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March

Divider Title: _____

To: Secretary Espy

From: Joel Berg

Date: March 30, 1993

Re: Making Government Programs Work

Attached is an insightful article from Washington Monthly outlining how highly-touted federal anti-crime and welfare reform initiatives have faltered. The article makes the basic point that, although the Safe Streets Act of 1968 and the Family Support Act of 1988 were bills that were relatively well-written by Congress, they both failed because they were not implemented properly.

You might want to give the article a quick read and consider how its lessons might be applied our reform efforts here at USDA.

Sign It, Then Mind It

*Until Washington tends to the details,
good ideas—even Clinton's—
will keep flopping*

by Christopher Georges

Ross Perot recently asked me for \$15. Against my better judgment, I'm sending him a check. I did not vote for Perot. I hope he never becomes president. Even so, he earned my contribution based on a single remark midway through the second presidential debate. "Please understand," he said, "there are great plans lying all over Washington that nobody ever properly executes."

If the Clinton administration takes one lesson from Ross Perot, that should be it. It's no secret that the new president has more programs than Microsoft. Many are smart. Some are desperately needed. But most will surely follow the same failed path as the ones they are intended to replace—unless the Clinton administration pays heed to more than just turning good ideas into laws. Just as important is focusing equal attention on the nuts and bolts of how to *make the plans work* on the ground level.

Let's face it, policy implementation is boring. It's complex, and it makes terrible TV. But it's also the missing gene of American politics. Few people focus on it; even fewer care. But getting it right is especially relevant now as Washington gears up to push Clinton's brash new agenda. "All the pious announcements, all the laws that are passed will mean nothing," explains Richard Nathan, director of the Rockefeller Institute of Government at the State University of New York at Albany, "unless there is a commitment to carrying them out. Our failure to do this has been *the* endemic problem of American government."

And what exactly does that mean? It's no secret that countless plans, whether under Johnson or Reagan, in areas from crime to welfare, have failed to live up to their promise. Little matter that the best policy minds designed them, that ambitious new laws were passed, that billions were funneled to federal agencies and the states. Inevitably, it seems,

our social ills have become worse. And when that happens, it's back to the drawing board to try a newer, better plan.

The assumption here is that the solutions—the laws themselves—are flawed. And in some cases that surely is part of the problem. But lawmakers and policy designers rarely stop to consider whether, for example, police officials charged with implementing the latest federal plan for community policing know how to train officers for the task, or whether welfare caseworkers actually sanction welfare recipients who fail to take job training classes, as the latest welfare law requires. In short, when the laws are written, is there enough thought given to how to implement the new policies?

In a word, no. Why not? Presidents and congressmen earn their stripes by passing legislation, not by making sure it works. To the constituents back home, a new law sends a signal that their man in Washington is on the ball, doing something—anything—to solve a problem. To the media, slavishly covering the signing of a new bill—as they did in broadcasting images of President Reagan's White House signing of the 1982 Garn-St. Germain Act, which helped cause the savings and loan disaster—is easy. Schlepping out to the hustings, on the other hand, to decipher the impact of the law on the banking industry, wasn't. About the only ones who seem to pay any attention at all to the implementation gap are professor-filled, blue-ribbon panels. (Foremost among them in recent years have been the 1990 Volker Commission on Public Service, the 1992 National Commission on State and Local Public Service, and a Brookings Institution team that is expected to release its review this summer.) Many have gone to great pains to illustrate that even the best laws will fail when implementation is ignored. Such warnings, however, seem to fall on deaf ears.

Of course, all politicians want their laws to succeed, but there is little incentive while designing new legislation to worry about the fine points of how it will be carried out. Unfortunately, it may take the failure of Clinton's vaunted agenda to prove the point. That's a particularly unsavory notion these days, as policy flops in the nineties will be more costly than those of the past. Considering the need to slash the deficit, we simply can no longer afford to play loopy-goopy with social programs; every penny spent must be producing tangible results. Just as important, further failures will push public confidence to the brink: How many times can Washington spend billions on reforms and then have nothing to show for them before taxpayers abandon faith in government solutions altogether?

There is, however, an easier way than waiting for the bright new agenda to become a wasted one: looking back to the causes of failed laws. Two areas, crime and welfare—where fully debated, smartly designed policy ideas in recent years failed—make the case.

Disorganized crime

No issue was hotter in the 1968 election than crime. In the three years leading up to the election, the nation had been bled by riots in more than 100 cities. A 1968 Gallup poll revealed that most Americans believed lawlessness was America's number one domestic problem. After months of debate and with the input of special task forces comprised of the brightest stars in the field, Congress and the Johnson administration unveiled the 1968 Safe Streets Act. The cure to the crime problem would start with the creation of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), through which \$300 million in grants would be doled out to police departments across the nation. In order to win the grants, however, localities had to promise to use the money to fund crime prevention programs that the think-tank task forces had endorsed, namely plans like community-based policing, drug treatment on demand, hiring more police officers, and school-based drug education. Sound familiar? If you've followed Clinton's \$3 billion crime program, it should. Of course, Clinton's plan is not identical (he's also pushing tougher ideas like boot camps for juvenile offenders), but the overlap is significant.

The bad news for Clinton is that the Safe Streets Act and the LEAA were dismal failures. (The LEAA, after a controversial, sorry existence, was abolished in 1982.) The good news, however, is that the failure had almost nothing to do with the quality of the policies proposed. In fact, libraries full of studies since 1982 have concluded that such reforms can, and have, worked—which helps explain why they're back on the agenda.

Instead, the failure was largely a product of how the act was carried out. Under Safe Streets, local police departments would submit funding proposals to "state planning boards," which would modify them as they saw fit and pass them along to the Washington-based LEAA for approval. If the plans contained the types of programs Congress and the administration had endorsed, the money would be released to the state boards, which would then dole it out to the local police units.

Of course, fighting crime, as the Safe Streets Act properly recognized, should intimately involve—and ultimately be controlled by—local governments, and not micromanaged from Washington. But Safe Streets'

LEAA made a crucial blunder. It essentially threw the money at the states and the state planning boards. It cared only about who got what amount of money. When it came to considering whether the money was being used properly, and more importantly, what results the funding was producing, it was essentially hands off.

And how did that play out in towns and cities across America (where few Washington bureaucrats care to look)? For one, the state planning boards—made up for the most part of academics who were sold on the reforms—invariably locked horns with local police officials, blue-collar types who were often set in their ways. To the local officials, many of whom were quite comfortable running their local fiefdoms, the pointy-headed planners were perceived as a threat to their autonomy. Massachusetts's state planning board, made up mostly of liberal Harvard types, not surprisingly found itself slugging it out with the street-wise Boston police. "Morale here is zero," one Massachusetts state planner told the press in the early seventies. "We have no friends, no political base, no power." One southern state planner at the time said, "The police chiefs in this state come out of the Salem witch hunt. If a police chief doesn't want a training program, you can't do anything about it."

It wasn't long before the agenda began to unravel. While some local departments never applied for funds, others did and then used the money as they saw fit. In 1970, 37 percent of the LEAA funds had been used to pay for programs completely unrelated to crime. (The governor of Indiana, for example, dipped into the LEAA trough to buy himself an airplane.) And in 1971, it was later discovered that more than a dozen states had used LEAA funds for illegal purposes. "What had appeared to be a law officer's dream for badly needed help," stated a congressional report examining the LEAA in the mid-seventies, "was becoming merely a politician's dream for the biggest pork barrel of them all."

"All the pious announcements, all the laws that are passed will mean nothing," explains Richard Nathan, director of the Rockefeller Institute of Government, "unless there is a commitment to carrying them out."

Even when the money did filter down to the local level, the new-fangled ideas were often resisted. Local police officials wedded to their ways. Consider the Georgia sheriffs who, after a plan had been approved, refused to allow their local jails to be replaced by a multi-county prison slated as a model providing the latest in rehabilitative programs. Why the stubbornness? To the sheriffs, local jails offered status, provided free labor when needed, and in many cases allowed them to put their wives on the county payrolls to cook meals for the inmates.

In the end, the local police simply beat the planners to a pulp. They were better organized and more politically connected. Linked by vocal, visible and well-funded groups such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the American Correctional Association, they rolled over the friendless and politically unsophisticated planning agencies.

And what was Washington doing during the meltdown? "Their biggest concern was to get the money out in the field," explained one state planning official to the authors of *U.S. v. Crime in the Streets*, a late seventies study of the failure of the Safe Streets Act. "It's as if the people there held an amoral attitude about program stan-

dards—they just wanted to get the money out into the hands of the police." Federal myopia meant chaos ruled. Nevada's crime program, for example, failed to include an organized crime component. New York's had just one page detailing how it would deal with the state's drug problem (whereas Vermont's included 320 pages on the same problem). None of this seemed to matter to the LEAA, which approved the plans all the same.

Equally damaging was the fact that evaluation from the LEAA was virtually nonexistent. By the mid-seventies, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the General Accounting Office, and the White House had all concluded independently that the LEAA was in a fog. One 1976 OMB report criticized the LEAA for paying for millions of dollars

worth of "interesting but unnecessary equipment." In fact, it wasn't until four years after the LEAA was created that Congress made the embarrassing discovery that the agency had not a single employee charged with collecting information on the success of programs.

Given the sloppy implementation of this act, it's little wonder that by the early eighties Washington was no longer enamored of the new crime-fighting ideas. But a decade later, we've come full circle. There is no question that localities must be tightly involved in implementing a federally initiated crime agenda, but unless the Clinton team is aware of why the grand ideas flopped the last time around, history is destined to repeat itself.

Class act

Of course, the bungling of crime reform may well be the exception. Safe Streets' grand ideas, after all, were being *imposed* on local governments from far-away Washington—a situation sure to inspire distrust no matter how well the regulations were implemented. Perhaps the bulk of the blame in this case really lies with local governments, which were reluctant to accept the fashionable new programs in the first place.

The best way to test that objection is to examine a failed federal reform that was not handed down but was instead inspired by the states themselves—welfare reform.

Clinton's tough campaign rhetoric in this area, such as his promise to "scrap the current welfare system," played no small part in putting him in the White House. While he embraced the foundation of current federal law—forcing welfare recipients to enroll in job training programs—he went a step further, offering a plan that essentially would cancel benefits for those who fail to find a job after two years on assistance. That's no minor suggestion, and one that would require a reprogramming of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

Clinton's no-nonsense talk is justified. Public polls show that Americans are not happy with the welfare system, and plenty of policy experts agree. Nearly 5 million families receive AFDC benefits and the average aid recipient is on the rolls for more than six years. The most recent reform, the 1988 Family Support Act, sought to fix that. The sweeping measure, which came after nearly a decade of debate, turned the philosophy behind welfare inside out. Instead of simply providing recipients with money, the law demanded that those receiving aid must in return prepare themselves for a job through training courses, enrolling in college, or the like.

To make the new idea work, the 1988 law, in creating a program known as JOBS, turned much of the implementation responsibility over to the states. The federal government agreed to release more than \$3.3 billion over five years in matching funds to state welfare agencies, which would be charged with creating specific programs to provide job counseling and training. The beauty of the 1988 act was that, unlike Safe Streets, many states, such as Arkansas and Massachusetts, had already experimented with so-called "welfare-to-work programs," giving Congress the confidence that it wouldn't be throwing money at a completely untested idea which the states didn't want.

The first round of evaluations of the act are just now filtering in, and while they don't point to a disaster on the scale of Safe Streets, about the brightest face that can be put on it is "mildly successful." In California, for example, welfare recipients who went through a job training program now earn an average of \$1,900 a year. Those who did not now earn an average of \$1,600. Nationwide, the number of people on welfare in the past four years has gone sharply up—not down. "The hope that states would use JOBS to signal a change in the mission of the welfare system has not been realized," was the conclusion of the largest, and thus far only, in-depth study of the act, *Implementing JOBS*, a review of the welfare-to-work programs in 10 states by Jan Hagan and Irene Lurie of the Rockefeller Institute of Government in Albany, N.Y. The pace of progress has in part prompted Clinton and others to push the more radical reform agenda.

But before we leap into the next welfare overhaul, what exactly has gone wrong with the last one? While some critics of the act argue that the law itself is not tough enough (job training requirements, for example, can be fulfilled through taking self-esteem classes), the larger problem is that the act is "under-rated and under-implemented," explains Richard Nathan, whose review of welfare implementation over the past three decades, *Turning Promise into Performance*, is scheduled for publication this spring.

And what does that mean on the front lines? For one, there hasn't been enough money to make it work—partly because the federal government's \$3 billion outlay isn't adequate, but also because the states simply have been slow to collect it. (Remember, the federal seed money is not a direct giveaway. In order for each state to receive its share, it must put up matching funds.) Of the \$1 billion available to the states in 1991, only \$600 million was actually claimed. Of the 10 states studied by Hagan and Lurie, only one, Oregon, even came close to pulling down all the funds to which it was entitled. And often the poorest states, which need the money the

most, put up the least—and thus pull down the least. Mississippi, for example, drew less than 15 percent of the federal funds to which it was entitled.

In some cases, states facing serious fiscal problems simply haven't been able to make the investment. But in others, it's also a matter of leadership—or lack of it. In fact, in none of the 10 states studied by Hagan and Lurie did welfare agencies make any "organizational changes" in the administration of their programs to incorporate the new federal mandates. Case-workers, for example, were rarely trained for the dramatic shift from distributors of checks to counselors. Instead, in places like Tennessee, county welfare directors were taught how to market the JOBS program, but caseworkers were never trained for the tougher job of educating welfare recipients about where to get the actual job training and education.

In some cases, the failure of leadership is apparent not so much in what state officials do but in what they neglect. Some governors, such as Maryland's William Donald Schaefer and Massachusetts's Mike Dukakis in the eighties, sparked their welfare-to-work programs by holding press conferences to emphasize positive results, pushing for ad campaigns and the like. Others, such as Texas's Bill Clements in the late eighties, sat on their hands. While part of the resistance to push JOBS program in some states may have been due to a lack of funds, some of it was more intentional. "Don't underestimate the politics of it all," said one Texas welfare official, referring to the Clements administration. "They knew they could win political capital by keeping a safe distance from any program that smacked of welfare."

But as with Safe Streets, the implementation vacuum starts in Washington and filters down to the local level. National leadership has made little effort to inspire local welfare agencies to make the new plans work, allowing them to fall back on old ways. In Michigan, says Nathan, "Social workers simply did not believe in the idea of the program. That's what implementation is about, changing the mindset of the people, not just at the top but at the local level." Consider the attitude of welfare bureaucracy in New Jersey. Crucial to the success of the 1988 act, policy planners say, is sanctioning welfare recipients who refuse to take job training courses by withholding part of their welfare checks. But, explains Allan Zalkind, a top welfare administrator in Newark, which has one of the largest welfare populations in the nation, "We oppose the mandatory aspect of the act. We don't like to sanction anyone unless we feel it is absolutely necessary. Our job is not to hold the gun to someone's head."

One fallout from the lack of wallet and will has been that JOBS programs in most every state have been limited to helping only those who volunteer to get job training—in other words, those recipients who actively want to get off welfare. (In some states, like Minnesota, it is official policy to serve only those who voluntarily ask for job training.) That's fine for the volunteers, but it doesn't help much in ultimately lowering the number of people receiving benefits. Those who volunteer for assistance in finding a job are often the most ambitious who, with or without JOBS, would have left the dole after a relatively short period. It's the hard-core cases who are at the heart of America's welfare problem, and JOBS has offered little help in moving them off welfare. "Serving mostly volunteers means we are not reaching into the caseload," explains Judith Geuran, president of Manpower Development Research Corporation, a not-for-profit group that specializes in welfare reform. "The law has potential, but we are a long way from making it work."

The promise land

Making the Family Assistance Act or any law work should be just as high a priority as passing it—for Congress, the White House, and especially the federal agencies. Fortunately, there are road maps for this kind of success, especially on the state level. One is Massachusetts's Employment and Training welfare-to-work program. Here Chet Atkins, who headed the state's welfare agency in the eighties, not only played a hands-on role in creating the policy, but once it was designed, took his show out to the field, working with welfare workers across the state to ensure that the plan was accepted and understood. Atkins realized that before he could change the behavior of those receiving aid, he had to change the attitude of those handing it out.

Recognizing the significance of this missing link in American policy may well be the toughest step. Longtime friend of Bill and Hillary, Marion Wright Edelman, sure to be on the "A list" of White House guests, would do well on one of her visits to leave a copy of a speech she gave six years ago at the Kennedy School of Government's commencement ceremonies. There she spoke of the need for change—but not the kind of policy change most closely associated with Clinton's campaign. "Pay attention," she urged the new graduates, "to the nitty gritty steps of implementation. Passing a law or drafting a regulation is the easiest part of the change process. Making it work, informing the public . . . and getting and training sensitive and skilled personnel to administer it is just as crucial." □



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

*Memo
book*

March 26, 1994

To: James Gilliland, General Counsel
From: Joel Berg, Office of Public Affairs *JB*
Subject: Praise for Your Staff

Reiterating our conversation in the cafeteria on Friday, I wanted to formally express my thanks for the prompt and professional help that Ken Cohen and Tom Fox of your office have provided to date to our national service planning efforts.

