's vast inland lakes and streams. The Quebec Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment (QLF/ACE) will be a partner helping to recruit, train, place, and evaluate applicants and the program. The USDA-SCS will transfer funds to the QLF/ACE under a memo of understanding that will provide specific details of cooperation. Local SWCDs and RC&D councils throughout the state have identified water quality concerns and needs and proposed

AmeriCorps projects to be addressed under the Soil Conservation Service umbrella.

VERMONT FIRE PROTECTION PROJECT

Rural fire departments in Vermont and all states are rated by an organization called the Independent Services Office (ISO). These ratings take into account the departments' capabilities to suppress fires in an effective and timely manner. These ratings range from 1 to 10, with 10 basically having little or no fire protection. Insurance companies use these ratings to determine the level of premiums to charge their customers for fire insurance. The higher the rating, the higher the premium. In Vermont, 25 towns have this higher rating.

The Vermont Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Councils along with the Soil Conservation Service have been providing limited technical assistance to Vermont communities for fire suppression water supplies. This effort, while successful, has just scratched the surface of the needs in rural Vermont communities. At the present time there are requests from 22 fire departments in Vermont and the list is growing.

A three person technical team (the Americorps Rural Fire Protection Technical Team) will be established to provide assistance to Vermont communities. A director, an information and education coordinator, and an engineer will make up the team. The development of fire protection and fire prevention plans will be a product of the team. On-site training and implementation assistance to install improvements are also a part of the project. The team will be administered by the RC&D councils in Vermont. One participant will be responsible for overall team coordination, including developing a plan of work, scheduling, compiling comprehensive community plans, supervision of other specialists, etc.

One participant will be responsible for the overall marketing of the project through media, organizations and other appropriate opportunities. One participant will an engineer responsible for evaluating and designing water withdrawal facilities.

NORTHWESTERN NEW YORK ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION

This project will engage five participants who will focus on ecosystem protection through the application of Geographic Information System technology. They will protect farmland, defend open space, preserve and restore stream corridors, develop urban greenways, protect wellheads, and help the Seneca Nation make other natural resource based decisions.

The project is centered in Erie County and the Sovereign Lands of the Seneca Nation. Included in this area are 3 cities, 25 towns, the Tonawanda Indian Reservation, the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation, the Allegany Indian Reservation and the Oil Springs Indian Reservation. The total population is just under one million. Data for land use planning and resource management is available but is often neither organized nor understood. The Seneca Nation, in particular, is struggling to manage its limited land holdings while accommodating the pressure of an increasing population.

The participants' efforts will focus on GIS data management and resource analysis. Participants will coordinate GIS activities with involved communities and other organizations and agencies. The Soil Conservation Service's East Aurora field office staff, as the project planners, will provide supervision and consult directly with the communities served to gather data and explain key components of various activities.

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Individual Site Application #25
Rural Development
Appalachia (KY, NC, WV, VA, TN, GA, AL)

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 95

NEEDS TO BE MET

The level of poverty in the Caucasian communities of the Southern Highlands of Appalachia are so persistent that they are also cliché. Whatever we, as a society, have done for and to Appalachia, it has not been nearly enough. Out-and-out poverty, both economic and of the spirit, have blighted the region, defying attempts at solution. Changing economies have left a legacy of environmental degradation that must be dealt with before re-development can take place. Infrastructure needs are spotty and not regionally addressed.

THE AMERICORPS RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM SOLUTION

Rural Development Team members will furnish critical community organizing skills to groups who can apply for rural development programs. Infrastructure needs will be handled through partnerships among four USDA agencies: the Forest Service, the Rural Development Administration (RDA), the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), and the Farmer's Home Administration (FmHA).

Six team members will work to implement the new Empowerment Zone & Enterprise Community Initiative by serving as resident community and rural development experts in each designated community. They will work with economically and socially disadvantaged rural residents to use appropriate programs through cooperative efforts with other USDA

agencies, and collaborate with all Federal, State, local, private sector and not-for profit organizations to help diversify local economies. Team members will be on-site to establish themselves as small business planning developers and information brokers with FmHA and other market-oriented organizations to assist in the assessment and development of markets for unique local products. Some of the individual project descriptions already identified follow this section and cover efforts from water quality and water supply to economic diversification and data base construction.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE PROJECTS

SCS will run projects in Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, and northern portions of Georgia and Alabama. Individuals from low-income households will receive the greatest benefit from the assistance that will be provided by AmeriCorps participants. Projects will help improve the environment, make local land users more knowledgeable about their surroundings, and help prepare them to be more "environmentally responsible," while not jeopardizing already marginal income levels. Management of water resources is a priority concern throughout the region in both rural and urban areas. These are ambitious projects that include a broad range of sites with a wide variety of objectives.

Locations for the thirty eight participants have been selected by Forest Service and Soil Conservation Service staff. Each position was selected on the basis of need of community or residents of the region to be served, the degree to which AmeriCorps participants would meet with a challenging and rewarding experience, and degree to which project staff could provide the support and direction necessary to ensure a the vital service is

performed. The numbers of AmeriCorps participants selected to work in any one geographic area are based on the amount of effort that would be mutually rewarding while not disturbing the culture of the community receiving the assistance. Typically these are projects with few participants requiring a carefully planned orientation and feed back from project staff at regular intervals. Following is a list of specific locations and functions of participants:

Tennessee Valley Resource Conservation and Development Council in Alabama - Two AmeriCorps participants will oversee details of a diverse multi-county resource conservation and development program that will include agribusiness development, community planning, and water resource management. 2

Woodland Community Land Trust (WCLT) and the Whitley County Communities For Children - These projects - located in Tennessee and Kentucky respectively - will serve rural, low income communities. Six AmeriCorps will offer assistance in training in intensive grazing, livestock raising and care, marketing farm products, and improving farm and community land management. 6

Water Quality Protection, Scenic and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement - Two AmeriCorps participants will serve in this remote and rugged area of Georgia to help rural farm owners gain more usable land from property while controlling erosion along stream banks and hillside areas. 2

West Virginia Soils Project - One Community Resource Aid will join partners from county commissions, planning and development councils and community governments and organizations to protect local soils and watersheds.

West Virginia Integrated Crop Management - One resource conservationist will integrate crop management with producers by providing in-field technical assistance, including insect and weed scouting, soil testing, determining crop yields, and pesticide education.

West Virginia Archeological Site Exploration - Low income residents West Virginia seldom have ability to take advantage of the cultural and environmental benefits that archeological data can provide in improving land use planning. One Cultural Resource Specialist, trained in archeology, will inventory and investigate archaeological and historical sites located on areas planned for construction of flood prevention or other structural measures, prepare archaeological and historical reports to document and record findings, and provide training to field office staffs and others in the identification of sites.

Southern Virginia Rural Recreation Development- Two AmeriCorps participants will work with the local grassroots citizens groups, the Old Dominion RC&D, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of State Parks and the Norfolk Southern Railroad which is interested in donating an abandoned railroad line for use as a recreational trail.

New River-Highlands Outreach Coordination - One participant will serve as the New

River Highlands RC&D Outreach Coordinator to create an program to focus attention on the water quality and forestry activities of the council and its resource committees.

