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USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service - MN - Area 1 - Twin Valley FO

Agassiz
Recreational
Trail
Project

GRANTEE: USDA - Natural Resources
Conservation Service

SITE: Twin Valley F/O
Area 1
Minnesota

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

OPTIONAL FORM 99 (7-90)

FAX TRANSMITTAL

of pages ▶ 8

To <i>Joel Berg</i>	From <i>Paula Jones</i>
Dept./Agency	Phone # <i>720-2847</i>
Fax # <i>720-4614</i>	Fax #

NSN 7540-01-317-7368

5099-101

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service - MN - Area 1 - Twin Valley FO

Subject: First Quarter AmeriCorps Report

Date: November 29, 1994

To: AmeriCorps Area Conservationists
AmeriCorps Project Directors

Action Required by December 14, 1994

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Glen Kajewski, AC	Kevin Daw, AC
John Nicholson, AC	Mark Kunz, DC
Roger Lenzmeier, PC	Jeff Stewart, DC
Al Gustafson, PC	Fred Kollmann, DC

The first quarter for AmeriCorps ends November 30, 1994. Your progress report must be submitted by December 14. Quarterly reports will be sent to our national office who will forward our reports to the Corporation for National and Community Service.

You are asked to provide the specific information listed on the quarterly report guidelines (see enclosure). The guidelines are flexible so that, in addition to quantifiable data, you can include other evidence of the progress and impact that the AmeriCorps members are having on your state.

We recognize that much of your energy has been devoted to learning, planning and startup of the program. Include your projections of what will be accomplished during the next quarter. This is important so that the program evaluation will include what we learned during the startup period.

We are serious about keeping our previous commitment to ensure that these reporting requirements will not be burdensome. reports should be brief and concise.

The quarterly reports will be used:

1. As an initial measure of our attainment of the Community Service objectives.
2. To determine the needs for technical assistance to be provided by CNCS or other sources of support.
3. To look for opportunities to improve the national program.
4. To help determine which projects will be approved for FY-96.

Contact Micheal Price at (612) 290-3677 if you have any questions. Send your report to him by December 14.

GARY R. NORDSTROM
State Conservationist
Enclosure

FIRST QUARTER AMERICORPS REPORT

TIME PERIOD: September 12 - November 1994

DUE DATE: December 15, 1994

NUMBER OF MEMBER ENROLLED AT THE TIME OF THE LAUNCH

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service - MN - Area 1 - Twin Valley FO

2. NUMBER OF MEMBERS ENROLLED AT THE END OF THE QUARTER (NOV. 30)
TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS OF DIRECT SERVICE PERFORMED
TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS IN TRAINING
5. PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING COMMUNITY SERVICE OBJECTIVES
This is the most important item in the quarterly report. Responses should be concise, quantifiable, measurable and show how much has been done towards the service objectives.
6. PRIMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Expand on #5 above using narratives, quotes and stories to show how the service your project has performed has begun meeting your community service objectives. Also, specify other important service you have performed that "gets things done" in your community. Tell what progress you have made in boosting the personal development of the Members or helping local communities build their long-term infrastructures.
7. PROJECTED OUTCOMES FOR NEXT QUARTER
We assume that the amount of work accomplished in subsequent quarters will exceed progress made during the program setup. What will you accomplish in the 2nd quarter that you were not able to do to-date?
8. PRIMARY CHALLENGES
Please be candid in specifying any CHALLENGES, problems, or disappointments you have faced, as well as what steps you, your Members, NRCS, USDA, and/or the Corporation for National Service can take to either rectify the problems or at least ensure they do not recur in the future.
9. PRIMARY TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS
Specify precisely what kind of staff or Member training, or other technical assistance can be provided. Specify precisely what kind of staff or Member training, or other technical assistance, can be provided by NRCS, USDA, CNCS or other sources to improve your project.
10. MEDIA COVERAGE
Please provide all newspaper or magazine clippings, videotapes of TV news reports, and cassettes of radio news reports.
11. OTHER CREATIVE DOCUMENTATION
Look for other ways to creatively demonstrate the progress of your projects, such as:
 - "before and after" photographs and videotapes
 - excerpts from journal entries written by Members
 - letters of support from satisfied individuals or groups