In particular, I especially appreciated that, during the course of only one workday -- and despite the pressing nature of the rest of their workload -- they reviewed and provided a written opinion on a complex and lengthy Departmental application for a summer program.

I thank you and them in advance for their continued assistance as we approach our April 29 deadline for submitting our year-long application to the Corporation for National and Community Service. The advice they are providing is being used as a model by many other federal agencies with whom we are communicating.

Eli Segal, a Special Assistant to the President and the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, will be briefing you and the rest of the sub-cabinet in your regular meeting on Thursday morning, March 31. Prior to that meeting, I will be sure to inform him of how helpful your office has been in advancing this program, which is a top priority of the President, the Vice-President, and the Secretary.

cc: J. Michael Kelly, Ken Cohen, Tom Fox

Memorandum

March 25, 1993

To: Eloise Thomas
From: Joel Berg JB
Subject: Briefing the Secretary on Eli Segal's Upcoming Visit

I understand that Eli Segal, Special Assistant to the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, will be meeting with the sub-cabinet next Thursday, March 31. I will provide the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary with a detailed briefing paper on the status of our national service activities by COB, Tuesday, March 29.

In addition, given the complexity and newness of the issues involved, it would be helpful to the Secretary if I could orally brief him and/or the Deputy Secretary before the meeting. I would suggest that Ken Cohen, the national service point person in the Office of General Counsel, and that either Stephen Dewhurst or Larry Wachs of the Office of Budget and Program Analysis, also attend the briefing.

Topics would include:

- 1) The Department's follow-up to the Secretary's meeting with Mel Blount.
- 2) The status of our application to obtain funds for the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences.
- 3) The progress we have made in identifying sources of money within USDA and ensuring that we can legally use that money for national service.
- 4) The status of our plans to run anti-hunger, rural development, and environmental programs.

Please let me know if the Secretary and/or the Deputy Secretary would desire such an oral briefing.

cc: Kim Schnoor, Fred Slabach, Charlie Rawls, Joanne Dyakon



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250-1300

memos

March 25, 1993

To: Assistant Secretary Townsend
From: Joel Berg JB
Subject: Eli Segal's Upcoming National Service Meeting With the Sub-Cabinet

Thank you for the invitation to brief your staff. It was a very helpful exchange and we are busy following-up together.

As I may have mentioned, Eli Segal, Special Assistant to the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, will be meeting with the sub-cabinet next Thursday, March 31. You may want to use that opportunity to communicate to Eli how your offices are helping build the administrative infrastructure for our programs.

If you need additional information prior to the meeting with Eli, please have your office call me at 720-6350 or leave a message for me at 720-4623 to let me know how I may be of assistance.

To: Secretary Espy

From: Joel Berg

Date: March 19, 1993

Re: Suggested Event for National Volunteer Week

The White House would like you to do an event on either April 14th or 15th, during National Volunteer Week, to highlight what USDA is doing to promote volunteerism by its employees. The other Cabinet Departments will also be highlighting their volunteer efforts that week.

My suggestion is that you visit the Van Ness School in Southeast Washington on either of those two days. Our Department of Public Liaison, part of the existing Office of Public Affairs, runs a "partners in education" program with the school in which 100 USDA employees volunteer at the school to tutor students, run educational field trips, raise funds to purchase computers, and hold a drive to provide Christmas clothes and toys to each child during the Christmas season.

Memo
Book

March 18, 1994

To: Paula Jones
From: Joel Berg JB
Subject: Georgia AmeriCorps Proposals

I have reviewed the proposals you gave me from Georgia, and most are excellent ideas. However, some of them may not really be applicable to AmeriCorps. The others will need considerable fleshing-out, with specific emphasis on how each proposal would tie into the larger rural development team or public lands and environment team in that area.

Some specific comments:

- 1) **Atlanta urban plant materials project:** This idea has great merit, but we must modify its goal that participants should have a "working knowledge of soils and plants" in order to provide "technical assistance in selecting, evaluating, and propagating plants." Instead, I would suggest that SCS and ES staff provide technical assistance, training, and day-to-day supervision for the work of the younger and less educated environmental team members who would do the actual work. What funding might be available for the project, particularly from the Atlanta Urban Resource Partnership, which the proposal references?
- 2) **Atlanta urban materials project:** Another great idea, but it should be combined together with the above plant material project.
- 3) **Atlanta urban stream monitoring program:** Yet another great idea, but it should be combined with the above two proposals. A environmental team consisting of a socio-economic mix of youth between the ages of 17-25 would perform all the above planting, education, and stream monitoring work under the guidance of USDA professionals.
- 4) and 5) **Two Rivers Wood Products Initiative and Georgia Forest Product Initiative:** Given the raging controversy over protection of the endangered Red Cockheaded Woodpecker, which resides in forests of the Southeast, I would recommend against using AmeriCorps programs to promote increased use of Southeastern forest products. Perhaps these projects could focus instead on finding ways to revitalize the local economies by recycling wood products.

6) Coastal Georgia outreach project: While the ambitious goals of this proposal are certainly commendable, the proposal itself doesn't provide a clear picture of how their program would actually help socially disadvantaged citizens or what the participants in the program would specifically do each day.

7) Appalachian water quality protection, scenic and wildlife habitat protection: In my opinion, this is the best proposal from Georgia. It should be used as a model for similar ideas, and we should figure out how we can create 5 or 10 such positions throughout the Appalachian region as part of our Rural Development Team. Possibly, younger environmental team participants might be able to actually carry out the work planned.

8) Youth Conservation Workshop: This idea would have to be expanded beyond helping to plan a yearly event, and should focus on a wide-range of environmental activities.

9) North Georgia Watershed O&M Evaluation: This sounds the like a good idea, but I would need more information about what kind of work the participants would do and what kind of training and equipment they would need.

10) Oconee River Water Quality: This project is a great idea, but I would need more information on how it would operate.

March 14, 1994

MEMORANDUM

From: Joel Berg

To: Kim Schnoor

Subject: Summer of Service Application Deadline Today

Memorandum
Bowl

As you may recall, in his recent meeting with Eli Segal, Secretary Espy pledged that USDA would meet the application deadline to the Corporation for National and Community Service for proposed Summer of Service projects for the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences and for at-risk youth to work on national forests in Arizona.

Attached are the two draft applications, which are due to the Corporation by 5:00 p.m. today.

Due to circumstances beyond the control of USDA, I was unable to have the applications ready before today. Because of the public safety components of this summer's projects, the Corporation directed me to draft the applications in tandem with the U.S. Department of Justice. Unfortunately, the Department of Justice did not provide the information we required for our joint application until last night at 7:30 p.m. I am concurrently running the applications by Larry Wachs in OPBA and Ken Cohen in OGC for approval.

Both applications propose projects that will be primarily coordinated by non-profit organizations. USDA will not be directly managing either program. Given the attached memorandum from the Office of General Counsel, both OGC and OPBA are likely to approve the applications.

Neither application commits USDA to any significant direct financial expenditure. The Chicago application commits only \$10,000 in direct USDA funding. SCS has volunteered \$5,000 in direct funding to the project, while ES and FS have volunteered \$2,500 each. Since these expenditures represent such a minute percentage of each of those agencies' budgets, it is impossible to quantify any other projects that might not be completed as a result of this commitment. The Chicago application also commits SCS, ASCS, and the FS to each provide, as in-kind contributions, one employee for an 11 week detail. The Arizona application commits use of Forest Service facilities and personnel to supervise conservation work. All the agencies involved have approved these applications.

Once OGC and OBPA review and approve the applications, I will make any changes they may request and then submit them to you for final approval. I thank you in advance for helping out in these adverse circumstances so we can meet the application deadline.

Fortunately, the application deadline for the year-round national service program has been extended to April 29, so I will be able to get you final applications for those programs with considerably longer lead time.



MAR 11 1994

*Memo
from
Joel*

MEMORANDUM

To: Kim
From: Joel

FROM: FYI, preliminary memo from OGC on our national service initiatives. We will shortly be able to ask OGC to review all our proposed uses of appropriations on a case-by-case basis.

SUBJECT: *- Joel*

On March 7, 1994, the Corporation for National and Community Service. The Corporation is charged by Congress with administering the National and Community Trust Act of 1993, Pub. L. No. 103-82, 107 Stat. 785. (References are to Subtitle C, Part I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended.) Accordingly, courts will be deferential to the Corporation interpretation of the Act.

Based on our discussion with Mr. Russell, we reached the following conclusions:

1. USDA may receive assistance from the Corporation. (section 121(b)(1), 107 Stat. 788).
2. The Act confers upon USDA the authority, if it receives Corporation assistance under section 121, to conduct national service programs or to enter into contracts or cooperative agreements. While USDA is not fettered in the type of entity that may receive assistance from USDA, existing national service programs should under section 121(b)(4) be considered.
3. If USDA receives assistance under section 121, then USDA is authorized and required to pay stipends, health care, and child care. (Sections 140(a), (d), and (e), 107 Stat. 811-813).
4. USDA has no general authority to provide national service educational awards directly and it may not provide funds to the Trust for such purpose.

We also concluded that it is possible for USDA to conduct to some degree national service programs without section 121 assistance, but the extent of such programs would have to be



MAR 11 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR JOEL BERG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

FROM: Kenneth E. Cohen 
Assistant General Counsel
Research and Operations Division

SUBJECT: National Service Projects

This memorandum summarizes the conclusions of our March 7, 1994, meeting with Terry Russell, Acting General Counsel, Corporation for National and Community Service. The Corporation is charged by Congress with administering the National and Community Trust Act of 1993, Pub. L. No. 103-82, 107 Stat. 785. (References are to Subtitle C, Part I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended.) Accordingly, courts will be deferential to the Corporation interpretation of the Act.

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4. USDA has no general authority to provide national service educational awards directly and it may not provide funds to the Trust for such purpose.

We also concluded that it is possible for USDA to conduct to some degree national service programs without section 121 assistance, but the extent of such programs would have to be

reviewed case-by-case. Receiving assistance under section 121 confers considerable authority on USDA under the Act that we otherwise would not enjoy generally. No minimum amount of assistance from the Corporation is required to trigger section 121.

Finally, I cautioned that any financing mechanisms used within USDA should assure that agency appropriations are not augmented unlawfully.



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

*Memo
book
(from
Joel)*

March 10, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS AND OFFICE HEADS

FROM: JOEL BERG, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS *JB*

SUBJECT: NATIONAL SERVICE BUDGET DEADLINE

In the past two months I have had the opportunity to meet with each of you personally to discuss how your organizations might participate in the Secretary's national service program. In many cases, myself and my staff followed-up in lengthy discussions with members of your staff. We are now at the point where we must immediately move these proposals through OBPA and OGC to obtain final approval. Please have your staff review the attached list of projects and identify the specific appropriation(s) that could be used to fund the Department's portion of the project.

As Ron Blackley pointed out in his January 10, 1994 memorandum requesting this information, national service is one of President Clinton's top priorities. Secretary Espy is dedicated to ensuring that USDA runs high-quality anti-hunger, rural development, and environmental programs as part of this initiative.

To meet our deadline for submitting the Department's application to the Corporation for Community and National Service, **I must have your responses by COB tomorrow, March 11, 1994.**

By March 15, 1994, we will need specific guidance on how much money out of those identified appropriations can be earmarked by your agency for FY95 national service projects. We will also need you to specifically identify what types of other projects now planned by your agency might **not** be funded if such national service projects were funded.

I will be available to answer any questions your staff may have. I can be reached at 720-4623.

Rural Development Administration

Potential national service tasks:

The Rural Development Team would establish regional clusters of "professional" and "paraprofessional" participants who could assist communities in identifying needs and resources necessary for economic well-being. The participants would have diverse education and training and would be matched up with individual communities or regions that have specific needs that can be filled by someone with that specific background. Individuals will be placed in communities where their particular talents can be best utilized. Experts in connecting rural homes to municipal water systems will be matched up to areas with that need. Experts in tourism will be matched up with communities that want to develop their tourism. Experts in sustainable agriculture will be matched up with groups of farmers who need technical assistance in that area. Experts in grant writing will be matched up with communities that need grant writing. Experts in attracting small businesses will be matched up with communities that want to attract more small business. Experts in watershed protection will be matched up with areas that need such help. Experts in farm and rural safety can be matched up to regions that need help on those issues. General planners would also be matched up with communities that need to develop overall economic plans.

Potential national service budget sources:

(Followed by FY94 budget, in millions of dollars, and explanatory notes)

Water and Waste Disposal Grants

Provides funds for grants to public and quasi-public, and nonprofit associations, and to certain Indian tribes for the development, storage, treatment, purification, and distribution of water or the collection, treatment, or disposal of waste in rural areas.

500.000

Rural Business Enterprise Grants

Provides funds for grants to finance and facilitate development of small and emerging private business enterprises in rural areas or cities of up to 50,000 population.

42.500



March 4, 1994

Joel Berg
USDA Office of Public Liaison
Room 213-A
14th and Independence, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Berg:

Re: Rural Development Corps Proposal and Training Design

It was a pleasure to meet you two weeks ago when I was visiting Washington DC. I appreciated your willingness to share the draft proposal to Americorps with me. As a rural development expert and a former Peace Corps volunteer, I am most pleased that USDA has decided to take the lead in designing a Rural Development Team that might function in a technical capacity to promote community development in the United States. You requested I give you some ideas on how to organize a training program for participants and an outline is attached.

Training Concerns

Given the broad range of subject matter expertise you expect to see among the Rural Development Team participants, it will be difficult to tailor a training program to meet each subject area's needs, until the program has grown large enough to sustain a critical mass of participants in each area. For example in Peace Corps, central staff supervision and training are broken down along subject area lines (agriculture, health, education, etc.). As you start with pilots you might consider focusing on a few subject areas (say water quality, small business, regional planning) so that you can provide some depth of backstopping expertise and enhance opportunities for interaction among Corps members.

I discussed your training needs with several colleagues and one recommendation was to have participants visit their sites early and then come to training so they could be clearer on what skills they needed. It would also be useful to consider inviting the Corp's local counterpart to participate in a few days or a week of the training. This would help build a sense of team effort across the program and provide local counterparts (who will be the permanent players) access to training and resources they may need as well.

The program outlined in the attachment could be done by Cornell or a consortium of land grant universities. Different schools have different strengths. It would be nice to strengthen the relationship between land grants, USDA agencies and community based organizations and a collaborative training effort would help achieve that goal. Land grants also represent an accessible resource (by mandate) to rural communities.

Other Issues

I have taken the liberty of sharing a few other comments on the rest of the proposal which extend beyond the training issue. I hope you don't mind my sharing them with you.

One goal is permanent hire by local communities you might wish to encourage communities to nominate local residents. This would enhance the acceptability of the Corps member in the community and enhance the potential permanence of the position. However experience from public sector job creation in the 1970s points to rural community inability to continue these positions once Federal support

expired. I'm sure you are also aware that many rural communities are characterized by nepotism which will be an issue if local residents go for Corps positions. I would avoid inundating any single rural community with too many Corps participants.

I was pleased that the proposal acknowledged the need to enhance the social infrastructure of rural communities. I would encourage you to focus Corps members role as that of catalyst, change agent, process facilitator more than technical expert in a particular subject area. The relevant technical expertise may reside in or near a rural community but what is missing is someone to motivate the community to move on an issue. This in fact will be a problem with the community application process. Only those most able to apply will do so. But then they may be the communities most able to make good use of a Corps member. In fact, you may wish to select communities based on their readiness rather than on their size. Avoid rigid definitions of what is rural - its a slippery area and I would let communities make their own case for whether they are rural or not. In fact, some of the most interesting issues today occur in communities where the link between urban and rural is shifting.

On supervision, you probably could have the State RDAs do it but you may find that you want someone to link all Corps members in a particular subject or geographic area together (eg the Peace Corps model given above). Local supervision should be by the local counterpart.

On evaluation, Cornell has a strong team which has developed models for participatory evaluation. Including recipient communities and Corps members themselves in the design and implementation of the evaluation process would be a nice way to build a self critical element into the program and build ownership and support for the program over the long term. This could be built into the inservice trainings as a key component.

I can not resist sharing two comments from our EFNEP coordinator on the structure of the Empowerment, Nutrition and Anti-Hunger Team. First she noted that Cornell has developed a training curricula for EFNEP para professionals which is now used by several states. That might be a ready-made training program for you to use as well.