Virginia Tidewater Forestry Products - One participant will help expand the markets available for forestry products. /

Marion Virginia Greenway - One participant will assist the local partners that include the Grassroots Conservancy, Smyth County and Evergreen SWCD and several State agencies in establishing a greenway through the Town of Marion, Virginia. /

Tidewater Virginia Geographic Information System - Under the leadership of the Virginia State Geographic Information Specialist, one participant will be responsible for creating a fully functional (Geographic Information System) for the Tidewater RC&D Council. /

Georgia Water Quality Protection, Scenic Wildlife Habitat Enhancement - Two participants will work in the following areas: streambank stabilization, creating riparian corridor/filter strips, livestock exclusion, livestock water facilities, and stream crossings. 2

Alabama Multi-Use Project - Two participants will work in the Tennessee Valley of the Appalachian counties of Alabama will work with community groups, individual businesses and governmental units in order to facilitate economic development and environmental protection. 2

Tennessee Environmental and Recycling Education - Seven AmeriCorps participants will provide at least one site to receive and store waste tires, used automotive oils and fluids, and lead-acid batteries, and other recyclable materials. 7

Tennessee Clinch-Powell Specialty Recreation and Tourism - Three AmeriCorps participants -- a planner, a marketer/trainer, and recruiter -- will help the establish the following to promote specialty recreation and tourism in the Clinch-Powell region. 3

Tennessee Chicksaw-Shiloh Water Quality - One participant would serve as a water quality technician monitoring and overseeing the Councils traveling gun irrigation system. The second would be responsible for developing and delivering environmental education programs to elementary school students in the area. 1

Tennessee Humphreys County Environmental Education Center - Two AmeriCorps participants would help the project provide easily accessible trails to the disabled and older citizens who are not able to use those trails presently existing in the community. 2

Tennessee Creek Watershed - One participant would serve as a non-point source contact technician. 1

FORREST SERVICE PROJECTS

The purpose of providing AmeriCorps participants through the Forest Service's Rural Community Assistance Program will be to provide needed skills to assist communities to become self-sufficient and maintain diverse economies. The theme of the Rural Community Assistance Program is to "Help People Help Themselves".

In Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, Virginia, West Virginia, and North Carolina, 20 team members under supervision of the Forest Service will focus on rural tourism, economic development, and wood utilization.

Rural Tourism: Rural tourism efforts have been underway in this region featuring recreational and aesthetic opportunities. The AmeriCorps participant would work directly with government and non-profit organizations such as Appalachian Regional Commission to provide these skills and services to local communities and the region in general.

Economic Development Coordinators: AmeriCorps participants could work with State Rural Development Councils to identify needs and target projects.

Wood Utilization: Working with state forestry organizations, an opportunity exists for an AmeriCorps participant to work with professional Wood Utilization Foresters. The objective would be to promote alternative wood products and value added manufacturing technologies. Working under the direction of the State Forester, this AmeriCorps participant would provide technology transfer to local communities as requested.

West Virginia Sustainable Development

In West Virginia, 6 participants will particularly focus on development of community-based sustainable economic development strategies using renewable natural resources in ways that protect and enhance the environment is the primary need to be met by this program. Corps members will help communities identify environmentally sound economic alternatives, provide technical assistance in analyzing these alternatives, and work with community and business leaders to implement essential projects that lead to sustainable economic activity. Corps members will provide technical support skills often unavailable in rural communities. Corps members will provide technical support in a wide variety of areas to existing rural businesses and entrepreneurs wishing to start businesses. Activities will focus on enhancing production of value-added products from forest resources, helping rural communities capitalize on travel and tourism opportunities, developing businesses based on recycled products, and supporting development of community-based economic development organizations.

Corps members will be living in Morgantown, WV and working throughout the State. Rental housing assistance is available through the West Virginia University housing placement service.

Work experience will involve a variety of technical efforts done in conjunction with a variety of partners. This includes designing, producing, mailing and analyzing five broad-based surveys aimed at determining community needs such as improvement in manufacturing base, market characteristics, demographics, etc. These will provide the basis

for 15 needs assessments, one for each of the 15 counties served. From these, about 30 market research projects will be undertaken with new and existing businesses looking at what these companies are producing and what they are capable of producing, what new sales opportunities may exist or be potentially available. These will lead the development of about 15 business plans. Five infrastructure improvement projects will be planned, and designed aimed at transportation facilities, industrial and building facilities such as dust control systems, timber bridges and multi-modal transportation facilities. Ten worker training programs will be designed and implemented. These will address employment and management needs. Approximately 15 financing plans will be developed for small businesses, and 10 revolving loan funds will be established. Ten community foundations will be established and 15 counties will be given grant writing assistance. Additional work experience will be gained in group decision-making, consensus building, and grass roots planning processes. The USDA Forest Service's Northeastern Area will be the administering organization. The program will be run in cooperation with a variety of partners. These partners will assist in planning, coordination, training, implementation, and monitoring the program. These program partners are: the West Virginia Rural Development Council, the West Virginia Development Office, the West Virginia Division of Forestry, the Appalachian Hardwood Center at West Virginia University, the Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, the Small Business Development Centers, Business and NBA programs at West Virginia colleges and universities, West Virginia Division of Tourism, Cooperative Extension Service, West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Program, and the West Virginia county governments.

Individual Site Application #26
Rural Development
South Carolina

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 45

NEEDS TO BE MET

Most rural communities in the South Carolina are changing. Those near urban areas are experiencing the trauma of unregulated and unplanned growth. However, the majority of those rural communities are seeing gradual declines in population and a reduction in the number and variety of small businesses that make living in rural America attractive. High school and college graduates are forced to seek life careers elsewhere because their hometowns, with shrinking farm employment and episodic bursts of manufacturing employment, are no longer perceived as either exciting or viable life choices. In many areas of the South Carolina, there is a lack of reliable and up-to-date environmental information. Coupled with that is a lack of environmental knowledge by the regional residents themselves. This information gap creates a disincentive for industry to relocate into an otherwise attractive area.

THE AMERICORPS RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM SOLUTION

Rural Development Team members will furnish critical community organizing skills to groups who can apply for rural water and waste programs. These community organizational skills will help rural residents organize themselves into such things as non-profit organizations, improvement districts, or even municipalities so that these entities can

more easily leverage funding necessary to build diversified communities. A key organizational component will be to seek out and assist disenfranchised and low-income residents and help establish them as participants in the larger community.

Team members will work to implement the new Empowerment Zone & Enterprise Community Initiative by serving as resident community and rural development experts in each designated community. They will work with economically and socially disadvantaged rural residents to use appropriate programs through cooperative efforts with other USDA agencies, and collaborate with all Federal, State, local, private sector and not-for profit organizations to help diversify local economies. RDT members will be on-site to establish themselves as small business planning developers and information brokers with FmHA, and other market-oriented organizations to assist in the assessment and development of markets for unique local products.

Fourteen team members will work on RDA rural water programs and eight team members will work on FmHa rural housing programs.

By filling the environmental information gap, efforts at rural business expansion and retention would be facilitated, thereby decreasing unemployment and reliance on transfer payments as a major economic contributor. Environmental learning and outreach centers will better prepare rural residents of the region to make decisions on the environmental effects of any development projects that they are considering as partial solutions to the overall development mix.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE PROJECT

The S. C. Rural Development Corps proposes to employ twenty AmeriCorps participants in a nine county targeted area in Westcentral South Carolina. The targeted area has a population of 506,844 and 3.5 million acres of which ninety-one percent is considered rural. South Carolina has the highest number of adults of any state in the nation with less than eight years elementary education and is seventh highest in the number of students living below poverty level. The targeted area counties are representative of the state and the AmeriCorps project is designed to be replicated in other sections of the state. There is currently a lack of reliable environmental data on this conditions of water quality in rural communities.