FIRST QUARTER AMERICORPS REPORT AGASSIZ
TWIN VALLEY MN

RECREATIONAL TRAIL

- 1) Numbers of Members at the time of the launch

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service - MN - Area 1 - Twin Valley FO

2) Number of Members enrolled at the end of the quarter
4

3) Total number of hours of direct service performed
1,204

4) Total number of hours in training
175

5) Progress towards meeting community service objectives

- a. Trail brochure design complete
- b. Assisting Ada city council with Trail development
- c. One of the grant proposals complete
- d. Ground breaking ceremony for the Trail
- e. Norman Co. East Science Fair
- f. Crookston Cleanup

6) Primary Accomplishments

a. Trail brochure - the design of the brochure is complete along with the logo which was developed through a logo contest.

b. Have been working with the Ada City Council on community development and with the towns trails as part of the area tourism development.

The grant proposal for a Heritage & Information Center is complete. This facility is to be located on the trail in the town of Twin Valley.

d. Oct. 18, 1994 was the ground breaking ceremony for the Trail. The AmeriCorps members got sponsors, speakers, and set up all media coverage ie. papers, radios, and TV.

e. The AmeriCorps members were judges at the Norman Co. East Science Fair for grades K through 6.

f. With other cluster group in Northern Minn. to clean up downtown Crookston.

7) Projected Outcomes For Next Quarter

a. Another set of fact sheets concerning the Trail progress and tourism.

b. Brochure completed. The design is now complete and hope to complete printing in 2 quarter.

c. Make contact with local business to get support for the trail development and to involve the business in the tourism effort.

8) Primary Challenges

a. The timing of recruitment was not conducive to maximum participation. The recruiting should be done during the early part of the Spring Quarter or mid-semester. Also, recruiting ended after people should have been on the job.

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USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service - MN - Area 1 - Twin Valley FO

- b. Lack of funds have affected supply availability. DOS computers are needed and are lacking. Also, lack of money has limited travel for training.
 - c. Communication between the field and Washington could be improved. An example is the approval of news releases by Washington. The AmeriCorps members just found this out the first week of December.
 - d. Uniforms issued to the AmeriCorps members amounted to a hat or a t-shirt. The members one t-shirt has worn out and two members have broken hats.
- 9) See Attached
- 10) The FSA state coordinator sent all the first week of December.
- 11) See Attached 2 items (1 of the 2 enclosures could not be sent over e-mail, will fax to you at request)

QUARTERLY REPORT

ART

TWIN VALLEY MN

Supplement to Primary Accomplishments

Recently, the AmeriCorps members from the Twin Valley cluster and the Thief River cluster participated in a leadership/team building Ropes Adventure Course. Individual goals were set at the beginning of the day. Through teamwork, those goals were met. Fears were overcome, trust developed, and good working relationships were forged.

Jeff York Twin Valley Mn Cluster

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PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED:

When starting a new project or program that is expected to continue indefinitely, many problems can occur in the first year. These problems can easily be corrected in the following years. Such is the case with our AmeriCorps program. The problems that we will address in the coming year include: equipment needs, media exposure, developing contact people, inter-agency problems, and various new project startup problems. In the following paragraphs, each of these issues will be explained along with our planned solutions to these challenges.

In order to achieve our goals in AmeriCorps, we had considerable equipment needs. Phone lines, phones, computers, desks, filing cabinets and supplies had to be obtained. Although these needs were eventually met, a considerable amount of time had passed from the starting date to the time we considered ourselves properly equipped to meet our goals. I believe that this problem is, for the most part, already solved. Equipment such as phone lines, phones, computers, chairs and desks will be left for next year's AmeriCorps members. Minor items such as stationary, envelopes, pens, etc. would easily be taken care of by the host agency (these were the first needs met, originally).

Another problem that AmeriCorps members had was exposure to the public and developing contacts. No one knew who the members were or what they were trying to accomplish. This problem, also, was easily solved. Through the efforts of the original AmeriCorps members, the public was made aware of their goals and efforts. Media coverage, informational videos, and press releases were some of the ways this problem was conquered. Contacts were and still are being forged through meeting and phone calls. It is anticipated that this will continue throughout the duration of the AmeriCorps program. By these continuing means, the problems of exposure and business contacts are managed.