Second, she suggested that one of the reasons for EFNEP's success is that it focuses on nutrition only. While EFNEP participants become empowered to address broader community development issues, the EFNEP paraprofessionals support but do not lead the charge into these other areas. Of all the community action programs started in the War on Poverty, EFNEP still survives. It is the only one built with strong links to the land grant university and research has continuously been incorporated into EFNEP program design. Locally it is linked to an existing infrastructure, Cooperative Extension, which is less challenging to the local power structure than community action agencies. Finally, participation in the program has always been voluntary. While Cooperative Extension is not known for its efforts in dealing with diversity, EFNEP has been one program where diversity goals have been reached.

Overall the proposal repeatedly mentions how to build long term political support for each of the Corps programs. Reagan's appointee to Peace Corps convinced him to invest in Peace Corps by saying that it was a force against communism and for American goodwill abroad. She deemphasized the program's social change/social justice aspects. You appear to be following similar logic in the design of the Corps proposal. Domestically the lessons from EFNEP above may be instructive as well.

I really appreciate your sharing the proposal with me. I am tremendously excited by the possibility of a Rural Development Team. This would be a great

From: Comm & Rur Dev Inst-CaRDI at ☎ 607.255.9984
To: Joel Berg at ☎ 202-720-5043

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opportunity for students and communities alike. Although I recognize the importance of targeting, I hope you will allow the program to reach beyond those few lucky communities to be selected as empowerment zones or empowerment communities. A lot of communities around the nation are ready to move and a Corps member could be just the catalyst needed.

If I can be of further assistance, don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Mildred Warner
Associate Director

Mildred Warner,
Cornell University

Training the Rural Development Team
Overview

As a land-grant college committed to a broad extension mission, Cornell's training strengths build on three critical resources:

Faculty who have worked closely with and trained community educators, creating a team that has facilitated and implemented community action programs.

Community educators--part of Cornell's extensive Cooperative Extension system--whose experiences and insights will be an integral part of a community service training program.

An existing and effective framework for interdisciplinary community training. This is part of Cornell's commitment to a Masters of Professional Studies in Community and Rural Development, reflecting a strong faculty commitment to addressing real community problems that defy the boundaries of academic disciplines.

These provide the foundation for a program that will focus on both general community development processes and on developing or strengthening more specific technical and community skills.

All Rural Development Team participants--whether technical or non-technical--face a common challenge. Their work will require understanding and facilitating essential community processes: assisting communities in identifying, articulating, and attaining a community vision, addressing community conflicts revealed in the visioning process, and in decision-making around allocation of community resources, developing community leadership, etc. A training program designed for all participants will therefore focus on community process--something that even technical experts must master--as the "core curriculum."

Weeks I and II of the training are therefore devoted to this "core curriculum," strengthening trainees' understanding of community development issues and their skills for facilitating community processes.

Weeks III and IV of the training are more focused and flexible, providing field experiences that strengthen understandings of both community process issues and technical areas.

Much of the Rural Development Team's work will require expertise in specific but diverse technical areas: water systems, grant writing, tourism and sustainable agriculture are some examples mentioned in the USDA overview (p.4). These technical areas build on previously established trainee-expertise. Training needs are therefore varied, and this informs the training program: Trainees' individual needs will be assessed with reference to the specific needs of their designated community service-areas. Trainees will then be linked with two mentors--Cornell faculty and Cooperative Extension master practitioners--for intensive field experiences that focus on essential issues and skills. Week IV will include final classroom work that assists participants in integrating these experiences and perspectives.

Week I-Understanding the Critical Issues in Rural Development

As trainees review community development, three issues are critical to their

Understanding: economic growth, decision-making processes in local governments and the impact of governmental decisions on rural communities. Reinforcing their understanding in these areas is critical to the process-oriented work that provides the focus for week two.

economic development

Politics and Economics of Rural and Development
Local Economic Development Policy
Agriculture and Rural Development
Industrial Restructuring and Local Policy
Entrepreneurship, Enterprise and Business Policy

local government organization, operations and policy analysis
Intergovernmental Systems
Economics of the Public Sector
Human Service Politics in the Community
Power and Empowerment in Human Services
Evaluation of Public Policies
Strategies for Policy and Program Evaluation

Week II-Understanding and Mastering the Community Empowerment Processes

Development team participants must transform their understandings into individual and community action. Week two builds the foundations for fostering community empowerment and developing community leadership.

community-based development

Community Decision Making
Community Education and Development
Community Development and Local Control

developing skills in community mobilization
Communication for Social Change
Communication Planning and Strategy
Conflict Resolution in Community and Environment

Weeks III and IV--Issue and Experiential Learning in Community Development

Field experiences with practitioners and work with faculty mentors can focus on both specific technical areas and community process issues. Examples of potential focus areas and the resources available in these areas:

Water Quality - Cornell has designed a rural water quality and well safety program which has won national recognition as an innovative extension program. We have strong expertise in technical aspects of groundwater hydrology as well as the community planning aspect of watershed management.

Community Empowerment--The Cornell Empowerment Group is nationally recognized as a leader in training for community empowerment particularly in the education and human service sectors. This work has helped reorient state and national policy toward a more client centered holistic approach.

Economic Development--Cornell has an entrepreneurship training program, and a community planning based Business Retention and Expansion program which uses local economic development types to survey local businesses, determine their needs and organize the community to meet them. This is a very successful

From: Comm & Rur Dev Inst-CaRDI at ☎ 607.255.9984
To: Joel Berg'at ☎ 202-720-5043

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community development approach to counter the unsuccessful industrial recruitment efforts of the past.

Nutrition--Cornell has been supporting the first effort in the nation at use of local professionals to analyze local hunger statistics and plan appropriate interventions and local policy changes. This nutrition surveillance is being touted across the nation as an appropriate means to assist communities to get a handle on their hunger problems and select the most effective interventions.

Community Planning-- from Landscape architecture to Main Street Revitalization to economic planning, Cornell has faculty expertise with field experience in using planning to help communities deal with practical problems. We are also supporting multi-county rural alliances to promote cooperative planning and action in rural areas of the State.

As you can see from the above, ample expertise of both a technical and a practical nature is available at Cornell to assist Rural Development Team members in individual or small group settings to explore the technical dimensions of their work assignments.

→

To: Secretary Espy
From: Joel Berg
Date: March 1, 1993

*Memo
From*

RE: Draft Language on National Service for Your Howard University Speech
(For possible expansion of Mike Alexander's text)

Permit me to talk for a few moments about creating a new definition of citizenship for African-Americans, and how a voluntary program of national service can help build that new definition.

The history of America is a history of dual realities. The first reality is that of a fledgling yet powerful democracy dedicated to eventually endowing all its citizens with equal rights and equal opportunities. In this reality, all Americans banded together for a common purpose. They built schools together, put out fires together, founded new communities, discovered startling new inventions together, and even fought wars together.

This common purpose of Americans awed the world. Wrote Alexis De Tocqueville, a Frenchman who traveled throughout America in the beginning of the 19th Century, "I have often admired the extreme skills with which the inhabitants of the United States succeed in proposing a common object for the exertions of sa great many men and inducing them voluntarily to pursue it."

This reality has always been the strength of America.

But there has always been another reality of America -- the reality of exclusion - and that reality has always been the nation's greatest failure. In this reality, the nation constantly has had to have been prodded, guilted, nudged, and ultimately forced into living up to its own democratic rhetoric.

In this reality, on the very day that the Bill of Rights became the law of the land in 1789, the vast majority of Americans couldn't vote and couldn't enjoy most of the rights guaranteed by the first ten amendments. Women couldn't vote. African-Americans throughout most of the country couldn't vote. Non-landowners couldn't vote.

This reality tolerated slavery, approved of husbands beating wives, looked the other way when whole tribes of native Americans were wiped off the face of the earth, exonerated lynchers, turned-back boatloads of Jews escaping the Nazis, and interned Japanese-Americans in squalid camps.

"People say to me, Well can you afford this program, and what if 250,000, what if 500,000, what if a million young people do this?" Well, if you think about it, think what we're paying now for the failure of this present society, think what we're paying now for all the young people who drop out of school, who have children when they're children, who get involved in drugs, who wind up in prisons, who can't work and draw welfare or food stamps or unemployment or who wind up in homeless shelters, you think what it costs us now to do that."

The President is already right. This society is already paying a high cost indeed. The question is whether we will continue to fund failure or whether we will begin to pay for success.

Democrats:

Means Test

ROTC

Service-Learning

ACTION

Republicans : Paid volunteers



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

TO: -----THOSE INTERESTED IN USDA/NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAM -----

FAX: -----

FROM: JOEL BERG/KATHERINE GIBNEY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF NATIONAL SERVICE
202 720-5043 (fax)
202 720-4623 (telephone)

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER SHEET 4

MESSAGE: I AM ATTACHING INFORMATION ON TWO PLANNED VISITS TO LOCAL SERVICE CORPS BEING ORGANIZED BY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SERVICE & CONSERVATION CORPS (NASCC). IF YOU PLAN ON ATTENDING, RSVP TO THE PERSON SPECIFIED BY NASCC. ALSO ATTACHED ARE TWO PAGES WITH A MAP OF DIRECTIONS TO BOTH SITES.



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

March 2, 1994

To: Mark Mulugeta, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation
From: Joel Berg, Office of Public Affairs *JB*
Subject: **Possible FCIC National Service Projects**

President Clinton's national service initiative --- now known as AmeriCorps -- will fund programs around the country in which Americans will perform at least a year of full-time community service in exchange for significant educational benefits.

Participants will earn small living stipends while performing work that addresses unmet human, environmental, educational, and public safety needs. For each year of service successfully performed, participants will also earn an educational voucher of \$4,725, which they may use to pay for college, vocational school, job training, or graduate school. USDA will be running a rural development team, an anti-hunger and empowerment team, and a public lands and the environment team.

In both rural development and environmental projects, participants could engage in outreach to help farmers understand the new provisions of our crop insurance programs.

I look forward to discussing this matter with you tomorrow to discuss how projects might be funded and managed.

DRAFT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 2, 1993

CONTACT: Joel Berg
(202) 720-4623

NATIONAL SERVICE IS AMERICA AT ITS BEST, SAYS SECRETARY ESPY

Washington, DC -- In a speech today to Howard University's Charter Day Convocation, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced that President Clinton's National Service plan is America at it's best - building community, offering opportunity and rewarding responsibility. Espy, who as a Congressman was a co-sponsor of the National and Community Service Bill of 1989, has long been a supporter of voluntary national service.

"The President's plan will take us down a new road. To be sure, this road is also rocky. It's also steep. When we take that path, it might be difficult for the first few miles. We have to tighten our belts. But this road will take us where we want to go, a road we can now travel together, and most importantly, it is a road that will help us build for our future rather than borrow from our future," said Secretary Espy.

"The President's call to national service is rooted in the concept of community. It's rooted in the view that when we come together, and work together, we can solve our problems, and make our country better. It's rooted in the ideal that each of us has an obligation to serve - that service is the rent we pay for the time we are allotted on earth. Just as past generations of youth met the challenge of civil rights at home, and human rights abroad - today's generation of students must have the opportunity to meet the needs of our communities today."

"Years ago at Howard, there was a project called HUMP - Howard University Mississippi Project. Students in HUMP went down to Mississippi to help teach people how to vote and to help teach people how to read. Of course a few years before HUMP, in 1964 hundreds of students from throughout the north came to Mississippi to participate in Freedom Summer. Most of those students were white - but they came to Mississippi to do what was right. They came, and three of them even gave their lives, so that Black Mississippians could have the right to vote. They were young, and they were idealistic - and they had a vision of what Mississippi could be, and what America could be. They had a higher purpose beyond their own individual comfort or desires. And that's the spirit the President wants to rekindle with his proposal for voluntary national service."

DRAFT

Speech to Howard University
69th Annual Convocation
Mike Espy, Secretary of Agriculture
March 2, 1993

Introduction:

To our President, Dr. Franklin Jennifer, to Chairman of our Board of Trustees Dr. Wayman Smith, to the other Board Members, to our distinguished faculty, alumni, and the many friends of Howard University: thank you for inviting me to this 69th Annual Charter Day Convocation.

It is always a great privilege, a special honor, and just plain fun for me to come to Howard University.

Howard is home. And the faculty, alumni, and friends of Howard are an important part of my extended family. So I want to thank you for welcoming me home.

Roots at Howard

Everytime I come to Howard, I am reminded of just how fast time flies. It's hard to believe that next year, 1994, will mark the twentieth reunion of one of the most illustrious, one of the most accomplished, and I must say one of the most celebrated classes in Howard's history, a class that has produced talented and dedicated professionals in many fields of endeavor: the class of 1974.

Two years from now my class, the class of 75, will celebrate its twentieth reunion.

One of the best things about being a Howardite is that it really doesn't matter what class you belong to. The esteemed Justice Thurgood Marshall was in the class of 1933. Patricia Roberts Harris, another distinguished Howard alumni was in the class of 1945. Governor Wilder of Virginia was in the class of 1959. The acclaimed opera star, Jesse Norman, was in the class of 1967.

I could go on and on. But the point is that for 126 years, Howard University has been graduating students who gone on to personify the contributions this unique institution has made, and continues to make, to our nation and to the world.

For over one and a quarter centuries Howard has molded the minds of leaders in all walks of life. It has shaped the character of leaders whose mission has been, and continues to be, to lift up a race, but even more, to lift up a nation.

I stand here today as just one in a long succession of Howard graduates who have left this institution armed with the knowledge, inspired with a vision, and motivated by the simple yet powerful ideal: to go into this world and just try to do some good.

So I want to thank Howard, and the Howard family, for all that you have done and continue to do for our country, but also for all that you have done for me.

Journey not alone

Twenty two years ago, when I came to Howard from Yazoo City, Mississippi, I never dreamed that I would come back to Howard, first as a Congressman, and then as the Secretary of Agriculture.

It has been a long journey for me to get from there to here - but I have not traveled this road alone, and I did not get here on my own.

My appointment as Secretary of Agriculture is not just a personal accomplishment for Mike Espy. Rather, it is a victory for Fannie Lou Hamer, who left the cotton fields of Mississippi almost thirty years ago and challenged the Democratic Party to break down the walls of segregation, because she was sick and tired of being sick and tired.

It is a victory for Medgar Evers, the leader of Mississippi's NAACP who was assassinated thirty years ago this June.

It is a victory for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, and for the countless thousands who toiled, who bled, and who died so that a son of the Mississippi Delta, where cotton is king, could one day lead the Department which oversees billions of dollars worth of programs for cotton.

Because of their sacrifices, I have the opportunity to lead a Department with a \$62 billion dollar budget/ with 112,000 employees and 14,000 offices in the United States and around the world.

I'm here because so many others were willing to till the soil, and plant the seeds, even though they knew that they would not be the ones to pick the fruit.

I have unprecedented opportunities available to me, and most of you have unprecedented opportunities available to you, because the generation before gave of themselves so that we, as a people, and we, as a nation, might do better.

That is really the kind of spirit our country must have if we are going to change the destructive and divisive course we have been on for the last twelve years.

And that's what I want to talk about today.

The past twelve years

For twelve long years, selfishness has been in, and selflessness has been out out.

For twelve long years, record incomes and multi-million dollar salaries were paid to a few at the top, while the bottom was allowed to fall out from under the many.

For twelve long years, we've had administrations more concerned about those who are motivated by greed, and less concerned about those in our country who are really in need.

Civil rights at USDA

For twelve long years under two Republican Administrations we've seen decades of progress in civil rights run into a red stop sign, and even be reversed, while discrimination and renewed racism were given the green light.

At USDA, it has really been like taking a cap off of a steaming radiator.

You can really see what has happened when an administration is hostile to civil rights. It means there will be less opportunity for minorities, in the public sector and the private sector. It means there will be a bureaucracy which is hostile to those who even dare file civil rights complaints. It means that when it comes to equal opportunity, most departments are members of N.A.T.O. - No Action, Talk Only.

The other day, I met with the President's of the 1890 institutions. There has been a lot of progress in their relationship with USDA. But they still receive the short end of the stick. I guarantee that it will be longer now.

Other changes over last twelve years

While racism has been on the rise, our standard of living has gone down.

During the past twelve years, our country has gone from the world's largest creditor nation, to being the world's biggest debtor. We were once first in the world in wages - now we are thirteenth. 35 million Americans cannot afford to see a doctor when they are sick. 9 million Americans cannot find a job, even though the recession is supposed to be over.

Ours is now a nation, where over half of African-American children live in poverty, a nation where for every four black men at Howard or other colleges, there are ten in prison or otherwise under the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system.

We've become a nation where many black youth actually prefer jail to freedom, because they are assured of a warm place to sleep, a hot meal, and an environment where at least they don't have to worry about drive by shootings.

What's more, for the past twelve years we've had an administration in Washington that simply did not care.

Well, I'm here to tell you that those days are done. Luther Van Dross has another song where he says "you've done me wrong - but it's over now!" And it is.

New administration, new priorities

President Clinton has charted a new course - 180 degrees opposite from the one we've been on.

A couple of weeks ago, President Clinton called on our country to have the courage to change. He presented a plan for economic renewal, and issued a challenge to America. Simply put, he challenged us, in the spirit of President John Kennedy, "to ask not what our country can do for us, but to ask what we can do for our country."