Although some data is available on large streams and rivers, small stream tributaries in rural watersheds have little or no collected data available. Rural leaders recognize this problem and agree that reliable water quality data would enable decision makers to select viable alternatives for addressing water quality concerns in rural areas.

This program proposes to utilize a multidisciplinary team of diverse backgrounds and training. These teams will collect data, develop strategies, and implement solutions. They will also assist rural low income and minority land users in identifying and implementing strategies that decrease water quality due to livestock and poultry waste, pesticide application, and grassland management. Overall leadership will be provided by USDA Soil Conservation Service; however, guidance and direction of the program will be provided through an AmeriCorps Advisory Council. This council will be composed of representatives

of numerous sponsor partners such as state and federal agencies, local units of government, and environmentally based organizations.

The project area has a high percentage of socially disadvantaged persons that receive a disproportionate share of specialized services. Many are difficult to reach due to isolation.

Our program will utilize a multidisciplinary team of participants with diverse backgrounds and training. These teams will collect data, develop strategies, and implement solutions where appropriate for demonstrations.

The work related program will gather and compile data in a format that local community decision makers can use to plan and solve environmental related problems in rural areas.

The data should show the impacts on water quality for individual property owners as well as community impacts. Groups and units of government such as conservation districts, Department of Health and Environmental Control, county councils, wildlife organizations, regional planning units, and others are presently in need of the aforementioned information.

The needs addressed in this proposal have been excerpted from strategic long range plans of soil and water conservation districts and Resource Conservation and Development councils, through a variety of environmentally related public meetings, and through information obtained from the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, local units of government, and environmental organizations. Agency personnel who have direct contact with rural community citizens also assisted with input into this proposal. Partners will provide portions, of the expenses related to training, office space, transportation, supervision, technical assistance, and materials and supplies.

An AmeriCorps Advisory Council will be formed for the purpose of advising and providing guidance for AmeriCorps team project operation and implementation throughout the life of the project.

The 20 member multidisciplinary team will consist of the following types of participants.

1. Rural Development Coordinator - serve as overall team coordinator. Priority would be given to a person with a degree in biological or environmental sciences. Should have good communicative, leadership, and organizational skills.
2. Water Quality Technician (5 positions) - strong technical skills in natural resources or biological sciences.
3. Environmental Technician (6 positions) - post high school education. Position requires some manual labor and willingness to work outside under potential adverse conditions.
4. Biologist/Forester (2 positions) - strong technical skills in natural resources to include knowledge of plants, animals, soils, water, and air.
5. Environmental Education Specialist (2 positions) - teaching and writing background will be helpful since this person will be utilized to write grant proposals for implementing projects.
6. Grassland Management Specialist (2 positions) - degree in plant animal science with emphasis on forage management.

7. Sociologist - will be responsible to work with socially disadvantaged to design strategies to reach objectives.
8. Horticulturist/Agronomist - degree in agronomy or horticulture.

The AmeriCorps participants will perform a variety of activities such as follows:

1. Develop plans for the construction and use of outdoor environmental learning centers by coordinating with local steering committees composed of teachers, students, parent/teacher organizations, and others.
2. Assist teachers in the development of lesson plans for the use of outdoor learning centers to enable them to expand their ongoing teacher program into these areas.
3. Develop programs or methods to educate students in environmental education with a focus on targeting low income and minority students.
4. Construct four outdoor environmental learning centers. For example, lay out and construct nature trails, establish signs, identify plants, construct amphitheaters, set up soil profile demonstrations, etc.
5. Select at least one watershed in each county and design a method of assessing the environmental concerns and impacts of grassland operations, heavy use livestock and poultry areas, heavy pesticide and natural use areas, erosion riparian areas, and conditions of low income communities.
6. Conduct water quality assessments to include biological water sampling, livestock, and poultry operations (location & numbers, etc).

7. Develop a system for storing and manipulating the data gathered from environmental assessments.
8. Complete evaluation assessments on individual farmsteads and homesites in rural areas for water pollution hazards.
9. Work with individual citizens on conservation measures related to improving water quality and other environmental conditions.
10. Gather soil samples and livestock and poultry waste samples for analysis.
11. Recommend rates of animal waste for land application.
12. Assist with calibration of spraying and spreading equipment.
13. Monitor animal waste application.
14. Develop news articles, brochures, lesson plans, etc. for public education of environmental awareness.
15. Entry of information into computer database.
16. Interviews with socially disadvantaged.
17. Conduct outreach programs to socially disadvantaged.

FOREST SERVICE PROJECT

South Carolina has the 2nd highest minority population in the Southern region, composed primarily of African Americans. An essential need for these communities is to develop community based leadership and to develop sustainable economies. Developing and

identifying community leaders in targeted areas is the first step towards building capacity and enabling the community to set its own vision and attain their goals. Models of this type of training are available from the Extension Service, state agencies, and consultants to accomplish this objective. A state committee, composed of representatives working with ongoing rural development efforts, such as the State Forester, Francis Marion and Sumter National Forest, Extension Service, and the State Rural Development Council, would be utilized to determine priority needs for placement of AmeriCorps volunteers. Communities with demonstrated need, based on demographic and census data, would be contacted. All communities would have an opportunity to apply for an AmeriCorps volunteer. The state committee would set priorities for available assistance. A series of Economic Development Specialists would be assigned to rural sites throughout the state on a short or long term basis depending on identified needs. Estimate that based on utilization of two (2) AmeriCorps participants, approximately six (6) counties will be served through leadership and economic development workshops.

**Individual Site Application #27
Rural Development
Mississippi Delta (AK, LA, MS)**

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 75

NEEDS TO BE MET

The three states of the Mississippi Delta Region comprise a list of the three states that traditionally appear at the lower end of most every organization's ranking chart for economic and social indicators. The majority of rural Delta communities are seeing gradual declines in population and a reduction in the number and variety of small businesses that make living in rural America attractive. High school and college graduates are forced to seek life careers elsewhere because their hometowns, with shrinking farm employment and episodic bursts of manufacturing employment, are no longer perceived as either exciting or viable life choices. Homes still linger in the Delta which have no running water. Substandard housing is epidemic. The great floods and ice storms of the past year have ravaged large portions of the vast Mississippi watersheds. Farms, homes, businesses, whole rural infrastructures have been washed away or laid waste to at the whim of Mother Nature.

THE AMERICORPS RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM SOLUTION

Rural Development Team members will furnish critical community organizing skills to Delta residents who can apply for rural development programs. These community organizational skills will help rural residents organize themselves into such things as non-profit organizations, improvement districts, or even municipalities so that these entities can

more easily leverage funding necessary to build diversified communities. A key organizational component will be to seek out and assist disenfranchised and low-income residents and help establish them as participants in the larger community. Infrastructure needs will be handled through partnerships with the Forest Service, RDA, and FmHA.

Team members will work to implement the new Empowerment Zone & Enterprise Community Initiative by serving as resident community and rural development experts in each designated community. They will work with economically and socially disadvantaged rural residents to use appropriate programs through cooperative efforts with other USDA agencies, and collaborate with all Federal, State, local, private sector and not-for profit organizations to help diversify local economies. RDT members will be on-site to establish themselves as small business planning developers and information brokers with FmHA, ACS, AMS and other market-oriented organizations to assist in the assessment and development of markets for unique local products.