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(File) 1st Quarter Report



April 7, 1995

Mr. Joel Berg
Director of National Service
USDA
14th and Independence Ave., SW
Room 541-A
Washington, DC 20250-1300

AmeriCorps National Service

CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
SERVICE

Dear Joel:

Thank you for submitting your First Quarterly Report for the AmeriCorps Programs of the USDA. We applaud you, your staff and the 1000 USDA AmeriCorps Members on the great things you have gotten done thus far.

This letter serves to give direct comments on your Quarterly Report and any other issues we believe would be helpful to review before your Renewal Application. I have discussed our response with Michael Arthur, Grants Officer, and Jim Ekstrom, Director of Technical Assistance and Training.

Your Report provides a succinct summary of important accomplishments at your operating sites. You are meeting your overall objectives, and it is clear that the press recognizes your accomplishments. You and your staff have provided exemplary, tireless leadership for our largest and most ambitious AmeriCorps program. You have been a pleasure to work with on an almost daily basis.

In your Second Quarterly Report we would like to have copies of all the individual site reports so that we have a complete record of accomplishments as we head into the renewal process. We also need a full and frank discussion of the challenges you have faced and the steps you have taken to resolve issues. You may provide this in a memo form as you did in the First Quarterly Report, but preferably it could be incorporated into your overall Second Quarterly Report so that reviewers are clear that this was intended as part of your submission.

Let me share with you a few concerns:

- Rural Development and Public Lands Teams: As you know, I have met with Paul Johnson, Chief of NRCS and with Lloyd Wright, Director of the Community Assistance and Resources Development Division of NRCS to reinforce our concerns that NRCS management of the program be strengthened and that problems be swiftly addressed. These meetings

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
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AmeriCorps, National Service
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National Senior Service Corps

were quite helpful in increasing my understanding of Mr. Wright's concerns that the line managers of his agency be held accountable for program success, and be endowed with the authority to take all measures to ensure the highest quality of programs.

An excellent example of problem resolution at the state/local level is the visit of Marc Freeman, an NRCS official in Texas, to a site where a Member had lodged a complaint. He has verified that the site is accomplishing worthwhile work and has established direct contact with the Member, urging her to call him in the future if she is unable to resolve her issues locally. Mr. Freeman's quick response and direct relationship with this program is a model for what must happen in the field if the widely dispersed Rural Development Program is to work over time.

- Regional Facilitators: We need clarification of the role the regional facilitators are to play in overseeing the program so that our state commissions and CNS offices can have realistic expectations in their relationships with these people. While we do not wish to get into the discussion of whether or not these positions will exist, it is critical that the functions they are now performing are somehow performed by USDA. We rely on your office to get information from CNS out in a timely way, and when we hear from our state commissions or state CNS offices that USDA Members seem uninformed about basic issues, it signals a real problems in the flow of vital program guidance.
- Database and Operating Site Forms: I am pleased that we finally seem to be achieving some agreement on the definition of your operating sites, and believe that the collaboration between Ron DeMunbrun and Tonda Williams here at CNS will ensure compatible recordkeeping in the future. Let me stress again the absolute urgency of getting all the information on your operating sites to us immediately.
- FSR Form: We must have a complete FSR form from you for the first quarter in order to certify that your Report was complete. Please send that to Michael Arthur no later than April 12, 1995.

Once again, we appreciate your dedication to AmeriCorps and all that you and your programs have done to make national service a reality.

Sincerely yours,



Meg Maguire
Senior Program Officer

spring. They finished up a grant application they had been working on for the trail. The logo contest they did has ended and they selected a winner and have sent out thank you's to the participants. They sent thank you's to the local media for their coverage of AmeriCorps so far. Did a press release to update AmeriCorps progress in this area. Holly also received a request for a monthly project to help clean up the parks in Mahanomen in the spring.