He asked us to put our individual wants and desires on the shelf, for a moment, and focus on what is good for us all. The President is calling upon us to plant some seeds today - so that we can have more fruit to pick tomorrow.

His economic plan is designed to start digging us out of the hole we've dug ourselves into over the last twelve years, to put us on a new course, and take us down another road.

When I think about where we are today, I'm reminded of some wisdom shared by that great philosopher Yoggi Berra. Yoggi said, "when you come to a fork in the road, take it".

Nation at a fork in the road

That fork in the road is where our nation is at today.

On one side, there is a path called the status quo, the same ole way, just getting by, and a lot of us want to stay on that path because it looks comfortable. It's a well worn path, so we start walking down that path. But as we walk further, we find out that the incline becomes steeper and it's harder to walk.

Our legs become heavy. We start having difficulty breathing. This incredible debt that our country has built up over the last twelve years is like that too because it shrinks the pool of savings that we have to invest in the real, jobs producing economy. It's a path that basically borrows from the future, rather than build for the future, and it ensures that our children will be worse off than we are.

If we keep on this same path, this proud nation is headed for bankruptcy - like some of the Third World countries, or Latin American countries. If we keep moving along, some economists predict we could face a hyperinflation, like Weimar Germany - an inflation that helped give rise to Adolf Hitler.

If we keep on the same path, by the year 2000 our deficit will be thirty three times what it was in 1980 - and all of the dollars we could collect in income tax would not be enough to just pay the interest on the debt.

Already, we pay close to \$250 billion in interest on a debt of \$4.1 trillion. That's money our nation cannot use for scholarships. It's money we cannot use for Head Start. It's money that goes to those wealthy enough to buy Treasury bonds on Wall Street - while more and more Americans are losing out on Main Street.

The path we've been on for the past twelve years is a path to financial ruin and even more economic decay for America - and I don't have to tell anyone here what will mean for African-Americans.

Clinton's plan takes us down the other road

The President's plan will take us down the other fork. To be sure, this road is also rocky. It's also steep. When we take that path, it might be difficult for the first few miles. We have to tighten our belts. But this is a road that will take us where we want to go, a road we can travel together, and most importantly, it is a road that will help us build for our future rather than borrow from our future.

We really have to do three things at once: We have to give the economic recovery a boost/ we have to reduce the deficit, and we have to invest for long term economic growth.

The stimulus portion of the plan is \$30 billion and it will create 500,000 to 700,000 jobs in the near future. New economic growth numbers say that the Gross Domestic Product expanded at a rate of 4.8% in the fourth quarter. That's good news - but now some are saying a stimulus is not needed.

But tell that to the 14% of African-Americans who are out of work. Tell that to the nine million Americans who are out of work. Tell that to the people being laid off at IBM, at Sears, at Boeing and other companies. We need a stimulus to put some teeth into what has really been a toothless recovery.

Second - deficit reduction

Secondly, we have to have real deficit reduction. We have proposed 150 real cuts in spending, and some revenue increases, to reduce the deficit by \$350 over the next four years, while at the same time reducing the deficit at a percent of gross national product from 5.4% to 2.7%.

Some of the programs on the chopping block are held sacred by the Department of Agriculture. But the overall package will trade some short term pain for long term gain.

Long term investments

Lastly, we have to make those long term investments that our nation has neglected during the last twelve years where the credo was if we can't see the profit in it immediately, let's not worry about investing in it.

We have to take the different road.

That road means we must invest in our infrastructure - as our economic competitors have done - and this plan does that.

It means investing in a healthy environment in a way which creates jobs and ensures that there is a better future for our children - this plan does that.

It means making capital available to those who are idea rich but capital poor - and by creating and financing community development banks - this plan does that.

Health care

On this new road, we will reform the health care system - so that no American is left without access to doctor. We will invest \$8.2 billion over four years in research for AIDs, in women's health issues, in the President's plan to immunize all of our children, and in teen pregnancy programs to help break the cycle of babies having babies.

WIC and Head Start

A different road means we can no longer be indifferent to financing programs like WIC and Head Start - programs which have proven to be successful in helping poor children out of poverty. This plan invests an additional \$8 billion in Head Start over four years, for full funding by 1999. It invests \$2.6 billion in WIC so that by the end of 1996 all eligible one to four year olds will be served.

Summer jobs program

A different road means we can no longer be indifferent to the plight of our youth - and this plan will invest \$2 billion over four years to finance 2 million additional summer jobs. It will provide \$1.2 billion over four years to finance school and work based apprenticeship programs for high school students who do not plan to go to college.

Working poor and welfare

This plan takes a different approach towards the working poor. Its premise is that no one who works full time should have to raise a family in poverty - so it increased funding for the earned income tax credit by \$20 billion over four years to lift working families out of poverty.

We also will have a different approach to welfare. We will invest in the education and training people on welfare need, we will invest in microenterprise programs that allow those on welfare to develop their skills and start their own businesses.

But we will also end welfare as a way of life, stop penalizing people on welfare for trying to do better, and require that they work, in private sector, or the public sector if need be.

On the old road, welfare recipients would be penalized if they tried to put away anything for the future. If the children work and to save money so they have a chance to go to college the parents could be convicted of welfare fraud.

On the new road, we will encourage them to save, and to accumulate the assets they need to break the cycle of poverty.

Good for African-Americans

All of these investments are good for America, and they are doubly good for African-Americans. They are good because, as Jesse Jackson said, to save African-Americans, you will have to save America.

They will help restore long term growth to our economy, and create new opportunities for millions who are now locked out of the economic mainstream. While the last twelve years the jelly has been on the top shelf, high up, so only a few could reach it, this plan will move the jelly down, so that many more people can reach it.

HUMP Precursor of National Service

That other road also means we have to once again motivate our young people in the spirit of public-service. That's what the voluntary National Service plan the President announced yesterday will do.

Years ago at Howard, I remember a project called HUMP. HUMP was the Howard University Mississippi Project. Students in HUMP went down to Mississippi to help teach people how to vote/ to help teach people how to read - and I believe they would receive some form of course credit.

Of course, a few years before HUMP, in 1964 hundreds of students from throughout the north came to Mississippi participate in Freedom Summer. Most of those students were white - but they came to Mississippi to do what was right. They came, and three of them even gave their lives, so that Black Mississippians could have the right to vote.

They were young, and they were idealistic - and they had a vision of what Mississippi could be, and what America could be. They had a higher purpose beyond their own individual comfort or desires.

National Service Proposal

And that's the spirit the President wants to rekindle with his proposal for voluntary national service.

The plan really has two parts. First, it will enable young people to pay back their student loans as a small percentage of income over time.

Secondly, young people will be able to serve as teachers in schools where kids need extra help. They will be able to serve in clinics where people need medical care. They will be able to serve in environmental corps, recycling waste and stopping pollution. They will be able to serve in community police patrols, rather than gangs.

In return for their service, the government will help finance their education.

Some are critical of this approach. Some are worried that African-Americans will be lost in a system of national service. Some argue that higher education should be free, that education is a right- that it should be a birthright for every American. They say no American should have to work for it.

Critics miss the point

But I think the critics miss the point. The President's call to national service is rooted in the concept of community. It's rooted in the view that when we come together, and work together, we can solve our problems, and make our country better. It's rooted in the ideal that each of us has an obligation to serve - that service is the rent we pay for the time we are allotted on earth.

Just as past generations of youth met the challenge of civil rights at home, and human rights abroad - today's generation of students too, must have the opportunity to meet the needs of our communities today. As the President said yesterday, national service will be America at its best - building community, offering opportunity, and rewarding responsibility.

Dr. King and Fannie Lou Hamer and so many others taught us - a successful life is not measured by simply by how much money is in your pocket - but by how much love is in your heart. Success is not measured by what kind of car you drive - but by what kind of drive is within you. It really isn't about how much you can get - it's about how much of yourself you are willing to give.

As Dr. King said, life's most urgent question is "what are you doing for others."

Conclusion

In conclusion, let me just say that when I walk into that big office at USDA, I try and remember each and every day how I got there.

If Dr. King and so many others had not met the challenges of thirty years ago, I would not have the privilege of standing here as Secretary of Agriculture.

I am here, and many of you are where you are, because he and so many others had spirit of service, the spirit of sacrifice, to make America better.

And that's the spirit our country must have today.

It is the spirit that moved an old woman in Mississippi to send me a \$2 dollar check she received for picking up cans - during my first campaign for Congress.

Page 10.

It is the spirit that moved Howard students to go to Mississippi twenty years ago - and a spirit that moved thousands of students to go during Freedom summer.

What we have to rekindle is the spirit of service - to Howard, to our communities, and most of all, to our country.

I assure you, we will all go much further, if we take that fork in the road.

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February

Divider Title: _____

February 28, 1994

To: Kim Schnoor
From: Joel Berg JB
Subject: Meeting with Stephen Dewhurst

I will be meeting with Stephen Dewhurst on Tuesday, March 1, at 2:15 in his office, room 101-A, to discuss USDA national service initiatives. If you have time, it would be helpful if you could join us.

To: Secretary Espy

From: Joel Berg

Date: February 26, 1993

Re: Suggested National Service Event for Monday

This Monday, on the 32nd anniversary of the founding of the Peace Corps, President Clinton will be announcing the details of his national service plan in a speech at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

The White House has asked that each cabinet member do an event to promote the plan. Since the First Lady will be doing an event in Washington, the White House would prefer you to do an event outside the DC media market. The next closest major market is Baltimore.

I suggest that you visit City Works, a model national service program just founded by Kathleen Kennedy Townsend. City Works is a program that brings together mostly disadvantaged youth to perform community service while receiving educational and job training benefits. It has been praised by Eli Segal, head of the White House Office of National Service, and provides a model for a type of service program likely to be included in the Clinton plan.

I suggest you visit a site where service is being performed and speak with a few of the youth. You could make general points in support of the Clinton national service plan. If you wish, you could also describe options for how USDA might participate in national service.

You could arrive at City Works in Baltimore at 11:30 a.m. and spend 30-45 minutes at the event. You would then have an approximately one hour return car ride to prepare for your Sparks Commodities speech.

February 24, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: KIM SCHNOOR

FROM: JOEL BERG JB

This is a follow-up to my memo of last week in which I requested a meeting with you and the Office of the General Counsel and recommending the detail of personnel from the agencies to support the national service effort. While I have already met with Jim Gilliland to explain that this initiative is a priority for the President's and important to the Secretary, I need your help in conveying that same message to OBPA.

In light of our previous discussions and my meeting with Fred Slabach, I have a few national service issues that I would like to discuss with you at your earliest convenience. Based on our discussions with the Secretary, yourself, Under and Assistant Secretaries and agency administrators, there appears to be a genuine enthusiasm for USDA to participate in the national service program. However, as you have pointed out, we must be absolutely certain that our efforts are consistent with all laws, regulations, and policies that govern the Department's performance of its duties and the expenditure of its funds.

To do that I would like to solicit your assistance in getting OGC and OBPA to focus on the central issues such as appropriate use of agency funds, funding for the Department's staff that will coordinate the efforts, and placement of the national service program concept within the Department's overall budget process. I feel that we are at the point where I can present specific projects and issues that should provide answers that are applicable to a wide range of projects. If you and I can meet with OGC and OBPA and frame our concerns within the context of this core set of projects, I think we will have provided them sufficient information to give us the concrete answers we need.

Since our application must be completed by April 15, 1994, there is a need to get together as quickly as possible. I will be calling you later today to get your thoughts on this approach and to see when we can schedule our meetings. I want to thank you in advance for your help in this process.

February 17, 1994

MEMORANDUM

From: Joel Berg JB

To: Kim Schnoor

I believe yesterday's meeting with Eli Segal and the Secretary went very well. I would like to follow up with you immediately on a number of matters.

First, I will meet with you and the Office of General Counsel at your earliest convenience. I would like to bring Ron DeMunbrun, who is my assistant for administrative and budget matters. Ron has been meeting with Ken Cohen and Tom Fox of OGC. Would you like to meet with them and/or with J. Michael Kelly or Jim Gilliland? Please let me know and I would be glad to have my office work with yours to set up a time to meet.

Second, in order to meet our March 15 and April 15 filing deadlines, my office must complete a great deal of additional work concurrent with the work now being completed to determine the size of our budget. Yet even if we somehow cannot legally use one penny of USDA funds, it is almost certain that we will receive a few million dollars in funding from the Corporation for National Service. Therefore, no matter the outcome of our current attempts to determine USDA budget sources, we should start implementing programs of at least a scale that can be paid for with Corporation funds.

In a September 30, 1993, decision memo to the Secretary (attached), I requested that he approve six permanent, non-reimbursable detailees from other USDA agencies. He responded by checking-off "Discuss with me." Based on our short timeline, I would renew my request but ask for only five employees on temporary details until our applications are submitted. I would request that the Secretary ask Undersecretary Nash, Assistant Secretary Lyons, and Assistant Secretary Haas to work with me to select one talented and experienced employee from each of their policy areas to help create the proposal in their area. I would also request that the Extension Service and the Forest Service each be asked to provide one full-time detailee to work on our two programs proposed for the Summer of Service.

The only other major expense we will incur in this planning stage is travel. I believe it is imperative that I or appropriate staff visit each proposed project site in order to assess firsthand the institutional capabilities of possible partner agencies. Given our extensive travel in support of the Secretary, OPA does not have significant funds to pay for national service travel. Therefore, I would request assistance in having appropriate agencies pay for such travel in the near future when we visit sites that relate to their work. Long-term travel funding will be built into our Corporation application.

The Secretary will also need to make a determination of whether he wants to formally create a USDA Center for National Service to coordinate our programs. I strongly recommend that we create such an office because all three of our programs have scopes that will cut across agency and under and assistant secretary lines even under his proposed reorganization. If he does, this office could either remain in the new Office of Communications or report directly to him.

It is clear that, even if we run fairly modest-sized programs for FY95, coordination of such projects is a full-time job. The Secretary will need to determine whether he wants me to continue coordinating national service and thus give up most of my public affairs duties, or whether he would like to select someone else to coordinate national service. I have discussed this issue with Ali and she will support either option.

I thank you for your help in these matters and look forward to meeting with you and staff from the Office of General Counsel in the near future.

February 16, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: KIM SCHNOOR

FROM: JOEL BERG

In response to your request for information concerning national service initiatives, we have made sufficient progress for me to give you an interim status report on the issues you raised. The information below is based on conversations with my staff, OBPA, OGC, and SCS. I will try as soon as possible to have those office's comments to you in writing.

In addition to the general discussion below, I have attached a status of these issues as they relate specifically to the Soil Conservation Service. SCS has been the most aggressive agency in exploring ways to participate in national service initiatives. We are working closely with them to address specific answers to the issues that have been raised.

Your initial concerns focused on four areas: the source of the funds; existing projects that would be reduced, altered, or eliminated due to a reallocation of funds; the amount of the funds available; the legality of using funds for national service efforts. In conjunction with OBPA and OGC we have made the following determinations. However, please note that with respect to OGC, the "opinions" offered are preliminary and have not been provided in writing.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Funding for FY 95 would come from the agencies' existing appropriations. Identifying the specific appropriations will take time. We will have to work with each agency individually as we have been doing with SCS. It does appear however, that the listing we produced using the FY 94 budget is an accurate representation of candidate appropriations.

Funding for FY 96 and beyond could come from existing agency appropriations or we could request a separate appropriations for national service activities. If it is politically acceptable to ask for a separate appropriations we may find that it is easier to centrally "steer" national service efforts rather than relying on existing appropriations.

The one area of concern that has not been clarified is what monies could be used to support a "Center of National Service" within USDA. That is still being worked on.

IMPACT ON PROJECTS

While agencies will have to tell us the specific impact on existing projects, the impacts are not automatically negative. National service gives us a reason to place a higher priority on projects that may have been unfunded because previous administrations did not place the same value on "humanitarian" work. Choices are always going to be made with respect to allocating resources. The national service program gives us a vehicle to refocus some of our efforts to support the Secretary's vision for USDA. The important thing to remember is that all national service projects will conform to and support the basic mission of each agency supplying the funds.

AMOUNT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE

In the initial review of the FY 94 budget we identified 1.14 billion dollars in appropriations that might be a source of funding for national service activities. Given the areas that were reduced in the President's FY 95 budget it still appears that at least 1 billion dollars in USDA appropriations represent a possible source of funding for national service. Being conservative, even if that number is cut in half that still leaves 500 million dollars as a potential source of funds.

LEGALITY OF USING USDA FUNDS

OGC staff members have made the following observations:

1. There is nothing in USDA's general appropriations that prohibits us from requesting funds from Americorps;
2. Within an Agency the Secretary has the authority to transfer some percentage of funds from one appropriation to another.
3. The specific language of each appropriations and its authorizing legislation will determine whether or not specific money can be used to support a national service initiative.
4. There is no general prohibition in USDA's general appropriations provisions that would prevent USDA from using existing appropriations to support national service initiatives.