Some of the individual project descriptions already identified follow this section and cover efforts from water quality and water supply to economic diversification and data base construction.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE PROJECTS:

In poor North Central Mississippi, two participants will work for the improvement of rural water and wastewater systems. One participant will act as a clearing house to assist in organizing and finding technical assistance for sewage and wastewater systems.

In the small town of Holly Grove in the Lower Mississippi Delta, one participant will help work to improve low-income housing. 1

In 34 Western Arkansas Counties, two participants will provide public outreach in rural development and facilitate to build unique public-private partnerships. 2

Four participants will work in parishes in the southern and western part of Louisiana to deliver information to farmers and other landowners to reduce non-point source pollution. 4

Three participants will work in the Louisiana parishes of the Lower Mississippi Delta to provide "dry fire hydrants" in order to provide water for fire-fighting in areas without running water. 3

Two participants in Northeast Mississippi will provide rural volunteer fire districts with planning and engineering assist needed to better utilize available water resources for fire suppression. 2

One participant in Mississippi will work on a livestock waste treatment and disposal project and cattle herd health improvement project for limited-resource Landowners. 1

Two participants in Southeast Mississippi would work together to promote tourism, create new agricultural markets, and develop new uses for wood products. 2

Three participants in Mississippi will complete development of arboretums in three counties used for environmental education leveraging resources available. 3

FOREST SERVICE PROJECTS

The purpose of providing AmeriCorps participants through the Rural Community Assistance Program will be to provide needed skills to assist communities to become self-

sufficient and maintain diverse economies. The theme of the Rural Community Assistance Program is to "Help People Help Themselves". Projects will focus on wood in transportation, recycling technology, and leadership in economic development.

Wood in Transportation: The State of Mississippi authorizes replacement of over 6,000 unsafe bridges. Opportunities exist to promote "Wood in Transportation" by having qualified Engineering students and graduates working through AmeriCorps would provide technical assistance to communities wanting to install timber bridges. Forest Service employees would work with these students to acquire skills needed in planning, construction and inspection of timber bridges and other wood in transportation projects. These AmeriCorps participants could also transfer the bridge technology to areas where potential projects could be duplicated and demonstrate the advantages of wooden bridges. Initial training and coordination of these outreach activities can be provided by Forest Service regional timber bridge coordinator. Existing audio-visual aids are available for this purpose.

Recycling Technology:

An opportunity exists to transfer recycling technology from existing rural and urban projects to other sites. Development of recycling programs following these models could be duplicated in other areas of the Delta region in order to create jobs and address environmental concerns. Below are 2 ongoing examples of the types of projects AmeriCorps volunteers would be involved in. 1) In Tupelo, Mississippi, an urban waste recycling project effectively utilizes yard waste and creates a marketable landscaping product. Not only does

this technology provide additional jobs and income to the community, it also reduces the amount of materials going into the local landfill. 2) In Franklin County, Mississippi, a rural recycling project employs disabled workers to recycle glass, paper and aluminum cans. This type of project provides employment opportunities and a sense of community pride to all involved.

Leadership and Economic Development: By working with partnerships developed from ongoing activities AmeriCorps participants would work with local community leaders to meet specific community needs, particularly with ongoing social programs, education and infrastructure needs. For example, local leaders developed from the Copiah County leadership development workshops in Hazlehurst Mississippi may be able to utilize a Business major to assist citizens in establishing small businesses. Ongoing outreach efforts can be enhanced by collaborating with 1890 institutions and black colleges. Alcorn State has capacity grants for education programs from daycare kindergarten through high school. Future needs for these programs could be identified in local areas, and local leaders could incorporate these social needs into their economic development plans. For example, many persons are unable to work due to child care needs. An AmeriCorps participant would work with community leaders to develop practical solutions.

**Individual Site Application #28
Rural Development
Great Lakes (MI, OH)**

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 20

NEEDS TO BE MET

The Michigan portion of the project is centered in a region in the southwest portion of the state. This is the area where people and agriculture are most closely integrated. It encompasses the Saginaw Bay area. Seventy percent of Michigan's animal agriculture is located here, and pesticide and fertilizer applications are intense. Because of soils and geology, the area has the state's most vulnerable aquifer and is highly susceptible to groundwater contamination. Fourteen Americorps participants would work in Michigan.

In Ohio, the project centers in the Darby Creek Watershed. It contains portions of six counties and is within a 20 minute drive of downtown Columbus. There are numerous small rural communities in the area, and in total, nearly one million people have access to, or reside within, the watershed. There are urban and rural poor within the watershed as well as limited resource families.

Darby Creek's ecology is unique and the Nature Conservancy has a bio-reserve located within it. The area has also been targeted for special water quality efforts by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and numerous surveys and critical areas have been identified. A special need exists in the urbanizing areas to help ensure development does not effect the aquatic ecosystem of Darby Creek. Six Americorps participants would work in the watershed area. In both Michigan and Ohio chronic unemployment and out-migration of

young people continue as problems.

THE AMERICORPS RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM SOLUTION

The Great Lakes AmeriCorps Projects would engage 20 participants in Ohio and Michigan. The focus of the project is improving and protecting water quality. Michigan's efforts will focus on implementing the Farm*A*Syst program - getting farmers to evaluate their impact on water quality and develop a plan for reducing that impact.

Under Farm*A*Syst, the AmeriCorps participants will serve as facilitators working one-on-one with agricultural producers. In each case the entire farming operation will be evaluated under a standardized outline. Items such as chemical and fertilizer usage, amounts, timing, application rates, mixing areas, and storage techniques will be assessed. Wellhead areas will be identified and protection measures offered. Other items such as crop rotations and animal waste considerations are also addressed as part of the Farm*A*Syst assessment. All 14 Michigan participants will work on Farm*A*Syst evaluations, and it is anticipated that each participant will be able to work with 200 farmers during the course of one year.

In Ohio, six participants will help carry out conservation work within the Darby Creek Watershed. Two will work at the task of keeping field maps updated and work in the field to check map accuracy and inventory tributaries. Two will assist the Soil and Water Conservation District do survey and design work for conservation Best Management Practices in the rural areas. They will also work with county engineers in checking Best

Management Practices in urbanizing areas. One individual will assist with the existing Turn Key Program and help establish riparian corridor buffers strips along Darby Creek. The final participant will assist the Scenic River Coordinator at the field level as a river keeper,

The project is designed to improve and protect water quality. The two areas chosen have environmental and social problems common to many sections of the country. As such, they would be replicable. The project is also designed to put the participants at the field level in real world job situations. As watershed management and water quality projects become more accepted, this is where future employment opportunities will lie. As a result, the experience the participants obtain will be of real value to them in the private sector job market.

In Michigan, implementing the Farm*A*Syst program will require daily interaction with agricultural producers. Participants will be work under the guidance of either Extension Service or Soil Conservation Service personnel. Their job will be to provide direct, one-on-one assistance to farmers using the Farm*A*Syst outline. As part of their work, they will also be able to direct farmers to Federal, state or local agencies and organizations that could provide additional help.

In Ohio, a variety of different conservation tasks will be accomplished by participants - from mapping, to surveying, to design, to implementation. Specifically, participants will be involved with carrying out components of the Darby Creek Hydrologic Unit Proposal and the Nature Conservancy's Darby Bio-reserve Plan. In addition, participants will assist the county engineers in Madison and Union counties with Best Management Practices on

urbanizing land.