The Cloquett Cluster:

I'm not sure what to do next with this cluster. I sent an email message to the state coordinator, Michael Price, and the area supervisor for this cluster in regards to working the forestry into this cluster last Friday. I requested a response by the 22nd and as of the 23rd I still have not received a response. I called this cluster this morning for our weekly conference call and only one of the members were there again. This is the second time this has happened. I asked whether they had set up a date for the monthly project and was told not yet. One of the members was working on it, unfortunately that member was not present today and the one member who was did not know what was happening. It seems to me they want to work on their projects and my part with this cluster is of no importance. Not only with the members but also the supervisors of this cluster.

The members are getting along well and their project sounds like is going well. One member has been working on entering their roadside erosion inventory into the computer, another is working on a mailing list for their newsletter, and the other is almost done with the newsletter and is also working on setting up a monthly project for us. They say they are having no problems but this cluster just isn't going as well as the others in the state.

I am meeting with Michael Price this coming week, as he is coming up for training with the two NW clusters, on Monday and Tuesday. I think the two of us need to have some serious discussion on what to do with this cluster.

Maybe next week will bring new solutions.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Soil
Conservation
Service

John Hanson Business Center
339 Burch's Frontage Road, Suite 101
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-6534

NUMBER OF PAGES BEING FAXED INCLUDING COVER: 5

TO: Paula Cole Jones DATE: 02/03/95

FAX NO: 202-690-0639

FROM: Linda Ellen Adams

PHONE: 410-757-0861

FAX NO: 410-757-0687

- ① New FY95 Proposal
(8 Members)
- ② 1st Gt. Report.



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Hours Service, Hours Training

AMERICORPS MARYLAND NRCS 1ST QUARTER REPORT DECEMBER, 1994

A. Progress Towards Meeting Community Service Objectives

Community Objective #1 - Develop, Construct, or Enhance Environmental Resources to Include Assistance with Three (3) Outdoor Education Classrooms and Two (2) Environmental Trail Interpretation Sites

1. Beltsville crew met with the principal and teachers of North Forestville Elementary December, 1994, to assess site locations. Work is scheduled for next quarter.
2. Beltsville crew has contracted with the Schmidt Center for work to begin January, 1995.
3. District of Columbia crew has met with Aquatic Gardens about the establishment of a crossing into a marsh to extend their educational program.
4. District of Columbia crew met with D.C. Recreation and Parks to schedule training in floracultural skills for a community garden facility.
5. District of Columbia crew toured Greenbelt Park to investigate site for a bridge crossing project and streambank erosion. Project is in partnership with U.S. Parks Service
6. Beltsville Crew worked with Iraq Walton League in Charles County, Maryland, to complete four (4) erosion control structures on a site that will be open to the public.

Community Objective #2 - Members Will Provide Mentoring for Twenty (20) Students in Cooperation with Local Schools and Other Organizations

1. Work began to develop partnerships at North Forestville.
2. Contact has been made with Trustees for training.
3. Survey training conducted by NRCS staff began for members to assist with teaching day at school. Members will staff stations to survey a stormwater crossing at an athletic field where a wetland will be created to capture runoff. Students will take part in the survey as part of mentoring experience. Stations staffed by members will be set up for soils and soil erosion demonstrations. As a result of this initial training, members were requested for other survey work in Southern Maryland.

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Maryland NRCS AmeriCorps
1st Quarter Report

Page 2

4. As a holiday activity, Beltsville crew members assisted at a homeless shelter for women in Hughesville, Maryland. As a result of this activity, the Beltsville crew leader was asked to serve as a mentor at the shelter.
5. Both crews worked in the greenhouse at the Beltsville National Plant Materials Center potting plants and completing field work in preparation for a mentoring project utilizing plant materials.

Community Objective #3 - Five (4) Parks will be Renovated and Adopted by Local Community

1. District of Columbia crew in partnership with D.C. Adopt-a-Park Program began developing forms for homeowners' associations and local businesses to adopt portions of parks after crew has completed park renovations.
2. District of Columbia crew received basic safety, tool usage, and landscaping training from D.C. Recreation and Parks in preparation for an extensive project at Banneker Park.
3. District of Columbia crew completed site assessment at Nannie Burrows.
4. Both crews assisted National Plant Materials Center staff with landscaping at the Center. Activity served as teambuilding training as well as basic tool and safety training.
5. Beltsville crew completed cleanup at Lake Artemesia and conducted site assessment. Work will continue in January.
6. Contact was established with Prince George's County Clean Stream Teams. Meeting held with Sharon Miggs. Members walked streams, secured kits for site monitoring, and selected streams to monitor.
7. D.C. crew met with D.C. Fisheries about a number of possible projects to enhance fish habitat.
8. D.C. crew scheduled meeting with Save Our Streams about a series of workshops on stream monitoring.