SUMMARY

Existing funds can be used to support some level of national service activities in FY 95. FY 96 support may be best achieved by asking for a separate appropriations. Obviously, some projects would not be done if money is reallocated to do national service work. Chief Johnson of SCS and Sharon Longino of FmHA have indicated that this is not a major issue. National service is something they want to do. The USDA budget contains anywhere from 500 million to a billion dollars that could potentially be used to support national service initiatives. In seeking funding for FY 96 perhaps a small portion of this could be moved from agency appropriations to form a separate national service appropriations. Legally we can use existing agency funds but we may be constrained in the delivery mechanism used for the funding. For example, we may have to form cooperative agreements with other organizations as the best way of using SCS funds as opposed to giving grants.

Finally, while the issue hasn't been fully explored, administrative support for FY 95 national service activities may best be provided by detailing agency personnel to a support unit and funding travel and other expenses via agency accounts as they relate to specific projects. All this may change as the lawyers and OBPA have a clearer picture of what support is required and what level of support the Secretary wants maintained.

SCS
NATIONAL SERVICE
STATUS

Merely for discussion purposes and with no explicit or implied commitment SCS is considering funding a range of programs that would support up to 500 national service program participants at a cost of approximately 8.5 million dollars. Working with SCS on exploring the various options has allowed the national service team to develop specific answers to the issues raised with respect to implementing national service initiatives within USDA. These answers are provided below:

SOURCE OF FUNDS

SCS is looking at using its "Conservation Operations" appropriation to fund national service activities. They call this their 01 account.

IMPACT ON PROJECTS

Rather than seeing reallocation of funds to national service as having a negative impact on existing programs, SCS is viewing national service as giving them an opportunity to focus efforts in areas that were previously ignored or under funded because there was little official justification for supporting them. National service provides that justification and a frame work within which to construct meaningful programs.

AMOUNT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE

The FY 94 "Conservation Operations" appropriations was 591 million dollars. It is the single largest appropriations in SCS. Our budget review had identified 25 million dollars as being potentially available for national service work.

LEGALITY OF USING THE FUNDS

1. There is nothing in SCS' appropriations that prevents us from using existing funds to support national service initiatives as long as they are "conservation" work;
2. "Conservation" activities are very broadly defined and can easily fit within the definitions established for our rural development and environmental national service models;
3. The public law authorizing "Conservation Operations" contains a provision authorizing the Secretary to make grants to State and local public agencies. However, SCS officials say this authority has been used only once and it is their opinion that Congressional approval would be required to exercise it in behalf of national service activities;
4. OGC is researching the legality of SCS managing a program and paying participants directly their stipend, health care, and income tax recovery. OGC does not see an immediate problem in doing this BUT they want to research further before giving a definitive answer.



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

Memo

February 3, 1993

MEMORANDUM

To: Kim Schnoor, Counsel to the Secretary

From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director of Public Affairs *JB*

Subject: **Fulfilling Your Request on National Service**

This memorandum is in response to your memorandum of January 28, 1994 outlining steps that need to be taken prior to the return of my original decision memorandum to the Secretary. I am pleased to report that I will be able to fulfill all the steps you requested very soon.

Over the past number of weeks, my staff and I have been working with the Office of Budget and Program Analysis, the Office of General Counsel, and the offices of many agency administrators in order to determine potential sources of funding, the amount of funds available, how the transfer of such funds would impact existing agency programs, and what types of funding processes would meet statutory requirements.

As soon as this work is completed, I will provide you with a detailed memorandum outlining our findings. I would then like to meet with you to brief you further on our progress.

Thank you for your attention.

cc: Ali Webb
Steve Dewhurst



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

February 1, 1994

To: Jim Lyons
Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment

From: Joel Berg *JB*
Deputy Director of Public Affairs

Subject: **Background On Our National Service Meeting Next Week**

Per our brief discussion today, I have made an appointment to meet with you next Thursday, February 10.

For your background, I have enclosed our internal planning document outlining some of the proposed USDA national service programs dealing with the environment and rural development.

We are planning a national service program far larger and more complex than those of any other Cabinet agency. If we obtain sufficient funding from Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, National Forest Foundation, and Corporation for National and Community Service sources, we could have pilot environmental or rural development projects in operation this Fall in up to 35 states. These pilots could provide boosts to rural communities that may face economic difficulties as a result of some of our resource policies.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss this matter.

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January

Divider Title: _____



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

January 31, 1994

To: David Montoya, Director of Civil Rights Enforcement
From: Joel Berg, Director of Public Liaison JB
Subject: **Help with National Service Initiatives**

Thank you for your recent memorandum regarding USDA national service initiatives. I agree fully with every point you made. USDA national service teams will most definitely work to improve the Department's affirmative outreach and improve participation in limited-resource farmer initiatives and special emphasis programs. Furthermore, each of our pilot programs will include not only diverse groups of participants, but will be run by a diverse management team. All our programs will be required to utilize meaningful EEO measurements in their evaluations.

As you know, these goals are difficult but vital. We will require significant support in meeting them. I would greatly appreciate it if you could assign someone from your office to spend significant time working to implement our national service plans.

Thank you again for your valued input.

To: Eli Segal

From: Joel Berg, (w) 720-4623

Date: January 28, 1993

Re: **GIVING NATIONAL SERVICE A RUNNING START**

It was good meeting you at the "urban barn raising." Although I have just started the very demanding and time-consuming job of Acting Director of Public Affairs and Press Secretary for the Department of Agriculture, I would like to volunteer all my spare times towards helping you get national service off and running.

As you probably know, starting in 1989, I studied national service for PPI/DLC and wrote four different policy reports on the topic, including the first-ever academic report on City Year. I also helped craft the National and Community Service Act. After I joined the campaign in November of 1991, I convinced then-scheduler Regan Burke to send BC to City Year.

In short, national service is my long-time burning passion and I will do anything to help you make it a reality.

I would like to meet with you as soon as possible to discuss the following topics:

- 1) Ways for the Department of Agriculture to provide national service opportunities through the National Forest Service, the 4H/Cooperative Extension system, or through the creation of an "Anti-Hunger Corps"
- 2) Methods of keeping the national program de-centralized and non-bureaucratic
- 3) Procedures to insure that the program is socio-economically diverse; making sure the program attracts middle and upper class kids while also providing upward mobility for low-income youth
- 4) How to avoid the mistakes of VISTA, CETA, and the Job Corps
- 5) The need for BC's plan to have a distinct philosophy and identity that clearly differentiates it from either Bush's "Points of Light" or traditional Democratic jobs programs
- 5) The importance of integrating of BC's youth apprenticeship and job training proposals with the national service plan
- 6) Using the "Police Corps" to build conservative support for the proposal
- 7) Methods to build grass-roots and interest group support for the eventual legislation

To: Secretary Espy, Ron Blackley

From: Joel Berg

Date: January 28, 1993

*Joel -
good ideas!
Pls. see me.*

Re: INCORPORATING USDA INTO THE CLINTON NATIONAL SERVICE PLAN

It is my understanding that the White House will soon formally request that every cabinet member select one staff member within their department to promote volunteer efforts of the department's employees and to integrate the department's activities into the evolving national service program. Given that I worked primarily on the national service issue for DLC/PPI and for the Transition Team, and that national service is my one area of real policy expertise, I have taken the liberty of outlining ways that USDA can be involved in this effort.

Using USDA as a major catalyst and focal point for national service is good politics AND good policy. It would provide useful services to the public, begin to dramatically redefine the Department in the eyes of the public, and ingratiate the Department with the Administration by helping promote one of the issues nearest to the heart of the President. National service is likely to be one of the most exciting and most remembered initiatives of the entire Clinton Administration --- USDA should play a key role in that initiative.

Ways For USDA Employees To Volunteer For Community Service

1) **Expand our existing "partners in education" program with public schools in Washington, D.C.** The Office of Public Liaison (OPL) runs a program with Van Ness Elementary School in Southeast in which 100 USDA employees at the school, run educational field trips, raise funds to purchase computers, and hold a drive to provide Christmas clothes and toys to each child during the Christmas season. FSIS employees have adopted Lincoln Junior High School. Such program could be expanded greatly -- at no cost to USDA --by increasing services to the two schools or by adopting additional schools.

2) **Call on all USDA employees in Washington and throughout the nation to volunteer at least one day each month on programs dedicated to fighting hunger.** Employees could volunteer in homeless shelters, soup kitchens, food banks, or other non-profit hunger-relief agencies. We could start a program in which USDA volunteers go door-to-door in low-income neighborhoods to advise residents how to apply for and use food stamps or other department nutrition programs. If even a fraction of the Department's 100,000 + employees take part in this program, we could have a major impact on reducing hunger in America. I will volunteer to participate, and I would hope you would urge your undersecretaries and agency heads to do so as well. If you had time to personally participate once a month, or at least periodically, it would send a powerful message to the nation.

Ways for USDA to Create Full-Time Service Opportunities

While volunteerism will modestly help fight social problems at their fringes, the core of Clinton's is full-time, year-round, compensated service that will be a kind of "domestic Peace Corps." You may be familiar with the Delta Service Corps, a national service pilot project, funded by the Commission on National Community Service, that will soon begin operating in Mississippi and neighboring states.

I anticipate that the vast majority of service opportunities created through Clinton's National Service Trust Fund will be managed by existing and newly created state and local youth service corps, however the Transition Team recommended that Clinton also create a small federally-run youth corps. The vast resources and broad mission of USDA give the Department unique opportunities to become one of the prime driving force behind creating a serious program of national service. Some suggestions:

- 1) **Create a modern-day Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) through the National Forest Service.** Because such a corps will require that most of the participants temporarily re-locate from their current homes in order to live in national forests, such a program would provide Clinton with one of the best opportunities to fulfil his wish that service opportunities be racially, socially, and economically diverse.
- 2) **Create a partnership with the vast 4-H and Cooperative Extension network to provide full-time service opportunities in both rural and urban areas.** (The public is largely unaware of how active 4-H is in inner cities.)
- 3) **Propose a plan for using the massive USDA field office structure as recruitment, training, and deployment centers for the overall national service program.** By doing so, you could fulfill two goals: a) Insuring that the overall national service plan does not neglect rural America, and, b) temporarily relieving some of the Congressional pressure on you to close field offices.
- 4) **Create a national anti-hunger and microenterprise corps that will be designed to meet your goal of using USDA programs to help people lift themselves out of welfare dependency.** By helping creating such a corps, you would send a clear and unmistakable signal that you and the entire USDA are serious about reinventing government.

Please let me know if you would like me to pursue any of these ideas further, either within the Department or in consultation with the White House Office of National Service.



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

January 27, 1993

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM TO CHIEF OF STAFF RON BLACKLEY

From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director of Public Affairs JB
Subject: **National Service and California Earthquake Relief**

In a coordinated effort between my office and the office of Assistant Secretary Haas, we are working to rapidly engage Los Angeles-area youth corps in helping earthquake victims obtain food.

The Los Angeles office of the California Conservation Corps has already volunteered to assign a group of their youth servers to help with the delivery of emergency food stamps. The youth servers will walk up and down the food stamps lines, hand out applications, and help victims fill out applications. Since the Department of Labor has given the corps money for earthquake relief, they have no immediate need for funding from us.

We have also requested help from the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, the Long Beach Conservation Corps, and the Orange County Conservation Corps. Most of the work of these three corps is performed on a fee-for-service basis, so they may need some federal funding to perform emergency food stamps and/or food distribution work. I understand that funding for such youth service projects is included in the President's earthquake-relief bill.



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250-1300

January 21, 1994

DECISION MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director of Public Affairs JB
Subject: Budget for USDA National Service Projects

Background:

As you will read in the attached memorandum to you from Mack McLarty and Eli Segal (attachment A), the White House hopes that Cabinet agencies will match Corporation for National Community Service funds with money from their own budgets in order to pay for agency-sponsored national service projects.

In response to the White House request, I am now in the process of consulting with USDA under and assistant secretaries, agency administrators, and office heads to determine potential resources for our national service programs. This process will soon discern how much money USDA agencies are willing to contribute voluntarily to national service, but I need direction regarding the size, scope, and budget of the overall program you would like the Department to manage.

I still hope to discuss budget issues and other key national service issues with you personally. However, I am requesting that you make decisions about USDA's national service budget as soon as possible, so I can work with OBPA and OMB to incorporate our proposal into the President's budget before his February 7 address to Congress. The charts on the following three pages outline the three phases I am proposing for USDA national service projects:

In Phase One, starting this April, USDA would assign personnel to help manage Civilian Community Corps Projects in Maryland.

In Phase Two, this July through August, USDA would help manage an urban farming project with the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences and a forestry project in Arizona or California.

In Phase Three, starting this Fall, USDA would begin to run our long-term Rural Development, Empowerment and Anti-Hunger, and Public Lands and Environmental Teams.

In this memorandum, I request that you make five decisions on critical budgetary and structural issues that must be resolved before we can proceed with any of the three phases.

Phase 2, Starts July 1994

What: Team USDA Runs Summer of Service Programs

Projects: Gang Members and Other at-Risk Youth Engage in Environmental Work in a National Forest and in Urban Farming at Sites Throughout a Major City

Where: Two Sites, One Possibly in Chicago and Another Possibly in Arizona or Southern California

Number of Participants: 100 or 50

USDA Budget: \$800,000 or \$400,000

Phase 3, Starts September 1994

What: USDA Year-Round AmeriCorps Projects Begin

Projects: Teams Conduct Work on Empowerment and Anti-Hunger, Public Lands and the Environment, and Rural Development - Each Team Also Has Sustainable Agriculture Component

Where: 50 Programs in 49 States, 30 Programs in 31 States, or 21 Programs in 19 States

Number of Participants: 2,400 or 1,400 or 1,000

USDA Budget: \$45 Million, \$25 Million, or \$19 Million

Decision #1: Personnel Support for April Projects in Maryland

Phase One of USDA national service activities could begin this April if USDA provides assistance to projects sponsored by the Civilian Community Corps (CCC) in Maryland. The National and Community Service Act mandates the Secretary of Agriculture to develop proposals for the CCC, a national set of pilot youth service programs to be operated on closed military bases.

Phil Caplan of the White House Office of Cabinet Affairs sent the attached memorandum to Ron Blackley further urging us to help with CCC these projects (Attachment B).

Even prior to Ron's exchange with Phil Caplan, I had met with the CCC staff to discuss how USDA could help their program. We discussed the possibility of USDA loaning staff and providing technical assistance to the CCC's first projects.

There are many USDA-related projects that CCC could help manage, including: building a SCS nature trail for visitors in Beltsville; performing anti-hunger and other anti-poverty work in Baltimore; working with SCS to improve the water quality of the Anacostia River and the Chesapeake Bay; providing food assistance to migrant farm workers on the nearby Delmarva Peninsula of Delaware; running urban farms in Baltimore; working on the George Washington National Forest in Virginia; and travelling to the Midwest to provide flood relief.

Recommendation #1:

USDA should temporarily detail at least one employee from relevant agencies to help manage each USDA-related work project. Some possible examples: a FNS employee would be detailed to an anti-hunger project; a SCS employee would be detailed to a water quality project; or an Extension Service employee would be detailed to an urban farming project.

I further recommend that the Forest Service open their residential barracks in the George Washington National Forest and provide support personnel to CCC participants for a period of at least one month.