Each participant will be provided basic job orientation and community awareness training by the Soil Conservation Service, the Extension Service, or a cooperating partner.

In Michigan, the Farm*A*Syst form and format are for the most part self-explanatory and a highly technical background is not needed, Specialists from the Michigan State University Extension Service and the U.S. Soil Conservation Service will provide the necessary training and guidance.

Similarly, no special skills are needed in Ohio. The necessary training there will be provided by the Soil Conservation Service, the A. B. Graham Center, Ohio State University, and the Darby Agricultural Coordinator.

In both states, participants will receive in-house structured training along with on-site, supervised training.

Additional specific task-related training will be offered by the appropriate cooperating partner to assure that the job and the individual are matched. Follow-up of each participant will be done by the project director to determine additional training needs and/or help. This follow-up will also help the participant focus on career choices and provide guidance for additional formal training.

Participants in the Great Lakes Water Quality project will be engaged in environmental protection and restoration on a daily basis.

In Michigan, a typical day might include visiting a row crop farm, a dairy, a confined livestock facility, or some combination of the preceding.

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**Individual Site Application #29
Rural Development
Minnesota**

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 21

NEEDS TO BE MET:

Development of community-based sustainable economic development strategies using renewable natural resources in ways that protect and enhance the environment is the primary need to be met by this program. Corps members will help communities identify environmentally sound economic alternatives, provide technical assistance in analyzing these alternatives, and work with community and business leaders to implement essential projects that lead to sustainable economic activity. Corps members will provide technical support skills often unavailable in rural communities. Corps members will provide technical support in a wide variety of areas to existing rural businesses and entrepreneurs wishing to start businesses. Activities will focus on enhancing production of value-added products from forest resources, helping rural communities capitalize on travel and tourism opportunities, developing businesses based on recycled products, and supporting development of community-based economic development organizations.

THE AMERICORPS RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM SOLUTION

The Soil Conservation Service and the Forest Service will both run innovative programs aimed at those problems and others.

Agassiz Recreational Trails (ART) Development Project

The Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources has approved \$650,000.00 for use by the ART Joint Powers Board to purchase an abandoned railroad bed and develop the Agassiz Recreational Trail. The 32 mile trail will link diverse educational and recreational opportunities along the main trail located in Clay, Norman, and Polk counties of Northwest Minnesota. We will upgrade local parks for better utilization by trail users.

The ART project started as a combined effort to restore wetlands and develop 9 miles of horse back riding trails east of Twin Valley. With each planning meeting the trail increased in scope and size. As the project was submitted to the LCMR there was 103 miles of trails and five parks. At the time we submitting the LCMR work program, one of the parks had to be dropped and a 17 mile stretch of the trail south of Ada has been sold to private landowners and is lost to trail use. But, two additional parks to the north of the main trail have been requested, along with 53 additional miles of trails going into Pennington County. Training will be provided by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), Board of Water and Soil Resources (EWSR) and local Soils and Water Conservation District's (SWCD). Classroom and On the Job training will be utilized. Most of the necessary training and equipment will be provided by the SCS and BWSR offices. This will reduce the overall cost of the project. There will be the following positions:

- 1) Trail Development: This person will perform maintenance on the trail. This includes /

placement of new signs repairing existing signs, tree-planting, erecting nesting boxes for birds and disposing of waste in trash containers along the trail.

2) Community Outreach: This person will work and communicate with local communities and businesses along the ART in order to promote local tourism economies. Each city council along the trail will be contacted in order to discuss how the trail could benefit the community financially and recreationally.

3) Public Outreach: Two people will promote trail tourism on a regional basis within the 14 counties of Northwest Minnesota. This is for communities that wish to develop and promote their own trail systems. These individuals will encourage such new trails to tie into the ART. A Regional Trails Plan will also be developed that will cover the 14 counties of Northwest Minnesota.

4) Trails Grant Writer: This person will be writing grants for communities that wish to develop and finance their own trail systems. This will be on a regional basis within the 14 counties of Northwest

FORREST SERVICE PROJECTS

Development of community-based sustainable economic development strategies using renewable natural resources in ways that protect and enhance the environment is the primary need to be met by this program. Corps members will help communities identify environmentally sound economic alternatives, provide technical assistance in analyzing these alternatives, and work with community and business leaders to implement essential projects that lead to sustainable economic activity. Corps members will provide technical support skills often unavailable in rural communities. Corps members will provide technical support in a wide variety of areas to existing rural businesses and entrepreneurs wishing to start businesses. Activities will focus on enhancing production of value-added products from forest resources, helping rural communities capitalize on travel and tourism opportunities, developing businesses based on recycled products, and supporting development of community-based economic development organizations.

Education - Corps members will be working in a mentored environment where professional Forest Service and State Forester's staff provide guidance and direction. Training will focus on developing interpersonal skills, collaborative planning skills, group involvement skills, consensus building skill, and meeting management skills. Corps members will be utilizing their technical skills in a real world environment. They will learn much about the decision-making process in rural communities and how to help diverse groups reach consensus on difficult issues.

Human needs - Corps members will become part of a team effort to assist rural communities

in making informed decisions as citizens identify, develop and implement sustainable economic development strategies. Corps members will be asked to apply their technical skills in real world situations which will affect the future of the communities in which they work. This involvement at the local level will familiarize Corps members with the resources, needs, and aspirations of rural communities and increase their awareness of rural people. These efforts will improve the decision-making capabilities of the Corps members, and provide new experiences to broaden their cultural awareness. Corps member activities are expected to have a significant positive impact on the economy of rural West Virginia. The technical expertise that Corps members will bring to bear in assisting existing businesses will help them become more competitive in both domestic and international markets. Targeted market research efforts will identify new products, business development efforts will improve the use of technology, updated management systems, improved advertising/sales techniques, and worker training programs implemented on-site will help improve business profitability and competitiveness. Business growth, job creation, and increased opportunities for value-added manufacturing opportunities will result. Corps members will also support the development of home-based and micro-businesses. Corps members will help prepare business plans, assist in the preparation of financing packages, assist in grantwriting, and develop micro-loan programs in rural communities to help generate successful small businesses.

Corps members will be living in the St. Paul area and working throughout the state. Rental housing assistance is available through the University of Minnesota housing placement service. Travel and per them expenses will be paid when overnight travel is required.

When project work requires extended travel periods, arrangements have been made for housing at State Parks and college campuses throughout the State. Self-confidence and practical experience in project planning, group process, consensus building, team work, multi-cultural awareness, and in natural resource based sustainable economic development will be gained from this program. Work experience will involve a variety of technical efforts done in conjunction with a variety of partners. This includes designing, producing, mailing and analyzing five broad-based surveys aimed at determining community needs such as improvement in manufacturing base, market characteristics, demographics, etc. These will provide the basis for 18 needs assessments, one for each of the 18 counties served. From these, about 36 market research projects will be undertaken with new and existing businesses looking at what these companies are producing and what they are capable of producing, what new sales opportunities may exist or be potentially available. These will lead the development of about 18 business plans. Five infrastructure improvement projects will be planned, and designed aimed at transportation facilities, industrial and building facilities such as dust control systems, timber bridges and multi-modal transportation facilities. Ten worker training programs will be designed and implemented. These will address employment and management needs. Approximately 18 financing plans will be developed for small businesses, and 10 revolving loan funds will be established. Ten community foundations will be established and 18 counties will be given grantwriting assistance. Additional work experience will be gained in group decision-making, consensus building, and grass roots planning processes.

