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State Summary - Louisiana

AMERICORPS

4th QUARTER REPORT

SITE INFORMATION

Operating Site Name:	<u>State Summary</u>
State:	<u>Louisiana</u>
Site ID #	<u>94ADFDC047L27</u>
Your Name:	<u>Billy R. Moore</u>
Your Position:	<u>Project Director</u>
Telephone number:	<u>(318) 473-7768</u>
Fax number:	<u>(318) 473-7682</u>
e-mail address (If available)	<u></u>
Date report completed	<u>10/6/95</u>
Reporting Period:	<u>July 1-September 30, 1995</u>
Program Start-up date:	<u>September 12, 1994</u>

Subject: PER - AmeriCorps Fourth Quarter Report
Louisiana

Date: October 6, 1995

To: Paula Cole Jones
AmeriCorps Program Manager
Community Assistance and Resource
Planning Division
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Washington, DC

File: 360

Enclosed is the fourth quarter report for Louisiana's USDA/AmeriCorps projects.
Please call Holly Martien at (318) 473-7753 if you have any questions.



Billy R. Moore
Assistant State Conservationist/Programs

Enclosure

cc: Donald W. Gohmert, State Conservationist, NRCS, Alexandria, LA
Judith K. Johnson, Regional Conservationist, South Central, NRCS, Ft. Worth, LA

State Summary - Louisiana

MEMBER INFORMATION

FULL-TIME MEMBER INFORMATION

Number of Members authorized for your site:	<u>7</u>
Environmental Corps Members:	<u> </u>
Rural Development Corps Members:	<u>7</u>
Number of Members enrolled at end of quarter:	<u>0</u>
Environmental Corps Members:	<u> </u>
Rural Development Corps Members:	<u>0</u>
Number of Members at beginning of quarter:	<u>5</u>
Environmental Corps Members:	<u> </u>
Rural Development Corps Members:	<u>5</u>
Total Hours of Direct Service for previous Quarter:	<u>3,234.75</u>
Environmental Corps Members:	<u> </u>
Rural Development Corps Members:	<u>3,234.75</u>
Total Hours of Direct Service for this Quarter:	<u>956.0</u>
Environmental Corps Members:	<u> </u>
Rural Development Corps Members:	<u>956.0</u>
Total Hours of Direct Service to Date:	<u>11,736.25</u>
Environmental Corps Members:	<u> </u>
Rural Development Corps Members:	<u>11,736.25</u>

State Summary - Louisiana

PART-TIME MEMBER INFORMATION

Number of Members authorized for your site:	0
Environmental Corps Members:	
Rural Development Corps Members:	
Number of Members enrolled at end of quarter:	
Environmental Corps Members:	
Rural Development Corps Members:	
Number of Members at beginning of quarter:	
Environmental Corps Members:	
Rural Development Corps Members:	
Total Hours of Direct Service for previous Quarter:	
Environmental Corps Members:	
Rural Development Corps Members:	
Total Hours of Direct Service for this Quarter:	
Environmental Corps Members:	
Rural Development Corps Members:	
Total Hours of Direct Service to Date:	
Environmental Corps Members:	
Rural Development Corps Members:	

State Summary - Louisiana

VOLUNTEER ASSESSMENT

Non-AmeriCorps Member Volunteers

Total Number of non-AmeriCorps Volunteers: Approx. 100
Involved in AmeriCorps service activities in
this quarter.

Total hours of AmeriCorps service activities: Approx. 800
Completed by non-AmeriCorps Member volunteers
in this quarter.

State Summary - Louisiana

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES THIS QUARTER

1. Staff changes made this quarter:

No staff changes. All USDA/AmeriCorps members in Louisiana have completed their service.

2. Program structural changes made this quarter:

None.

Number of Members who have left National Service 5
this quarter.