Agree _____

Date _____

Disagree _____

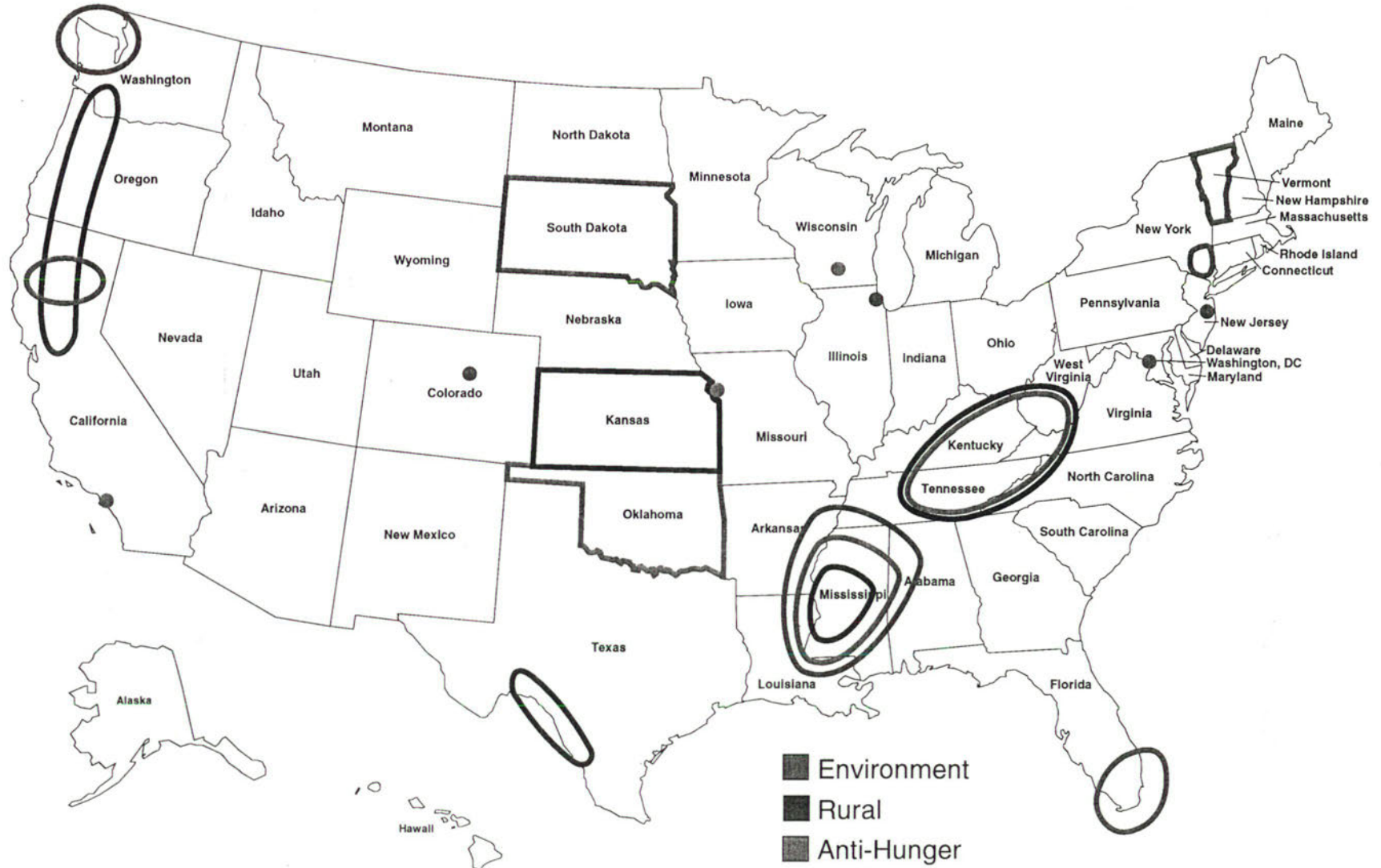
Discuss with me _____

\$19 Million Option - Possible AmeriCorps/USDA Pilot Sites

States and Cities Represented:

Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Mississippi
New Jersey
New York
North Carolina
Oklahoma
Oregon
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
West Virginia
Washington
Vermont
Virginia

Chicago
Denver
Kansas City
Los Angeles
Milwaukee
Washington, DC

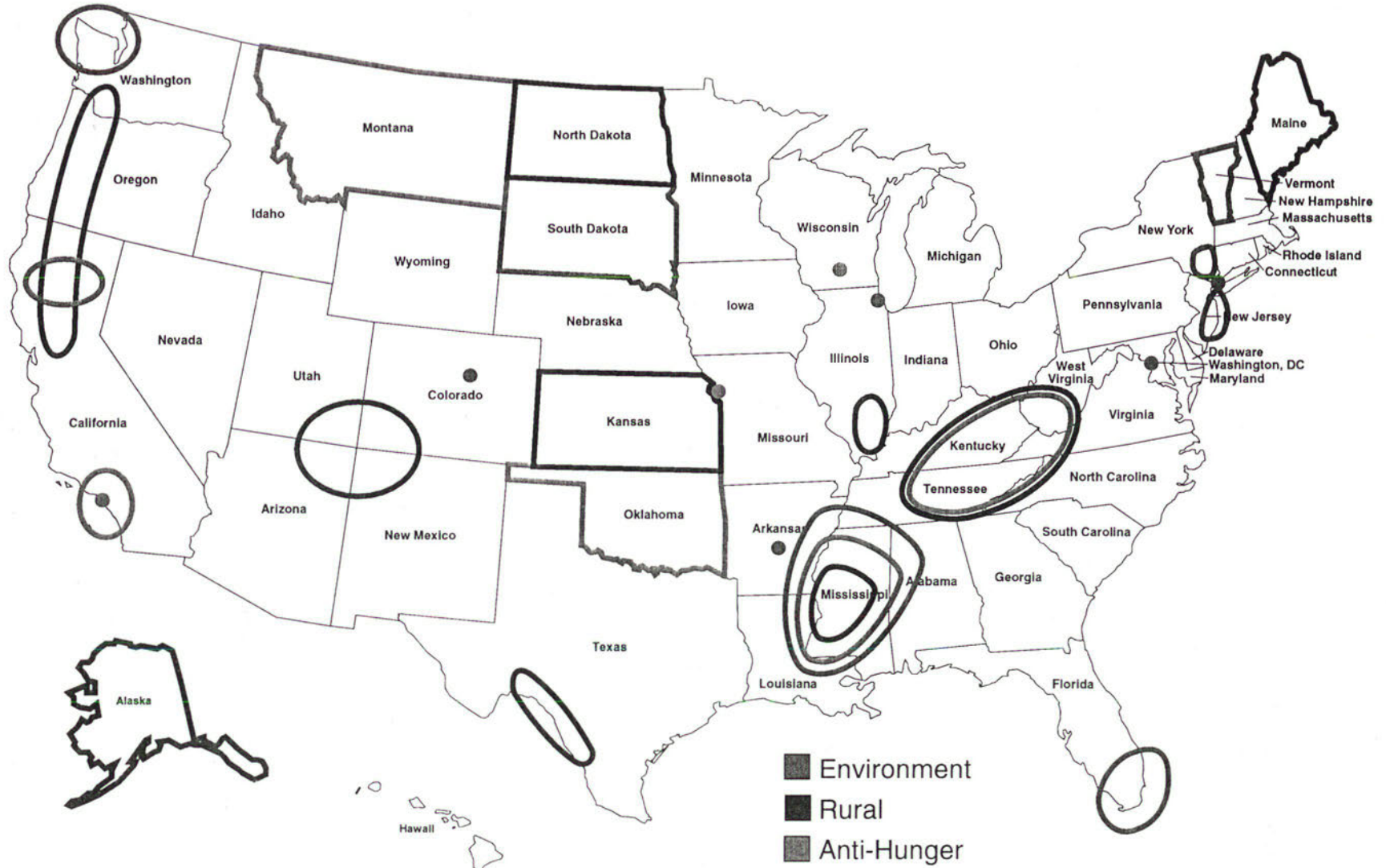


\$25 Million Option - Possible AmeriCorps/USDA Pilot Sites

States and Cities Represented:

Alaska
 Arizona
 Arkansas
 California
 Colorado
 Florida
 Georgia
 Illinois
 Kansas
 Kentucky
 Louisiana
 Maine
 Mississippi
 Montana
 New Jersey
 New Mexico
 New York
 North Carolina
 North Dakota
 Oklahoma
 Oregon
 South Dakota
 Tennessee
 Texas
 Utah
 Vermont
 Virginia
 Washington
 West Virginia

Chicago
 Denver
 Kansas City
 Little Rock
 Los Angeles
 Milwaukee
 New York City
 Washington, DC



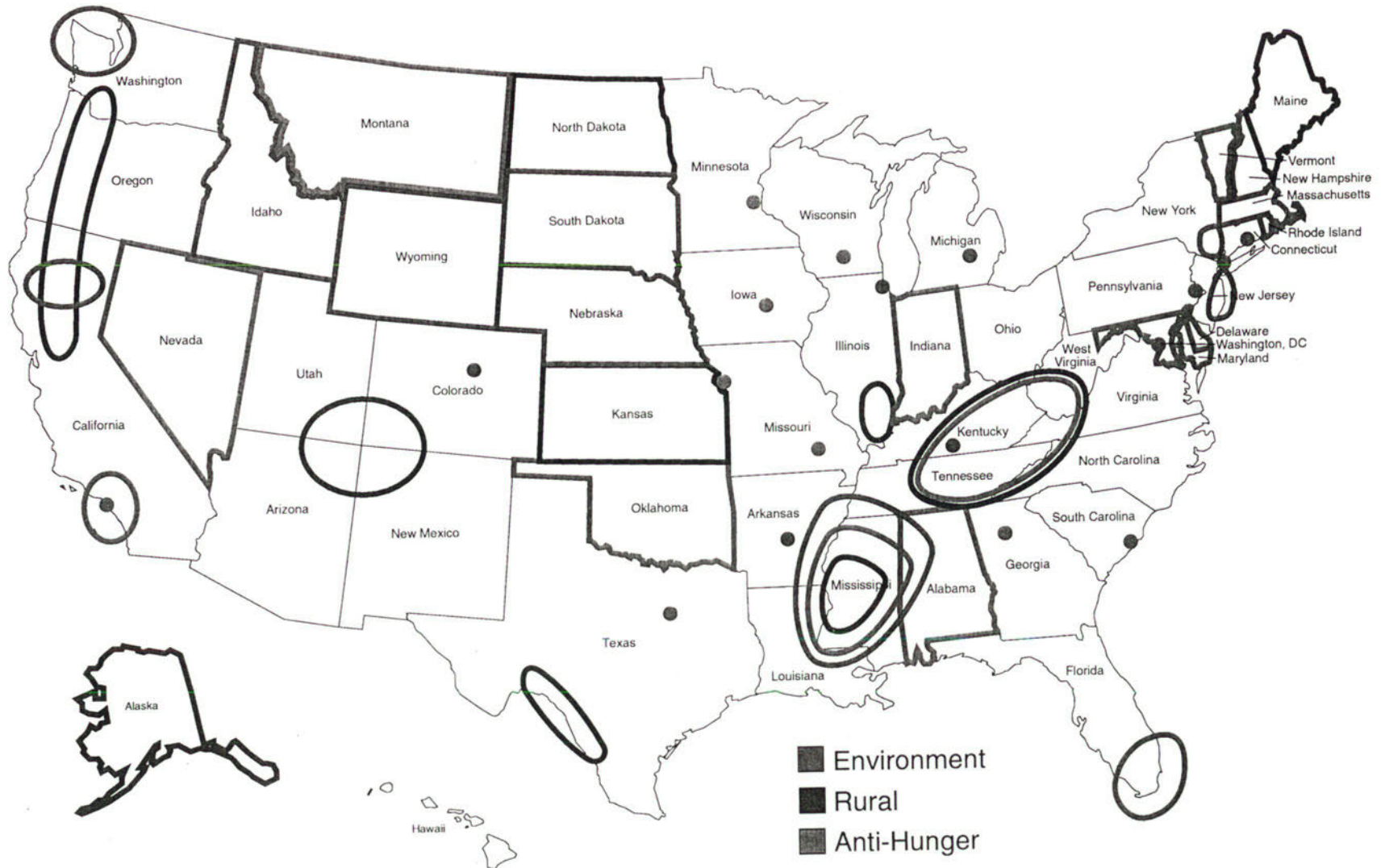
\$45 Million Option - Possible AmeriCorps/USDA Pilot Sites

States and Cities
Represented:

All States
Except Hawaii

Cities
Represented:

Atlanta
Charleston
Chicago
Dallas
Denver
Des Moines
Detroit
Hartford
Kansas City
Little Rock
Los Angeles
Louisville
Milwaukee
Minneapolis
New York City
Philadelphia
St. Louis
Washington, DC



The \$19 million option would fund: 1,000 participants, including 400 in the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, 400 in the Public Lands and Environment Team, and 200 in the Rural Development Team. The participants would work in five Rural Development sites of 40 people each, eight Empowerment and Anti-Hunger sites (half urban, half rural) of 50 people each, and eight Public Lands and Environment sites (half urban, half rural) of 50 people each.

The \$25 million option would fund: 1,400 participants, including 500 in the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, 500 in the Public Lands and Environment Team, and 400 in the Rural Development Team. The participants would work in ten Rural Development sites of 40 people each, ten Empowerment and Anti-Hunger sites (half urban, half rural) of 50 people each, and ten Public Lands and Environment sites (half urban, half rural) of 50 people each.

The \$45 million option would fund: 2,400 participants, including 1,000 in the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, 1,000 in the Public Lands and Environment Team, and 400 in the Rural Development Team. The participants would work in ten Rural Development sites of 40 people each, 20 Empowerment and Anti-Hunger sites (half urban, half rural) of 50 people each, and 20 Public Lands and Environment sites (half urban, half rural) of 50 people each.

Recommendation #3:

Given the strong backing of President Clinton and OMB Director Leon Panetta for national service, it is possible, despite the advanced state of the budget process, for USDA to either request FY95 line items or special earmarks for our AmeriCorps projects. I recommend that you direct OBPA to work with me to develop a \$25 million AmeriCorps budget for FY95. This \$25 million figure represents about 1.3% of the \$1.8 billion of discretionary spending in USDA rural development, environmental, and anti-hunger programs that carry out tasks similar to those to be performed by our AmeriCorps Teams. This budget would fund 1,400 participants at 30 pilot locations -- an ambitious but manageable goal for our first year.

Agree to \$25 million option _____ Date _____

Approve \$45 million option _____

Approve \$19 million option _____

Approve no USDA funds _____

Discuss with me _____

Decision #4: Creation of USDA Center for National Service

I strongly believe that our AmeriCorps program will be most likely to succeed if it is managed in a non-traditional and non-bureaucratic manner that cuts across existing USDA agency lines.

Despite strong support for my planning efforts from the White House and from Ron Blackley, some agencies have reacted to my initial requests for help with indifference or hostility.

One agency even continues to hamper our efforts to incorporate youth service activities in Midwest flood relief.

Furthermore, many of our team concepts would require help from agencies that, even under your reorganization plan, will continue to be managed by different under and assistant secretaries. For instance, the Rural Development Team will need help from RDA, the Forest Service, the Extension Service, FmHA, REA, and SCS. The Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team would need help from FNS, the Extension Service, AMS, and HNIS.

Even the Public Lands and Environment Team, which will be run mostly by employees under Jim Lyons on the Forest Service or SCS, will still likely need help from sustainable agriculture experts in ARS, outreach workers in the Extension Service, and conservation program employees in ASCS. Based on these cross cutting needs, USDA AmeriCorps programs will work best if coordinated at the departmental level.

We must have a management structure which will guarantee that AmeriCorps/USDA programs meet the vision of President Clinton and yourself rather than the bureaucratic idiosyncracies of individual USDA agencies.

AmeriCorps should be a flagship program for your "Team USDA" concept.

I fully understand your reluctance to create a new USDA office at a time you are reducing offices and merging agencies. Therefore, I would recommend creation of a new "center" to guide USDA national service activities that would not technically be a new office or agency. Secretary Babbitt has already taken such an action at the Department of Interior.

This new center could either remain tied to public affairs functions by being placed in the new Office of Communications (OC) or it could be created as a free-standing entity that reports directly to the Secretary and would be administered under the umbrella of Executive Operations.

The new center could manage a large AmeriCorps/USDA program with only ten full-time employees in Washington, who would be recruited from the ranks of existing USDA employees: a Director, a Rural Development Team Coordinator, an Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team Coordinator, a Public Lands and Environment Team Coordinator, an Internal and External Communications Coordinator, a Coordinator of Recruitment and Training, a Coordinator of Private and Non-Profit Fundraising, an Office Manager, a Staff Assistant, and a Receptionist.

If the new center operates with staff detailed from USDA agencies, it would need its own budget of only \$231,931 for FY95 (Attachment C). If, however, the new center operates with employees whose positions have been transferred from agencies, then it would need its own budget of \$862,744 for FY95. (Attachment D). You could take either action, under the authority of the National and Community Service Trust Act, without further approval from Congress.

Either budget for the center could be funded out of the \$19 million, \$25 million, or \$45 million you would set aside to run our three AmeriCorps Teams.

Recommendation #4:

If you approve of USDA managing significant AmeriCorps program with sites across the country, management of that program will require leadership independent of the office of public affairs. I therefore recommend that you create a new USDA Center for National Service that reports directly to the Secretary under the umbrella of Executive Operations. The office would have ten employees transferred from other USDA agencies.

Date _____

Agree to new independent center with transferred employees _____

Approve new independent center with detailed employees _____

Approve new center within OC with transferred employees _____

Approve new center within OC with detailed employees _____

Disapprove of any new national service structure _____

Discuss with me _____

Decision #5: Method for Obtaining National Service Budget

Funding for USDA AmeriCorps initiatives could either be requested through new separate line item or multiple line items in the USDA budget request, or it could simply be earmarked as a Secretarial initiative with funds coming from a wide variety of existing programs.

As you will see in the attached summary of existing FY94 budget items (Attachments E - H), I have identified almost \$2 billion in discretionary spending in USDA programs that carry out tasks similar to those that will be carried out by our three AmeriCorps Teams. I identified \$823 million in rural development, \$225 million in feeding programs and nutrition, and \$815 million in natural resources and the environment. Each figure represents overhead funds (not in loans or entitlements) which could be tapped legally to help fund AmeriCorps. By spreading the earmarks over a dozen USDA agencies, no single agency would be required to make an unreasonable contribution.