The program will be run in cooperation with a variety of partners. These partners

will assist in planning, coordination, training, implementation, and monitoring the program.

These program partners are: The Minnesota Rural Development Board, The Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource Minnesota Technology, the University of Minnesota North Central Forest Experiment Station, Small Business Development Centers Natural Resources Research Institute at UM-Duluth, Iron Range Revitalization Board Cooperative Extension Service Upper Midwest Technology Transfer Center, and Minnesota county governments.

**Individual Site Application #30
Rural Development
South Texas Colonias**

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 60

NEEDS TO BE MET

"It's like having the third world in your own backyard." That's how one South Texas resident described the Colonias problem. "Colonias" is the name given to admittedly extremely sub-standard residential subdivisions all along the U.S./Mexican border that are mostly populated by persons of Mexican descent. The problems of colonias are not difficult to describe. What is surprising is that if you were to run through a litany of the major ills in the world, you would find most of them embodied in the colonias. Problems of inadequate shelter -- many, if not most, colonias residents own their own homes, for the most part. Many of these homes started life as a humble travel trailer and have since been added on to as many as five times, as the residents' families grew or they managed to recycle building materials or scrape up enough cash to purchase them. One distinguishing characteristic of colonias is that often the main problem is water. Few colonias residents have indoor plumbing. Luckier ones have a faucet on their property where they go to fetch water. Colonias areas are also typified by high water tables that make pit toilets or even septic systems not only impractical, but extremely hazardous to residents' and general watershed health. Endemic to these enclaves is poverty, drug abuse, and long periods of family separation as working-age males follow the migrant agricultural worker routes. As if that

**Individual Site Application #31
Rural Development
Four Corners (UT, AZ, CO, NM)**

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 70

NEEDS TO BE MET

The Four Corners region of the United States is a vast, sparse populated area of tremendous diversity and spectacular beauty. The region is at the heart of an ongoing struggle to create a sensitive balance between the need to protect and sustain the environment, and the need to provide a sound economic base for the area's residents. This proposal will provide for action which will ultimately help develop that balance. The area has a population of approximately 441,000 people and covers an area of about 83,000 square miles. The project includes an area about 250 miles in circumference from where the four states of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah join together. There are 12 population centers ranging in size from a few hundred to several thousand persons. The rural population is widely dispersed, with many areas having poor accessibility. This region is one of the most economically distressed areas in the Nation. Per-capita income is less than \$5,000. About 53 percent of the Navajo Nation's population lives below the poverty level. Unemployment ranges as high as 28%. Unemployment is generally high on all the Indian reservations in the area. About 42 percent of the area's population are members of the Hopi, Navajo, Southern Ute, Ute Mountain Ute, White Mesa Ute or Zuni tribes.

THE AMERICORPS RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM SOLUTION

Four USDA agencies (Rural Development Administration, Farmers Home Administration, Forest Service, and Soil Conservation Service) have joined forces to provide a full-service rural development experience for the region. Fifty-six RDT positions have been identified that span nearly all of the possible features of a comprehensive approach to regional rural development. In addition to RDT programmatic features of Housing, Water Systems, and Rural Business Development, the two attached specific and targeted projects round out the regional mix.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE PROJECTS

This proposal has been jointly prepared by the RC&D coordinators of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah with assistance from conservation district leaders in Arizona and Colorado and RC&D Council members. It addresses the large scale rural development needs of the region. The concept provides for team approaches to addressing key problems common to each state in there region. A need for 20 AmeriCorps participants has been identified. These people would be distributed in functional teams.

Specifically, the proposal addresses the need to inventory existing human and natural resources for the purpose of determining possible new and innovative natural resource based industry potential. The proposal further provides for the seeking of funds to establish these industries. In addition, proposal addresses the need to assist limited resource farmers (especially Native Americans) to develop sustainable small scale agricultural systems leading to improved nutrition, increased income and employment, and a quality environment.

Finally, the proposal includes an element of education and information directed toward helping area citizens (and others) understand benefits and costs associated with environmental and economic choices currently being made.

- 1) Develop an inventory of existing natural resources and determine the feasibility of developing new and innovative natural resources based industries with possible value-added potential.
- 2) Seek grant funds to provide for the establishment of ~~feasible~~ industries.
- 3) Assist small scale, limited resource farmers in developing sustainable agricultural systems for the purpose of improving family nutrition, increasing income, expanding employment, and maintaining a quality environment.
- 4) Conduct an information and education program for the purpose of helping area residents understand the costs and benefits of environmental and economic choices currently being made.

The project concept is to utilize skilled teams of AmeriCorps participants in each of the states working closely with established agencies and organizations currently dealing with rural development issues related to natural resources and the environment. Each of the major components of the project; inventorying, determining industry potential, small scale agriculture, information and education, will benefit from a team of individuals whose efforts will be directed toward accomplishing specific tasks associated with the component. The project is designed to create strong partnerships with existing professionals in order to minimize replication of efforts and maximize existing resources. The project will be administered in each of the four states by RC&D Councils in cooperation with the Soil

between the affected tribes and the 4-Corners Heritage Council. Skills needed include regional planning, community development, public or business administration, landscape architecture, engineering, recreation planning, interpretation and environmental education. All the Tribes within the 4-Corners are pursuing tourism development as an economic development strategy.

4) Four Corners Business and Expansion Program - Participants will Develop a business retention and expansion (R&E) program for the Four Corners region. The purpose of this program is to identify and solve business problems related to survival, expansion and start-up and thereby to strengthen and/or increase economic activity. The program would require a full-time coordinator familiar with the area who would serve all the program-participants. The coordinator would work with a regional resource team comprised of representatives from the USFS, FMHA, RDA, CE, SBDC, COG's and state economic development departments and local citizens. This proposal is jointly prepared and submitted under a multi-agency / multi jurisdictional approach to enhancing the viability of rural communities and Tribes in the Four Corners Area (Colorado, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico) through existing strategic partnerships. The Americorps program will provide an infusion of assistance into new alliances, shared visions and collaborative approaches addressing community problems and change identified by communities and Tribes in the Four Corners Area.

This proposal takes advantage of existing community based planning,

partnerships and networks established in the last 2 years to work with rural people, communities and Tribes to create jobs, increase family income, generate community revenue, and enhance the quality of life in the Four Corners area.

Partnerships and Networks, Region 2 - This partnership includes the municipalities and counties of Southwestern Colorado, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, Fort Lewis College, the Colorado Dept. of Transportation, the Southwestern Colorado Travel Region, and the Four Corners Heritage Council. This partnership focuses on joint efforts between local communities, and public land agencies in areas of resource management, collaborative planning, research, economic diversification and public policy. Three corp members will be assigned to the Community-Public Lands Partnership. Skills needed will include Community/Land Use planners, economists, GIS, facilitation of processes, Tourism-Recreation planners, value added forest products and Agriculture.

Partnerships and Networks, Region 3 - These partnership includes the municipalities and counties of Northeastern Arizona, Northwestern New Mexico, the U.S. Forest Service, the Soil Conservation Service, the New Mexico and Arizona Departments of Commerce, Tourism and Transportation, the New Mexico Rural Development Council and the Four Corners Heritage Council. The partnerships focus on joint efforts between local communities, Action Teams, Tribes and public agencies in areas of resource management, recycling, collaborative planning, research, and economic diversification. Two teams of three AmeriCorps participants will be assigned to support the above listed projects and partnerships. One team will be assigned to northern Arizona to work through the Coconino

and Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests; the other team will be assigned to the Carson, Cibola and Santa Fe NF's of northwestern New Mexico. Skills needed will include community/regional planners, economists, GIS, facilitation/mediation, tourism/recreation planners, and business/cooperative development, with emphasis in value added forest products and agriculture.