Total-to-date 9

Number of Members who have gained employment thru 0
their AmeriCorps Service

State Summary - Louisiana

MEMBER ASSESSMENT
as of the end of this quarter

TOTAL AUTHORIZED POSITIONS: 7 TOTAL EMPLOYED: 0

TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL CORPS POSITIONS FILLED _____
TOTAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT CORPS POSITIONS FILLED 0

DEMOGRAPHICS OF AMERICORPS MEMBERS

Box 1 - GENDER

Number of Males _____

Number of Females _____

TOTAL _____

Box 2 - RACE

Number of Caucasians _____

Number of African Americans _____

Number of Native Americans _____

Number of Hispanics _____

Number of Asian American/Pacific Islander _____

TOTAL _____

Box 3 - EDUCATION

Number w/out High School Diploma or GED _____

Number with High School or GED _____

Number with some college _____

Number with college degree _____

Number with Graduate degree _____

Number w/Professional or Trade School _____

TOTAL _____

NOTE: Totals in boxes 1-3 should be the same number and should be the same as TOTAL EMPLOYED.

Box 4 - OTHER

Number receiving Health Insurance from NRCS _____

Number receiving Child Care through AmeriCorps _____

Number of Children _____

Number w/Disabilities _____

State Summary - Louisiana

BUDGET INFORMATION

Federal dollars spent on AmeriCorps (Local Level Only)
Project Manager completes this section

Per cent of your time spent on AmeriCorps	<u>25*</u>
Approximate dollar amount	<u>\$10,300.00*</u>
Cost for any other Federal employee spending time on AmeriCorps	<u> </u>
Travel costs for Members & Managers	<u> </u>
Training costs	<u> </u>
Supplies	<u>\$150.00*</u>
Uniform costs	<u> </u>
Program costs	<u>\$975.00*</u>
(Please explain what these costs were.)*Gas, Utilities	

Partner dollars spent on AmeriCorps

Supplies	<u>\$100.00</u>
Travel	<u>0</u>
Training	<u>0</u>
Program Costs	<u>0</u>
Other	<u>\$200.00</u>

*Totals Represent 5 Supervisors/5 Sites.

PROJECT DIRECTOR COSTS (One per State - Above site level costs only) Do NOT include any costs already captured by the Project Manager.

Federal dollars spent on AmeriCorps	
Per cent of your time spent on AmeriCorps	<u>5</u>
Approximate dollar amount	<u>\$2,060.00</u>
Cost for any other Federal employee spending time on AmeriCorps	<u>\$2,060.00</u>
Travel costs for Members & Managers	<u>\$1,200.00</u>
Training costs	<u> </u>
Supplies	<u>\$500.00</u>
Uniform costs	<u> </u>
Program Costs	<u> </u>
(Please explain what these costs were).	

Non-Federal Funds Spent
(Explain)

Objectives Section

Objective: (state objective)

*Develop the knowledge and skills of three AmeriCorps members within six weeks in order to provide technical assistance necessary to carry out the Farm*A*Syst program.*

Progress towards meeting this community service objective.

*This community service objective was completed within the first quarter of the AmeriCorps year. Additional on-the-job training and formal training on Farm*A*Syst assessments have been conducted throughout the service year.*

Objectives Section

Objective: (state objective)

Reduce the pollution risk of ten farmsteads per parish (9) as measured by the results of pre- and post-assessment surveys.

Progress towards meeting this community service objective.

This community service objective has been accomplished.

*Throughout the AmeriCorps year over 500 high school students received Farm*A*Syst assessment packages. Most of the students were required as a class assignment to complete the pre- and post-assessments and worksheets in order to receive a grade.*

*Over 685 landowners gained knowledge of the Farm*A*Syst program and received assessment/worksheet packages. At least 90 one-on-one Farm*A*Syst assessments were conducted.*

*Eighty-five landowners completed the post-assessment Farm*A*Syst survey. Of 85 landowners responding, 39 landowners either made or planned to make 55 changes to their farming practices. Of those 55 changes planned, 43 were due solely because of information gained through Farm*A*Syst. Of the 55 changes planned, 25 changes have been accomplished.*

Objectives Section

Objective: (state objective)

Develop the knowledge and skills of four AmeriCorps members within six weeks in order to provide technical assistance necessary to carry out the dry fire hydrants program.