Recommendation #5:

While earmarking is the easiest approach, obtaining a separate budget line item increase the visibility of AmeriCorps, reduce resistance from USDA agencies, and make it more likely that AmeriCorps will develop strong Congressional supporters who will help institutionalize it. I recommend that the USDA seek a separate line item in the FY95 budget for each of our three AmeriCorps teams.

Agree to line item requests _____

Date _____

Approve of earmarking approach _____

Disapprove of any budget request _____

Discuss with me _____

A

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 12, 1993

MEMORANDUM FOR CABINET SECRETARIES

FROM: MACK McLARTY
ELI SECAL

SUBJECT: Budgetary Support for National Service

Congressional consideration of National Service legislation is now nearing conclusion. The President expects to sign the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 into law in early September.

The support and active assistance of your department is critical if we are to create quality placements for more than 20,000 Americans this coming year. With your help, many of these participants will become engaged in service activities which directly advance the missions of your departments.

Some federal agencies are already engaged in using full-time volunteers to deliver their programs across the country. For example, the Department of Defense supports Summer of Service and VISTA Summer Associate volunteers serving in communities impacted by base closure and realignment of military facilities. The Department of Health and Human Services involves Foster Grandparents in Head Start programs in a number of communities. Many other agencies, including the Department of Justice, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Interior are currently considering new or expanded efforts.

In addition to these ongoing efforts, National Service is a cost effective way of dealing with many national emergencies. With the assistance of the Department of Agriculture and Federal Emergency Management Agency, for example, additional service volunteers have already begun assisting communities rebuilding after the Midwestern floods.

As you develop your operating plans for FY 1994 and your budget requests for FY 1995, we ask that you identify areas where National Service volunteers can be effectively used to deliver the Administration's programs. Over the months to come, we will be discussing these matters with you in greater depth. As you know, this effort is the main agenda item for the inter-departmental working group chaired by Peter Edelman. Please call on Peter to meet with your senior staff if you would like to discuss this initiative in greater detail.

Original to: CofS-Ron Blackley
cc: OPA/OPL DepDir-Joel Berg

B

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 27, 1993

MEMORANDUM TO RON BLACKLEY

FROM: PHIL CAPLAN *PC*

SUBJ: Civilian Community Corps

As we spoke about after a breakfast last month, I have enclosed briefing material about the Civilian Community Corps, part of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The legislation calls for the Secretary of Agriculture to "develop proposals for the Corps" and to sit on the Advisory Board (see pp. 63 and 68 of the attached statute).

General Donald Scott or Sarah Whitman, both of the CCC, will follow-up with you soon.

Please call if you have any questions.

Thank you.

BUDGET FOR USDA CENTER FOR NATIONAL SERVICE WITH ALL STAFF DETAILED

C

12/30/93

CENTER FOR NATIONAL SERVICE
FY 95 BUDGET
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

SECTION I -----	OPERATING PLANS	ACTUAL OBLIGATIONS	PROJECTED COMMITMENTS	PROJECTED FOR YEAR	VARIANCE FROM PLAN
1100 Salaries:					
Salaries	0	0	0	0	0
Overtime	0	0	0	0	0
Awards	0	0	0	0	0
Lump Sum Payment	0	0	0	0	0
1200 Benefits	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL, SECTION I	0	0	0	0	0

SECTION II -----	OPERATING PLAN	ACTUAL OBLIGATIONS	COMMITMENTS THROUGH 04/15/93	OBLIGATION/ COMMITMENTS	UNOBLIGATED AS OF 04/16/93
2100 Travel	60,000	0	0	0	60,000
2200 Transportation of Things	2,000	0	0	0	2,000
2300 Rent, Comm, Utilities:					
Leases	0	0	0	0	0
Mail/Communications	8,700	0	0	0	8,700
Rent/Etc., Subtotal	8,700	0	0	0	8,700
2400 Print, Reproduction:					
Printing	7,000	0	0	0	7,000
Photography	3,300	0	0	0	3,300
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
Print/Repro, Subtotal	10,300	0	0	0	10,300
2500 Other Services					
Training	0	0	0	0	0
Design	5,000	0	0	0	5,000
Video and Film	5,000	0	0	0	5,000
Repair and Maintenance	1,300	0	0	0	1,300
Teleconferences	29,180	0	0	0	29,180
Contractors/Agreements	5,000	0	0	0	5,000
	0	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous	3,996	0	0	0	3,996
Fees	3,000	0	0	0	3,000
Other Ser., Subtotal	52,476	0	0	0	52,476
2600 Supplies/Materials					
Subscript/Public	250	0	0	0	250
Supplies/Materials	2,550	0	0	0	2,550
ADP Software	3,150	0	0	0	3,150
Gasoline	0	0	0	0	0
Supplies/Mat., Subtotal	5,950	0	0	0	5,950
3100 Equipment:					
Equipment	1,000	0	0	0	1,000
ADP Equipment	10,500	0	0	0	10,500
Equipment, Subtotal	11,500	0	0	0	11,500
4100 Prompt Payment Act	0	0	0	0	0
Greenbook Costs	80,995	0	0	0	80,995
	0	0	0	0	0
Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL, SECTION II	231,921	0	0	0	231,921
TOTAL, SEC. I & II	231,921	0	0	0	231,921

BUDGET FOR USDA CENTER FOR NATIONAL SERVICE WITH TEN FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

12/27/93

CENTER FOR NATIONAL SERVICE
FY 95 BUDGET
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

SECTION I -----	OPERATING PLANS	ACTUAL OBLIGATIONS	PROJECTED COMMITMENTS	PROJECTED FOR YEAR	VARIANCE FROM PLAN
1100 Salaries:					
Salaries	522,096	0	0	0	522,096
Overtime	1,000	0	0	0	1,000
Awards	0	0	0	0	0
Lump Sum Payment	0	0	0	0	0
1200 Benefits	144,983	0	0	0	144,983
TOTAL, SECTION I	668,079	0	0	0	668,079

SECTION II -----	OPERATING PLAN	ACTUAL OBLIGATIONS	COMMITMENTS THROUGH 04/15/93	OBLIGATION/ COMMITMENTS	UNOBLIGATED AS OF 04/16/93
2100 Travel	60,000	0	0	0	60,000
2200 Transportation of Things	1,000	0	0	0	1,000
2300 Rent, Comm, Utilities:					
Leases	0	0	0	0	0
Mail/Communications	5,800	0	0	0	5,800
Rent/Etc., Subtotal	5,800	0	0	0	5,800
2400 Print, Reproduction:					
Printing	4,500	0	0	0	4,500
Photography	3,000	0	0	0	3,000
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
Print/Repro, Subtotal	7,500	0	0	0	7,500
2500 Other Services					
Training	0	0	0	0	0
Design	5,000	0	0	0	5,000
Video and Film	5,000	0	0	0	5,000
Repair and Maintenance	1,000	0	0	0	1,000
Teleconferences	22,320	0	0	0	22,320
Contractors/Agreements	1,800	0	0	0	1,800
Labor Employment	0	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous	1,000	0	0	0	1,000
Fees	1,000	0	0	0	1,000
Other Ser., Subtotal	37,120	0	0	0	37,120
2600 Supplies/Materials					
Subscript/Public	250	0	0	0	250
Supplies/Materials	2,000	0	0	0	2,000
ADP Software	1,000	0	0	0	1,000
Gasoline	0	0	0	0	0
Supplies/Mat., Subtotal	3,250	0	0	0	3,250
3100 Equipment:					
Equipment	1,000	0	0	0	1,000
ADP Equipment	5,000	0	0	0	5,000
Equipment, Subtotal	6,000	0	0	0	6,000
4100 Prompt Payment Act	0	0	0	0	0
Greenbook Costs	73,995	0	0	0	73,995
	0	0	0	0	0
Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL, SECTION II	194,665	0	0	0	194,665
TOTAL, SEC. I & II	862,744	0	0	0	862,744

POSSIBLE FUNDS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM
ALREADY IN USDA BUDGET

TITLE	DESCRIPTION FROM FY 94 EXPLANATORY NOTES	POTENTIAL FUNDS (IN MILLIONS)
FMHA Very Low-Income Repair Grants	Provides funds for grants to very low-income elderly owner-occupants to make necessary repairs to improve and modernize their dwellings in order to remove safety and health hazards.	25.000
FMHA Rural Housing for Domestic Farm Labor	Provides funds for USDA to share with state or other political subdivisions, public or private nonprofit organizations, or nonprofit organizations of farmworkers the cost of providing low-rent housing, basic household furnishings and related facilities to be used by domestic farm laborers.	11.000
FMHA Mutual and Self-Help Housing Grants*	Provides funds for grants made to local organizations to promote the development of mutual or self-help housing programs under which groups of usually six to ten families build their own homes by mutually exchanging labor. Funds may be used to pay for construction supervisors who will work with the families.	12.750
FMHA Rural Housing Preservation Grants	Provides funds for grants to eligible private nonprofit groups, Indian tribes, and government agencies for the rehabilitation of single family housing owned by low-income and very low-income families and the rehabilitation of rental and cooperative housing for low and very low-income families.	23.000
FMHA Supervisory and Technical Assistance Grants	Provides funds for grants to public and private nonprofit organizations for packaging loan applications for housing assistance under the various housing programs of FMHA.	2.500
FS Research on Enhancing Rural America	Provides funds for research on ways to broaden the economic opportunities available to rural communities with forest-based economies.	13.000
FS Economic Recovery	Provides technical and financial assistance to help communities that have become distressed due to their economic dependence on forest resources, including timber.	4.864
FS Rural Development	Strives to strengthen rural communities and enhance their social and natural environments. Through a more diverse use of forest resources -wood, recreation, wildlife, minerals, scenic quality - communities can develop natural resource-based opportunities and enterprises.	3.890
FS Economic Diversification Studies	Provides funds for studies to be cost-shared with participating communities to develop alternative economic opportunities for strengthening rural communities or regions.	0.550
FS Forest Products Conservation and Recycling	Provides funds to allow the program staff to be a partner in coalitions concerned with the future of both rural and urban communities with an emphasis on, among other things: the role of proper utilization of forest resources in economic development and business retention; identification of needs as part of research project planning and application of new technologies.	1.500

TITLE	DESCRIPTION FROM FY 94 EXPLANATORY NOTES	POTENTIAL FUNDS (IN MILLIONS)
FMHA Very Low-Income Repair Grants	Provides funds for grants to very low-income elderly owner-occupants to make necessary repairs to improve and modernize their dwellings in order to remove safety and health hazards.	25.000
ES Rural Development Centers		.950
Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization Center	Provides funds for the Center to offer grants to support the development and commercialization of new industrial and consumer products and uses for agricultural and forestry materials, with preference for projects that benefit rural communities and are environmentally friendly.	6.500
ES Farm Safety	Provides funds for proposals including training emergency rescue professionals in farm accident extrication procedures and education of nonprofessional in first-on-the-scene emergency response procedures.	1.975
CSRS National Research Initiative Competitive Grants	Provides funds for research grants. Emphasis is placed on research in the areas of natural resources and the environment; nutrition, food quality, and health; plant systems; animal systems; rural development, markets, and trade; and processing of value added products.	107.664
RDA Water and Waste Disposal Grants	Provides funds for grants to public and quasi-public, and nonprofit associations, and to certain Indian tribes for the development, storage, treatment, purification, and distribution of water or the collection, treatment, or disposal of waste in rural areas.	500.000
RDA Rural Business Enterprise Grants	Provides funds for grants to finance and facilitate development of small and emerging private business enterprises in rural areas or cities of up to 50,000 population.	42.500
REA Rural Economic Development Grants	Provides funds for grants for the purpose of promoting rural economic development and job creation projects including funding for project feasibility studies costs, start-up costs, incubator projects, and other expenses for the purpose of fostering rural development.	13.025
APHIS Scientific and Technical Services	Programs develop methods to control animals and pests; conduct diagnostic laboratory activities that support the Agency's veterinary programs; and also provides and directs technology development in coordination with other groups in APHIS to support plant protection programs of the agency and its cooperators at the State, national and international level.	53.008
RURAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL FUNDS SUBTOTAL IN MILLIONS:		823.68

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDS FOR
ANTI-HUNGER AND EMPOWERMENT TEAMS
ALREADY IN USDA BUDGET

G

TITLE	DESCRIPTION FROM FY 94 EXPLANATORY NOTES	POTENTIAL FUNDS (IN MILLIONS)
ES Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program	Targets low-income youth and families with young children and helps them to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and changed behavior necessary to improve their diets.	61.431
ES D.C. Extension Service	Conducts programs in the District of Columbia addressing critical issues and problems, especially in the areas of youth development, family living, home horticulture, consumer education, community resource development, and food and nutrition.	1.038
ES Food Safety	Conducts education projects which address the needs of the different participants within the food industry. The aim is to increase responsible involvement in protecting the safety of the food supply.	1.975
ES Indian Reservation Extension Education		1.750
ES Nutrition Education Initiative	Provides funds for programs in which the Extension Service and FNS are collaborating to develop nutrition education programs that target the most needy WIC clients, who are vulnerable to at-risk factors and to those who are eligible for food assistance programs and need help to receive these benefits.	4.265
ES Rural Health and Safety		2.000
HNIS Research Program	Provides funds for competitive contracts to conduct various research activities.	.075
FNS Nutrition Studies and Education	Provides funds for FNS nutrition studies and education efforts.	15.835
FNS WIC Evaluation Projects	Provides funds for various projects to evaluate the effectiveness of the WIC program as well as provide resources for States to conduct individual evaluations	.500
FNS Food Stamp Employment and Training Program	Provides funds for 100 percent grants to States to implement employment and training programs for the purpose of assisting members of households participating in the Food Stamp Program in gaining skills, training or experience that will increase their ability to obtain regular employment.	75.00
FNS Food Stamp Research, Evaluation, and Demonstration Projects	Funds to support the FNS research agenda in several areas including, welfare reform, coordination and simplification, evaluation of program effectiveness operations and integrity, and nutrition education and monitoring.	10.600

H

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDS FOR
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC LANDS TEAM
ALREADY IN USDA BUDGET

TITLE	DESCRIPTION FROM FY 94 EXPLANATORY NOTES	POTENTIAL FUNDS (IN MILLIONS)
FS Urban and Community Forestry	Provides for State Foresters and contracted private consulting foresters to give technical assistance to private landowners to develop plans for and ensure proper tree planting.	12.500
FS Trees for the Future	Provides for expanded tree planting and stewardship efforts on private forest lands and in urban and community areas. In addition to environmental benefits, urban forestry programs can provide productive seasonal jobs for inner city youth.	12.500
FS Maintenance of Facilities	Provides for Maintenance and minor renovation of facilities including roof replacements, siding, painting, floor coverings, and electrical and mechanical systems.	26.495
FS Forest Road Maintenance	Provides for maintenance planning, roadside brushing, surface grading, replace/repair bridges and other structures and obliteration of roads no longer needed.	82.198
FS Forest Trail Maintenance	Provides for maintenance work including clearing pathways of encroaching vegetation and fallen trees, repairing or improving trail signs, treadways, drainage facilities, and bridges.	31.332
FS Research Construction	Provides construction of research facilities.	3.572
FS Construction for Fire, Administrative, and other Purposes	Provides for replacement, construction and improvement of offices, employee housing, service and storage buildings, nursery buildings, airports, and heliports. Also provides water, waste, electrical and similar utility systems to provide quality facilities to support fire and general administrative purposes.	10.264
FS Recreation Construction	Provides for repair and rehabilitation of existing recreation facilities, to meet health and safety standards, protect soil and water resources and to construct new facilities to meet public recreation needs.	73.604
FS Forest Road Construction	Program finances for planning, management, project engineering, construction, and reconstruction of multipurpose road systems on and adjacent to NFS land.	133.218
FS Trail Construction	Provides for redevelopment and improvement of the trail system. Trail redevelopment emphasizes the reconstruction and relocation of substandard trails resulting from age, heavy use, location or lack of maintenance. Reconstruction includes facility work such as bridge replacement, tread replacement, drainage structures, and barrier removal.	33.510
FS Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Infrastructure Initiative	Provides for correcting resource damage and health and safety conditions by accomplishing heavy maintenance and repair of recreation facilities especially in counties with high unemployment.	79.000

TITLE	DESCRIPTION FROM FY 94 EXPLANATORY NOTES	POTENTIAL FUNDS (IN MILLIONS)
ARS Research on Soil, Water, and Air Sciences	Provides for development of management guidelines, practices, and systems for promoting cost-effective conservation and enhancement of the quality and production capacity of our Nation's soil, water, and air resources. Emphasis is being placed on water quality protection, sustainable agriculture, waste utilization, and a better understanding of the impact of global change on agricultural productivity on soil and water conservation and protection.	83.524
ES Sustainable Agriculture	The program provides a critical step between research efforts and producers adopting improved management practices. The program focuses on: establishing validation applied research and demonstration projects; developing databases and decision support systems utilizing research based information resulting from projects funded under subtitle B.	2.963
ASCS Water Bank Program	Provides technical assistance to land owners and operators who enter into agreements for the conservation of specific wetlands.	1.490
SCS Conservation Technical Assistance	Provides funds for specialists to inventory and interpret site-specific information about soil, plant, water, and other physical conditions to determine suitable alternative land uses and conservation treatment alternatives.	24.509
SCS Great Plains Conservation Program	Provides assistance to farmers and ranchers in planning and applying resource management systems on their farms and ranches to prevent or reduce the effects of the climatic hazards of the area.	6.055
SCS Watershed and Flood Prevention Services	Provides funds to carry out preventative measures, including but not limited to reseed, engineering operations, methods of cultivation, the growing of vegetation, rehabilitation of existing work and changes in use of land.	50.122
SCS Watershed Planning	Provides funds for the Department to make surveys of proposed small watershed projects and prepares plans in cooperation with local sponsors.	1.920
SCS Resource Conservation and Development	Provides assistance to farmers and ranchers in planning and applying resource management systems on their farms and ranches to prevent or reduce the effects of the climatic hazards of the area.	26.871
SCS River Basin Surveys and Investigations	Provides funds to conduct research, investigations, and surveys of watersheds of rivers and other waterways.	1.154
Reforestation and Stand Improvement	Provides funds to reforest harvested areas, unsuccessful plantations, and areas damaged by fire, insects, or disease and to release planted trees from competing vegetation or overcrowding	62.828
ARS Special Fund	Provides funds for additional labor, subprofessional, and junior scientific help to be employed under contracts and cooperative agreements to strengthen work at Federal research installations in the field.	2.500
ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC LANDS TEAM POTENTIAL FUNDS SUBTOTAL IN MILLIONS:		815.14



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

January 18, 1994

To: Sarah Whitman, Don Mathis, NCCC

From: Joel Berg, USDA JB

Re: USDA-Related Projects for the NCCC in Maryland

In response to both our meeting and the attached note from Phil Caplan to USDA Chief of Staff Ron Blackley, I have been able to make great strides in identifying Departmental resources to develop proposals for how USDA can create and help manage work projects for the NCCC.