Timber/ Bridge Wood Transportation Project - Most counties have limited access to people with engineering skills to assist them in the development of timber bridge proposals and in the construction of the bridges. This project would involve recruitment of an engineering graduate student to assist interested counties, communities, and Indian Tribes in identifying there bridge needs, help in the development of proposals and oversee construction. The wood utilization conference scheduled to be held in Farmington, NM in the fall of 1994 will include timber bridge technology and construction as well as demonstration of the SLAM timber bridge design program.

**Individual Site Application #32
Rural Development
Pacific Rim (CA, WA, AK)**

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 70

NEEDS TO BE MET:

Rural areas of California are suffering from multiple environmental concerns and severe economic problems. The Pacific Northwest has needs to protect endangered species of wildlife, improve forest management on small land holdings, and improve economic conditions. Other rural areas are suffering competing demands for limited water, and they need water quality and conservation improvement. Small farmers with limited resources and of various ethnic groups need help with farming methods and resource protection.

In Alaska, many communities are connected to each other only by river in summer, dogsled and snow machine trails in the winter, and expensive air service all year long. The indigenous people adapted to this vast, harsh land centuries ago by hunting, gathering, and fishing for food, clothing, and shelter materials. People continue to live off the land and this lifestyle is defined as "subsistence" by today's society.

A mixed-bag of land ownership creates difficulties in managing the natural resources for traditional subsistence and culturally acceptable uses. The state government, federal government, native village councils, and native corporations own and manage the lands which have supported the Athabascan people for generations.

THE AMERICORPS RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM SOLUTION

The AmeriCorps positions within these communities (as proposed in this grant application) are part of the movement to counteract the social fragmentation occurring within our communities. By recruiting from within local communities, and working closely with different people within the community to develop the collaborative working relationships that facilitate integrated service-learning within schools, the AmeriCorps participant (as a Regional Based Coordinator of the Adopt-a-Watershed curriculum model) will play a key role in integrating the development of our two greatest resources; the children of our communities and the land we live on. AmeriCorps participants will meet these needs by providing on site technical and educational assistance.

Residents have the traditional knowledge base required for the job, but we need to translate this into a working relationship that creates local employment and skilled professional workers. The AmeriCorps project would help Alaskan young people to assist their native villages in writing natural resource management plans for their land. The villages' goals are to increase local employment and provide professional opportunities that do not conflict with their traditional values. It is typical that the good agency jobs in these villages are filled by outsiders, whose high wages raise the per capita income without benefit to the local people. The AmeriCorps project should give local residents opportunities for both experience and education in natural resource management fields.

MID COLUMBIA SALMON HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

This project will restore and maintain salmon habitat on privately owned lands in the MidColumbia region by providing technical, financial, and material assistance through a collaboration of local, state, and federal efforts.

Gain voluntary participation by private landowners by providing incentives to improve and protect key salmon habitat they control.

Plan, design and install critical conservation practices that enhance salmon habitat components such as water quality, cover, food sources and adequate in-stream **flows**.

Coordinate and focus the technical, financial and material resources of local, state, and federal agencies to accomplish the mission.

The Mid-Columbia region located on the Washington side of the Columbia River is capable of providing key habitat for salmon spawning. Certain runs of salmon in the Columbia River system are candidates for listing under the endangered Species Act. Current water quality conditions for the direct tributaries and their sub-watersheds are generally below state standards for aquatic life. The Columbia River salmon issue has become a major national concern. This project aims to deal with this issue using a voluntary approach that will insure longer lasting results.

The primary environmental concerns are high in-stream water temperatures and low stream flows in the summer. Both of these conditions are fatal to juvenile salmon. Both of these conditions can be corrected by improving vegetative cover and soil stability along streambeds and adjacent areas. Current economic and resource limitations in the area require

that an incentive be provided to landowners to voluntarily improve salmon habitat in streams they control. The project would utilize the AmeriCorps program to supply the needed personnel to plan, design and install conservation practices on privately owned lands.

Partnering agencies would help provide additional financial and material assistance.

The Soil Conservation Service would provide overall leadership and direction for the project.

Local conservation districts would also provide oversight and prioritization based on their knowledge of the local conditions and their rapport with the landowners.

AmeriCorps participants would build a record of work experience and dependability, learn and utilize team problem solving skills to accomplish a goal, learn the factors that contribute to good water quality and gain experience in dealing with people on an individual and group basis. The local community would gain the opportunity to voluntarily solve a high profile environmental concern. The project would also provide a format for diverse groups and individuals to come to a consensus on how to treat salmon habitat problems. Finally, numerous opportunities for environmental education would be created for local schools and the general public. All of this will contribute to a better, and more sustainable solution.

The proposed project area is located in Klickitat County,

Washington and encompasses the major drainages and tributaries to the Columbia River that originate within the county.

There is an overall need within the project area to provide accelerated assistance to private landowners to improve conditions in potential salmon spawning waters. The AmeriCorps program would provide the needed support and opportunity to satisfy this need. Certain runs of salmon in the Columbia River system are being considered for listing under

the Endangered Species Act. Providing quality spawning habitat is vital to salmon survival.

The AmeriCorps program can be used to address this national environmental concern by supplying needed personnel to plan, design and install critical conservation practices.

The objective is to target private landowners with technical, financial and material assistance to improve salmon habitat. AmeriCorps participants could work with landowners to help them improve streamside areas (also known as riparian areas) to provide more shading in the summer and thus increase water flows. AmeriCorps workers could also assist irrigators to be more efficient. In this way, less water would have to be taken from streams. This would improve summer time stream flows as well.

These conditions have been documented by the Central and Eastern Klickitat Conservation Districts in their Watershed Inventory Report of January 1991. There is also supporting documentation available from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife as well as the Yakima Indian Nation.

The project would build on four years of water quality improvement projects by the Central and Eastern Klickitat Conservation Districts as well as the Yakima Indian Nation and the Northwest Power Planning Council. Several streams and rivers in the project area have been targeted by the following agencies for salmon habitat enhancement.

CALIFORNIA WATERSHED PROTECTION

The project will protect and heal watershed ecosystems in areas damaged by the 1993-94 wild fires, earthquake, and also in areas with a high potential for fires.

This AmeriCorps project would meet needs in rural and rural/urban interface areas of California. The participants would work on projects to provide assistance to persons needing help in forest recovery, salmon and fisheries recovery, water quality improvement and conservation, and similar work.

Rural areas of California are suffering from multiple environmental concerns and severe economic problems. The Pacific Northwest has needs to protect endangered species of wildlife, improve forest management on small landholdings, and improve economic conditions. Other rural areas are suffering competing demands for limited water, and they need water quality and conservation improvement. Small farmers with limited resources and of various ethnic groups need help with farming methods and resource protection.

The goal of the Adopt-a-Watershed program is to develop a strong community-school connection through a collaborative effort of coordinating existing programs and community resources. It will link work and education through hands on learning by doing, in the service of watershed stewardship. It is becoming imperative that communities join together to care for the land around them and to teach their youth. This program will develop that ethic of service in all of the participants, the teachers, the parents, the students, the mentors, and the apprentices as each person involved understands how he/she is part of a larger

process, and how each person has power and value in the collaborative effort of building community and caring for their own habitat.