Progress towards meeting this community service objective.

This community service objective was accomplished within the first quarter of the AmeriCorps year. USDA/AmeriCorps Members received extensive on-the-job training to develop skills to coordinate the dry fire hydrant program in Louisiana. The members developed strong working relationships with Natural Resources Conservation Service employees, landowners, state and federal agencies, and local police juries and fire departments.

Objectives Section

Objective: (state objective)

Complete planning activities for the installation of 35 dry fire hydrants per parish.

Progress towards meeting this community service objective.

All parishes in the Trailblazer RC&D area have passed resolutions agreeing to participate in the dry fire hydrant program. Parish surveys have been completed for all eight parishes. Each parish has made a request for hydrants, and nearly all applications have been received, and permits are being requested from the U.S. Corps of Engineers. The USDA/AmeriCorps member assisted police juries with their letters of resolution (which state their intent to participate in the dry fire hydrant program), their application process (which involved working with the police jury and local fire protection agencies to determine precisely what materials were needed to complete the project in each area), and tracked the volunteer effort of all eight parishes by keeping a record of time, miles, equipment use, etc., donated for the project. Filming was completed of the installation of a dry hydrant in Bienville Parish, and using this film, a dry hydrant program video has been produced.

Thirteen parishes in the Capital RC&D area have established six-member dry hydrant committees composed of volunteers from the RC&D council, soil and water conservation district, police jury/parish council, and volunteer fire departments along with employees of the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The USDA/AmeriCorps member has developed and distributed a dry hydrant pamphlet for local use. The USDA/AmeriCorps member has secured quad sheets for each parish to assist in identifying hydrant sites. The USDA/AmeriCorps member has participated in 15 dry hydrant committee meetings and made three presentations to fire chief meetings.

The USDA/AmeriCorps member working with Twin Valley RC&D has contacted 26 parishes to introduce the dry fire hydrants program and solicit parish participation. Fire districts in every parish have been contacted. Of the 26 parishes, 24 parishes will be participating in the dry fire hydrant program. Dry hydrant site locations are being determined with 9 parishes. 35 hydrant sites

have been identified and surveyed in Iberia Parish. Three primary storage locations in the Twin Valley RC&D area have been identified for materials pick-up and storage. Materials have been delivered. A consolidated list of materials for hydrants from all participating parishes was developed and provided to Trailblazer RC&D. Easements and permits for the installation of hydrants were also secured.

A USDA/AmeriCorps member worked with all twelve parish coordinators for the dry hydrants program in the Northeast Delta RC&D area to conduct an inventory for possible site locations. The member presented dry fire hydrant program information to police juries and volunteer fire departments throughout the Northeast Delta RC&D area.

All of the parishes in the Imperial-Calcasieu RC&D area have completed all the steps necessary to participate in the dry hydrants program and materials have been delivered. Cameron Parish will be installing 35 hydrants; Jefferson Davis 35 hydrants; Allen Parish 35 hydrants; Beauregard Parish 35 hydrants; and Calcasieu Parish 35 hydrants. The USDA/AmeriCorps member obtained all easements, surveyed all sites, applied for all permits; and sent in application packages for each parish to Trailblazer RC&D.

Objectives Section

Objective: (state objective)

Plan and install, as appropriate, 35 dry fire hydrants in each receptive parish within the respective area of responsibility and perform required evaluation.

Progress towards meeting this community service objective.