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**Maryland NRCS AmeriCorps
1st Quarter Report**

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R. Any Major Staff, Structural, or Service Changes Made

Joseph Haamid joined us just before start-up in November as Project Manager in D.C.

C. List Any New Members Joining or Quitting

Dean Mosher joined the D.C. crew in late November. Michael Harris was released for cause in December.

D. Primary Accomplishments of our Projects

See (A) - Page 1.

E. Primary Challenges or Problems at Our Sites

Our NRCS team agrees that challenges are weekly if not daily. Attendance and promptness of members was immediately recognized as a challenge, but the establishment of the members as a team as well as individual counseling will overcome this problem.

Members are quite concerned about the lack of AmeriCorps uniforms. They saw them when working with the ARS crew. They also expressed concern about the lack of AmeriCorps events promised when they met with Joel Berg in Washington, D.C. We hope a schedule of activities for 1995 will be arriving soon.

One overall challenge for the program is a limited budget and workload of existing NRCS staff for training. Partnerships may assist this need, but not overcome it entirely.

F. Primary Training, Technical Assistance, and Equipment Needs

Training Needs - Conflict Resolution, Understanding Diversity, Crewleader Training
Equipment Needs - AmeriCorps uniforms

**G. Media Coverage - Newsletter to be published by members during second quarter.
Media plan yet to be developed by NRCS staff**

H. Other Documentation Such as Photos of Thank-You Letters - Will be forwarded under separate cover.

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Maryland NRCS AmeriCorps
1st Quarter Report

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I. Future Team Building Activities - Activities are ongoing. Continue to meet with ARS group for project activities, tours, training. Plan to meet with other local AmeriCorps groups during second quarter.

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Call 15
FAX TRANSMITTAL

Date: Feb. 2, 1995

Number of Pages: #6

TO: Joel Berg

FAX 720-4614

FROM: Paula Cole Jones, Program Manager
National Service and Volunteer Programs
Community Assistance and
Resource Development Division
Washington, D.C.

FAX (202) 690-0639

PHONE (202) 720-2847

COMMENTS:

~~Texas Quarterly Report~~

Maryland - quarterly report
and

Objectives for a team to start up
in the next 30 days FY95

2/23/95

To: DEE

202-690-0639

From: John

BAOGER

207-764-4126

ADOPT A STREAM GRANT PROPOSAL

Fish River Lakes Water Quality Association

February 9, 1995

"Adopt A Stream" is an educational program whose objective is to: "encourage students to gain a sense of stewardship, an environmental ethic, and a willingness to take action to improve our environment".

The program will be implemented in five schools within the Fish River Chain of Lakes Watershed and will reach kids in the fourth, eighth and ninth grades. The schools involved are; Sinclair, Frenchville, and Grand Isle Elementary, St. Agatha Middle, and Ashland (Portage) High School. Several teachers have stated they will appreciate the training in environmental education, a subject area they are very unfamiliar with. It is our hope that once we have visited the schools, the teachers will take action to carry out the program in the future.

The subject areas involved in the curriculum include: the geography, ecology, and history of the students' adopted stream, how pollution enters the watershed, and ways we can protect the environment. Activities the students will be able to take part range from building their own watershed to visiting the actual stream to monitor the water for quality and pollution. The monitoring equipment is provided for by the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and also by Chad Bourgoin, a senior Environmental Studies student at UMFK. Materials we would appreciate additional funding for are primarily for the construction of the watersheds and are listed as follows:

List of Anticipated Expenditures

	<u>Cost</u>
Rotary Pump and Tubing	\$100.00
100 lbs. of Clay	141.00
Model Houses/People/Animals	150.00
Foam/Wood/Glue/Etc.	40.00
Basin (holding tanks)	<u>60.00</u>
Total Cost	\$491.00