The AmeriCorps positions within these communities (as proposed in this grant application) are part of the movement to counteract the social fragmentation occurring within our communities. By recruiting from within local communities, and working closely with different people within the community to develop the collaborative working relationships that facilitate integrated service-learning within schools, the AmeriCorps participant (as a Regional Based Coordinator of the Adopt-a-Watershed curriculum model) will play a key role in integrating the development of our two greatest resources; the children of our communities and the land we live on. AmeriCorps participants will meet these needs by providing on site technical and educational assistance.

The needs that will be met by this are rural development and environmental in nature. The specific site projects will address needs of endangered species conservation, Limited Resource Farmers, education about the environment, and natural resource protection and betterment. A national service program addresses these needs very well because meeting the needs incrementally protects and improves the Nation's natural resource base, improves the economic climate of some severely depressed rural parts of California, and assists limited resource and minority landowners and land users.

Development Centers.

Individual Site Application #33
Rural Development
Midwest Flood States (IA, MO, IL, KS, NB, ND, SD, MN, WI)

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 189

NEEDS TO BE MET

The great floods of the past year have ravaged large portions of the vast Mississippi and Ohio watersheds. Farms, homes, businesses, whole rural infrastructures have been washed away or laid waste to at the whim of Mother Nature. In places, whole townsites must either be rebuilt or substantially reworked. Clearly, a simple patch-up effort will not suffice. As if the flood had not taken enough toll, this region has been recently plagued with a rapidly shifting economy as its two mainstays, agriculture and manufacturing, readjust to life in the 90's. In many places of the region, rapid depopulation is occurring independent of whatever effects the great floods may also be having in that regard. The job ahead in the Flood Region is diverse and so requires a diverse mixture of solutions.

The environmental needs to be met will be the restoration and protection of resources damaged by the statewide record floods of 1993 including wetlands restoration, riparian area reestablishment, livestock waste management, trout stream protection, and debris removal. The project will also promote rural development by restoring, improving, and protecting priority resources for farmers and small rural communities. In North Dakota, the two participants will assist in the completion of a inventory of rivers and streams in a seven-county project area. The inventory data will be evaluated to determine eligibility for

Emergency Wetlands Protection assistance and to prioritize specific sites. The AmeriCorps participants would be involved in the inventory and evaluation phases. Prioritized sites will be planned by SCS personnel for debris removal. In Iowa, the work of the AmeriCorps participants will enable local water resource districts to alleviate flooding hazards caused by the Midwest flood of 1993. Considerable debris, primarily native woody material needs to be cleared and snagged from the Red River and eight of its major tributaries in order to curtail future flooding. An estimated 500 river miles will require a reconnaissance survey to determine the specific actions that will be necessary to curb flooding problems. The local water resource districts have estimated 190 roads and 250 bridges and culverts would benefit from Emergency Watershed Protection. An estimated 200 farmsteads, with nearly 1,000 buildings, would benefit from reduced out-of-bank flooding. Twenty-one communities would also benefit. Implementation of this project will benefit over 167,000 people in the seven counties. Reduced flooding will protect soil resources from overland sheet flows. Prime farmlands, which entail nearly half of the cropland in the project area, would be better protected from flood events.

The needs in the other flood states are equally enormous.

THE AMERICORPS RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM SOLUTION

Two-hundred and ninety-seven (NUMBER NOT YET DETERMINED) participants will form Midwest Rural Development and Environmental teams and will perform flood recovery work, and address priority environmental and rural development concerns in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and

Wisconsin. Four states have designated exact service projects they will conduct; the remaining decisions will be based on spring and summer weather and flooding conditions.

The Soil Conservation Service and the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) will administer the program. In Illinois, twenty-three participants will form two environmental teams to supervise the clean-up of debris from the flood in 12 counties. In Iowa, sixty-six participants will form a rural development team to restore and protect resources damaged by the flood. In North Dakota, two participants will work in a seven-county area to assist in the completion of an inventory of rivers and streams; the participants also will supervise debris removal projects. In South Dakota, thirteen participants will form a rural development team in designated flood disaster areas to perform recovery work, as well as emphasize the importance of flood plain management. (IOWA?) The remaining participants will be assigned in the other five states as needs are identified by the SCS, the ASCS, members of the state's emergency management team, and local partners. All teams will be designed according to the rural development model with more skilled participants assigned individually, but some will also form into crews periodically to supervise environmental work such as debris removal.

A socio-economic diverse group of participants will be recruited, with persons displaced or otherwise affected by the flood to be given preference as participants.

Sites will be identified by the Soil Conservation Service, the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service, and personnel from the other agencies that comprise each state's emergency management team. Site design plans could duplicate work activities as outlined in the Illinois, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota proposals. The Iowa model is a rural

development team, consisting of 12 components with 66 participants as follows:

1) three participants will assist the reestablishment of riparian wetland areas in each state; 2) ten participants will serve as community assistance planners in each state; 3) four engineering students and one coordinator will serve as participants in Animal Waste Management System development; 4) four engineers and one coordinator will work in the Emergency Watershed Protection Program; 5) one information specialist in each state will communicate emergency program opportunities to the public; 6) one landscape architect will enhance rural development efforts by incorporating comprehensive landscape planning and using visual tools to involve the public; 7) one coordinator will match beginning limited resource farmers with retirement age farmers under the Rural Population Stabilization Program; 8) two specialists will identify locations of tracts participating in the Wetland Reserve Program, Emergency Wetlands Reserve Program, and Conservation Reserve Program and will develop Digital Data Layers; 9) six restoration specialists will target flood damaged riverine areas for wetland restoration; 10) one biologist, one engineer, six implementation crew members for streambank stabilization; 11) one ecosystem manager will perform accelerated ecosystem management planning with private landowners in priority streams; and 12) four water resource assistants and four nutrient management planners will work with rural water management and improvement.

The **North Dakota** plan calls for two rural development participants with forestry, biology, surveying, engineering, or contracting skills to assist SCS personnel in the Emergency Watershed Protection recovery effort. The **South Dakota** proposal will create a rural development team of 11 biological technicians who will perform paraprofessional tasks

in various areas of the state related to watershed recovery work. In **Illinois**, an Environment Team of 23 participants with two crew leaders would supervise removal of flood debris in 12 counties of the state.

All participants will receive on-the-job training in technical and programmatic areas to meet the needs of their position. Training, will be provided on location by local and state level specialists from SCS, ASCS, and other resource agencies.

Participants on the rural development teams will be mostly college or professional school graduates. Socio-economic diversity of participants will be a major component in recruitment. In addition, work/study students in institutions of higher education in the flood states will also be recruited. A goal of 25% of the participants will be recruited through the Corporation's national recruitment pool.

Participants will gain valuable technical expertise, community organizing skills which could be helpful in their future careers. The individuals will have an opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills in natural resource conservation. This opportunity could result in these individuals pursuing an education and career in conservation or rural development.

Success will be measured based on accomplishments related to an annual plan of operations that will be developed each year for each program.

Initially, the participants on the rural development teams will work with the SCS or ASCS project office or local field office staffs. After minimum skill levels are attained, the participant will work independently with periodic supervision and quality control overview. Participants will have tasks assigned that are matched to their educational and previous work

experiences.