Implementation of the statewide dry fire hydrant program, administered by the Trailblazer RC&D Council, was delayed because of negotiations between the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and the Trailblazer RC&D Council. The contract for this program was signed in March 1995. Our members used the first quarter and most of the second quarter to publicize the dry hydrants program, form dry hydrant committees, coordinate federal/state/local involvement in the dry hydrant program, and locate dry hydrant sites. Because of the delay caused by negotiations, this dry fire hydrant project will continue into FY-96.

Eighty dry hydrant sites have been identified in the Trailblazer RC&D area. Two hydrants have been installed--one as a demonstration project, the other as part of a field inspection.

Thirteen parishes in the Capital RC&D area have identified 300 dry hydrant sites. One dry hydrant has been installed.

The USDA/AmeriCorps member working with Twin Valley RC&D has contacted 26 parishes to introduce the dry fire hydrants program and solicit parish participation. Of the 26 parishes, 24 parishes will be participating in the dry fire hydrant program. A dry fire hydrant field day was conducted in Sabine Parish, and approximately 80 people attended. 600 dry hydrant sites have been identified. Two dry fire hydrants have been installed.

In the Imperial-Calcasieu RC&D area: Cameron Parish will be installing 35 hydrants; Jefferson Davis 35 hydrants; Allen Parish 35 hydrants; Beauregard Parish 35 hydrants; and Calcasieu Parish 35 hydrants. 425 dry hydrant sites have been identified. The USDA/AmeriCorps member obtained all easements, surveyed all sites, applied for all permits; and sent in application packages for each parish to Trailblazer RC&D. Two dry fire hydrants have been installed. Other sites are waiting for 404 permits to be received.

PRIMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Member Development: Progress made in boosting the personal development of members.

Members have received training on first aid/CPR, sexual harassment prevention, photography, travel regulations, safety, national service, improving self-esteem, team building, effective presentations, ethics, HIV/AIDS, and how to apply for federal jobs.

Members participated in National Day of Service activities which included assisting local elementary schools as teachers aids, working as tour guides in the Kisatchie National Forest on Forestry Awareness Day, and helping with Meals on Wheels for the elderly and disabled.

A week-long retreat was conducted at the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center in Galliano, Louisiana. During this week, members reflected on their year of service and had an opportunity to work as a corps on a coastal revegetation project for the plant materials center. All members participating agreed this experience was great--for member development, for accomplishing something important for the state of Louisiana (stopping the coastal erosion problem), for team building, and to help add closure to their year of service.

Members assisted with flood recovery efforts in New Orleans during the last week in May 1995. They cleaned and disinfected homes and removed destroyed furniture and walls in homes of the elderly and disabled. They were called angels by those they helped, and they came away from this experience with a greater compassion for the elderly and for those in need. Many members said this was the most meaningful part of their service year.

2. Community Building: Progress made in meeting your community service objectives.

USDA/AmeriCorps members in Louisiana have organized groups of citizens in committees to get dry fire hydrants installed in rural areas; they have increased the awareness of rural landowners of possible risks to their groundwater supply; and they have become important catalysts in their communities to make things happen. They are accepted in their communities and have accomplished getting their projects on the ground. The work they have accomplished will live for many years and will impact many citizens of Louisiana.

3. Other Accomplishments:

USDA/AmeriCorps members volunteered their time to assist the city of Winnsboro conduct their annual Catfish Festival. They were an important part of the days activities--they assisted with festival activities, provided information about their USDA/AmeriCorps projects, and provided information about AmeriCorps.

USDA/AmeriCorps members helped to prepare food, greet guests, and organize tours during the opening day of Hope Youth Ranch. This ranch is dedicated to helping troubled teenagers.

USDA/AmeriCorps members planted trees in city park in Tallulah, Louisiana.

Because of her flood relief experience in New Orleans, one USDA/AmeriCorps member was selected as an alternate team member to go and provide disaster relief assistance to the Virgin Islands.

4. Unique Successes or "Great Stories":

Members assisted with flood recovery efforts in New Orleans. They cleaned and disinfected homes and removed destroyed furniture and walls in homes of elderly and disabled homeowners. They were called angels by those they helped, and they came away from this experience with a greater compassion for the elderly and for those in need. Many members said this was the most meaningful part of their service year.

Lieutenant Governor Melinda Schwegmann addressed Louisianas first class of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) AmeriCorps graduates at the Forestry Center in the Alexander State Forest near Woodworth, Louisiana on August 4, 1995. Participating USDA agencies conducted a graduation ceremony to honor nineteen USDA/AmeriCorps members for their commitment to a season of service. The Forestry Center was originally constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the early 1930's.

PRIMARY CHALLENGES

Report on problems resolved and unresolved, obstacles to achieving program objectives, significant sources of delay, program elements not meeting expectations, events or incidents that caused concern. Use the format below for explaining problems and solutions.

NATURE OF PROBLEM

Please state the problem clearly and concisely. Be candid.

1. Implementation of the statewide dry fire hydrant program, administered by the Trailblazer RC&D Council, was delayed because of negotiations between the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and the Trailblazer RC&D Council. The contract for this program was signed in March 1995. Our members used the first quarter and most of the second quarter to publicize the dry hydrants program, form dry hydrant committees, coordinate federal/state/local involvement in the dry hydrant program, and locate dry hydrant sites. Because of the delay caused by negotiations, this dry fire hydrant project will continue into FY-96.
2. In Louisiana Natural Resources Conservation Service AmeriCorps members worked side-by-side with Forest Service AmeriCorps members. The USDA/AmeriCorps program in Louisiana¹ was been a great Team USDA effort. However, the Team USDA concept was not always clear to AmeriCorps members, especially when one agency requires one method of accomplishing something and another agency has another method.
3. After completing 902 hours of service, one member was forced to discontinue her national service with our agency because of financial problems. This member moved to Louisiana from Maryland to participate in our USDA/AmeriCorps project. With the stipend provided, she was unable to pay rent and utility bills and have enough left for food expenses. She left our agency to return home to Maryland. Our office requested that she receive a partial educational award, but it was recommended by our agency's national headquarters that she attempt to find an AmeriCorps position in her local area to complete her commitment to national service.

HAS THE PROBLEM BEEN RESOLVED?

IF NO, WHAT STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM?

1. Yes. The contract was signed in March 1995, and a USDA/AmeriCorps project has been approved to continue this work in FY-96 in Louisiana.
2. Yes. Employees of both agencies learned to work through the differences in agency policy to get things done, and USDA/AmeriCorps members learned to accomplish this also.
3. Yes. The member has returned home to Maryland. However, we were unable to locate a position for this member to complete her service, and it was determined by a USDA panel to deny a partial education award for time served.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE SOLUTION OR RESOURCES NEEDED TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM?

Specify what steps you, your Members, USDA, and/or the Corporation for National Service can take to rectify the problems or at least ensure they do not recur in the future?

In the future, it would be best if we recruited in the local area. The financial strain of moving and establishing in a new community could be overwhelming to new AmeriCorps members.

TRAINING ASSESSMENT

PRIMARY TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

Please specify precisely what kind of staff or Member training or other technical assistance can be provided by USDA, the Corporation for National and Community Service, or other sources to improve your project.

Life skills - money management, time management, stress management

Communication skills - presentation skills, media skills

Organizational skills - project development

Map reading skills - for locating dry fire hydrant sites for use by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, and others.

MEDIA ASSESSMENT

1. NATIONAL IDENTITY ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

None.

2. MEDIA COVERAGE

Television and newspaper coverage of dry fire hydrant field days with recognition of USDA/AmeriCorps involvement in project.

Television, radio, and newspaper coverage of our USDA/AmeriCorps graduation.

3. OTHER CREATIVE DOCUMENTATION

USDA/AmeriCorps Yearbook is attached.