Below are some preliminary ideas for joint NCCC/USDA projects that would fit the Corporation's human or environmental priorities. If any of these ideas interest you, we will develop them in much greater depth:

* **Building a nature center in Beltsville, Maryland.** USDA's Soil Conservation Service is planning to build a nature center and trail for visitors. This large and labor-intensive project could be a perfect early signature project for the NCCC.

* **Performing anti-hunger and other anti-poverty work in Baltimore.** NCCC participants could help low-income individuals and the elderly apply for food stamps and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, overhaul their diets, and learn to prevent foodborne illnesses. Team members could also help individuals obtain the expanded Earned Income Tax Credit or otherwise benefit from the Administration's new programs aimed at empowering citizens to lift themselves out of poverty.

* **Working to improve the water quality of the Anacostia River and the Chesapeake Bay.** NCCC participants could perform some of the physical work needed to protect these ecosystems, such as work in streambank stabilization, watershed improvements, and wetland protection or repair. Team members could perform water quality assessments by conducting samplings. They could also help organize community cleanup days -- they could even organize a Saturday in which hundreds of USDA employees volunteer.

* **Providing food assistance to migrant farm workers on the nearby Delmarva Peninsula of Delaware.** The Delmarva Ministries currently provides emergency food assistance to between 800 to 1,000 migrant laborers and their families in Delaware. NCCC participants could help expand or improve this service delivery.

*** Helping teach environmental education in Maryland schools.** The Forest Service has extensive experience in recruiting young people to teach environmental education. Building upon this experience, USDA could help supervise NCCC participants working in schools and speaking at civic organizations to teach on a wide variety of environmental topics, including: safe handling of household chemicals, tree planting in urban and suburban areas, testing for radon, recycling and reducing waste, and decreasing non-point source pollution.

*** Running urban farms in Baltimore.** Funding to Baltimore urban gardening projects has recently been cut significantly, so NCCC members could possibly play an important role in continuing projects to allow poor Baltimore residents to grow their own food.

*** Working on a national forest in Virginia.** NCCC participants could work out of Camp Augusta Springs in the George Washington National Forest of Virginia; this camp has residential facilities that housed a 48-person youth forest camp last summer. NCCC participants can perform work in trail maintenance, recreation management, fish and wildlife management, facility construction and maintenance, and water and soil conservation.

*** Providing flood relief in the Midwest.** Existing youth corps have played a vital role in the recovery of the flooded Midwest. Unfortunately, heavy flooding is possible again this spring. NCCC participants could be brought into the area rapidly. USDA agencies -- particularly the Soil Conservation Service --- could help coordinate NCCC participants working with local conservation corps members, 4-H volunteers, and work-study students. They could provide physical labor critical to short-term clean up, as well as human services needed for long-term recovery. They could also assist in some of the long-term infrastructure repair, such as levee rebuilding.

USDA would provide the following for each project:

One full-time employee to provide technical assistance for each work project. In the case of some projects, USDA might be able to provide up to six employees to act as co-crew leaders for each crew.

Training for each participant and/or crew leader. USDA would provide all the technical training needed for each participant and/or each crew leader to perform the difficult anti-hunger, environmental, or flood-relief tasks assigned to them.

Tools and educational materials needed in each project by participants and/or crew leaders. USDA would provide tools and equipment and any pamphlets, maps, and/or handbooks needed to perform projects.

Additional educational curricula in the areas of the environment and anti-hunger work. In addition to the limited information needed to perform each work project, USDA would also develop advanced curricula in the areas of the environment and nutrition to advance the personal growth of NCCC participants.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Public Affairs

Office of
Public Liaison

Washington, D.C.
20250

TO: PAUL JOHNSON

**FROM: JOEL BERG
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF PUBLIC LIAISON/NATIONAL SERVICE**

DATE: JANUARY 14, 1994

**RE: INVITATION TO SPEAK AT JANUARY 20 MEETING ON SCS AND
USDA/NATIONAL SERVICE**

The National Association of Service & Conservation Corps (NASCC) has invited a select group of youth corps directors on January 20 from 3:30 - 5 p.m. to the Dupont Plaza Hotel, 1500 New Hampshire Avenue NW, to meet with those planning the USDA Public Lands and Environment Team. NASCC expressed to me how much they would like for you to attend. I would like to invite your participation, if at all possible.

Here's the format: I will begin with an overview of our Public Lands and Environment Team then you would follow. I think the directors in attendance would like to know how you see youth service corps fitting into SCS program, your expansion plans for their use, etc. You and I would speak no longer than 15 minutes in total as the organizers want to leave ample time for a dialogue with the youth corps directors. I understand that the directors want to discuss successes and concerns about previous work with federal programs in the field and to talk about support from Washington as we expand our joint efforts.

Katherine Gibney will call your office on Monday afternoon to see if you can attend.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

From: UNDER SECRETARY FOR
SMALL COMMUNITY AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Date:

2/13

To: Joel Berg - Pub. Affairs

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ For your signature | ☐ Rewrite—text | ☐ Please return |
| ☐ Prepare reply for my signature | ☐ Rewrite—not enough information | ☐ As you requested |
| ☐ For Secretary's signature | ☐ For your action | ☐ For your information |
| ☐ Reply directly-copy to me | ☐ For your approval | ☐ Please file |
| ☐ Copy to me with copy of incoming | ☐ For your comments | ☐ Set up meeting on this |
| | | ☐ Call me on this |

Remarks:

- ①. O.K. to charge Airline cost for Greenville EZ/EC Intg. to mu office.
- ②. PLS. get Inmas straight wim W. House Re! Their call to me
- ③. PLS. explain the Budget \$1 to me.
- ④. Rick is coordinator for EZ/EC Intg. for Nation. can not do
- ⑤. Other 7 days (Start? End?)

Action Date: _____

Dates



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

January 12, 1994

To: Bob Nash
From: Joel Berg *JB*
Re: Next Steps for the Rural Development Team

Our plans to create a rural development team as part of the President's AmeriCorps initiative are moving ahead. I have briefed Wilbur Peer on the initiative and will attempt to meet shortly with each of your administrators. In the short term, we could use your help in three areas:

Staff - We are in critical need of the full-time assistance of a rural development expert to aid in the development of our team. It would be extremely helpful if you could assign a talented, experienced, and energetic senior-level employee from one of your agencies to work full time -- or nearly full-time -- on this project for a month. I would suggest Rick Wetherill, the Deputy Regional Director of RDA in the Southwest Region, who has provided us with an insightful and creative series of suggestions on national service, and who has expressed interest in working with us further.

Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Workshops - It is wonderful that the EZ/EC application book includes a full page on national service. To further explain AmeriCorps to potentially interested groups and individuals, I would request that a very short part of the agenda of each of your regional workshops be devoted to AmeriCorps. **Peter Necheles has already agreed to this, but we need you to approve funding for all or part of my travel expenses.** (Our office has virtually no remaining travel budget.)

Unclear \$ for what.
Budget - Since the Corporation for National Service has only a small pot of money devoted to federal agencies, the White House has made it clear that they expect federal agencies to run AmeriCorps programs with significant funds from their own budgets. Consequently, Ron Blackley has issued a memorandum requesting all agencies to determine how much of their budget might be spent on national service. We estimate that each participant in the Rural Development Team will cost USDA approximately \$30,000 a year. Therefore, for the first year of our program, 700 participants would cost us \$21 million, 500 participants would cost us \$15 million, 400 participants would cost us \$12 million, and 200 participants would cost us \$6 million. I would appreciate it if you could begin to consider how much your agencies might be able to contribute to a program that would help carry out many of their vital missions.

I look forward to meeting with you and/or your staff in the near future to discuss these matters.

CC: Wilbur Peer



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

January 10, 1994

To: Under and Assistant Secretaries, Agency Administrators, Office Heads

From: Ron Blackley, Chief of Staff 

Subject: Sponsorship of National Service Initiatives

The Administration's national service program -- now known as AmeriCorps -- is one of the President's top priorities. Participants in AmeriCorps will earn a small living wage while performing work that addresses unmet human, environmental, educational and public safety needs. For each year of service successfully performed, participants also earn an educational voucher of \$4,725, which they may use to pay for college, vocational school, job training, or graduate school.

This program presents an exciting opportunity for USDA. Secretary Espy has announced that USDA will run a Rural Development Team, a Public Lands and Environmental Team, and an Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team. These teams will likely participate in activities in areas related to most USDA agencies, including sustainable agriculture, USDA feeding programs, rural development, National Forest maintenance and construction, rural housing, urban tree-planting, nutrition education, soil conservation, youth-at-risk, farmers' markets, watershed protection, urban farming, and food safety.

The White House has made it clear that the Department should identify areas in operating plans and budget requests where AmeriCorps volunteers can be used to effectively deliver our programs. In order to properly plan our efforts, please compile a list of current FY 94 initiatives that lend themselves to AmeriCorps participation, as well as an estimate of how much money your agency might be able to spend on national service initiatives in FY 95. Please provide this information to Joel Berg, Director of Public Liaison and National Service, by January 24, 1994.

If you have any questions concerning AmeriCorps, please contact Joel Berg, 720 -4623, Room 213A.

January 10, 1994

To: Ron

From: Joel

Per our discussion on Saturday about the memorandum from Mack McLarty and Eli Segal, I have drafted a memo from you requesting our agencies to identify possible budget sources for national service. Let me know if you would like me to make any changes before signing it.



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

*Copy
Joel wrote
for
Ron*

January 10, 1994

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250-1300

*Delivered to
Charlie Rawls and returned
to Joel*

January 10, 1994

MEMORANDUM

To: Kim Schnoor, Eloise Thomas, **Charlie Rawls**, Stephen Dewhurst

From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director, Office of Public Affairs *JB*

Subject: Letter from Mack McLarty to the Secretary on National Service

Attached is a August 12, 1993, memorandum from Mack McLarty and Eli Segal to the Secretary on the subject of budgetary support for national service. The letter requests that the Secretary develop "operating plans for FY 1994" and "budget requests for FY 1995" that "identify areas where National Service volunteers can be effectively used to deliver the Administration's programs."

I learned of the existence of this memorandum in a recent conversation with Eli Segal, whose office subsequently faxed me a copy. I then checked with the Office of Executive Secretariat, which has no record of the memorandum having been received by Secretary's office.

If you have seen this memorandum, please inform me of any response issued by the Secretary or the Department. As you may know, I am coordinating national service initiatives on behalf of the Secretary and am most anxious to fulfill the White House's directive that USDA play a significant role in building national service.

I thank you in advance for your assistance.

Attachment

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 12, 1993

MEMORANDUM FOR CABINET SECRETARIES

FROM: MACK McLARTY
ELI SECAL

SUBJECT: Budgetary Support for National Service

Congressional consideration of National Service legislation is now nearing conclusion. The President expects to sign the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 into law in early September.

The support and active assistance of your department is critical if we are to create quality placements for more than 20,000 Americans this coming year. With your help, many of these participants will become engaged in service activities which directly advance the missions of your departments.

Some federal agencies are already engaged in using full-time volunteers to deliver their programs across the country. For example, the Department of Defense supports Summer of Service and VISTA Summer Associate volunteers serving in communities impacted by base closure and realignment of military facilities. The Department of Health and Human Services involves Foster Grandparents in Head Start programs in a number of communities. Many other agencies, including the Department of Justice, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Interior are currently considering new or expanded efforts.

In addition to these ongoing efforts, National Service is a cost effective way of dealing with many national emergencies. With the assistance of the Department of Agriculture and Federal Emergency Management Agency, for example, additional service volunteers have already begun assisting communities rebuilding after the Midwestern floods.

As you develop your operating plans for FY 1994 and your budget requests for FY 1995, we ask that you identify areas where National Service volunteers can be effectively used to deliver the Administration's programs. Over the months to come, we will be discussing these matters with you in greater depth. As you know, this effort is the main agenda item for the inter-departmental working group chaired by Peter Edelman. Please call on Peter to meet with your senior staff if you would like to discuss this initiative in greater detail.



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

January 8, 1993

To: Paul Johnson, Chief, Soil Conservation Service
From: Joel Berg, USDA National Service Coordinator JB
Subject: Follow-Up on AmeriCorps

Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me about how SCS can participate in the President's AmeriCorps initiative.

As we discussed, SCS can have a major role in both our Environmental Team and our Rural Development Team. To date, Jim Fuller, Carl Bouchard, and Jeff Anliker of your staff have provided invaluable assistance and advice.

In advance of my meeting with you and your senior staff, let me suggest a few areas which I believe would be useful for us to specifically discuss:

1) Pilot Program in Maryland in April -

The National Civilian Community Corps --- the only part of AmeriCorps that will be managed directly by the Corporation for National and Community Service --- will begin a 60-person pilot program this April which will be based in Ft. Meade, Maryland.

Participants in this pilot could potentially help construct the SCS nature center in Beltsville and/or could work on water quality projects and soil conservation projects related to the Chesapeake Bay and the Anacostia River.

Could SCS provide immediate assistance so that USDA can play an important role in the April start-up?

2) Summer of Service Program -

This year's Summer of Service program sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service is aimed at crime. In conjunction with the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences and the National Future Farmers of America, SCS could help run a summer project aimed at recruiting gang members and other at-risk youth into running urban farms. The program participants would then help form community anti-crime patrols at the farms and create "safe-havens" surrounding the farms for other community activities.

Could SCS provide staff or other resources for such a project?

3) Long-Term Project Locations -

We have been considering placing Rural Development Team programs in some or all of the following locations: the Mississippi Delta, the Texas-Mexico Border, the Pacific-Northwest in areas impacted by the spotted owl, Maine, Kansas, Appalachia, the Four Corners area (Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona), Alaska, North Dakota, Southern Illinois.

We have been considering placing Public Lands and Environment Team locations in some or all of the following areas: the Hudson River Valley, the Columbia River, the Florida Everglades, Olympia Peninsula in Washington, the New Jersey Shore, Northern California, New Hampshire, Mississippi Delta, Massachusetts, Charleston, Rock, Nebraska, South Dakota, Wyoming, Idaho, Denver, Dallas.

Do these locations make sense? What other locations would make sense or are high priority areas?

4) Specific Tasks for the Rural Development Team

The Rural Development Team would establish regional clusters of "professional" and "paraprofessional" participants who could assist communities in identifying needs and resources necessary for economic well-being. The participants would have diverse education and training and would be matched up with individual communities or regions that have specific needs that can be filled by someone with that specific background.

The need to develop new leadership in rural America was a continuing theme of Secretary Espy's recent Rural Development Forum. Americorps/USDA Rural Development Team can help redress that problem by playing a major role in developing that leadership. We will make a concerted effort to recruit participants who want to return to areas similar to those in which they were raised. This program can help begin reversing America's rural "brain drain."

Individuals will be placed in communities where their particular talents can best be utilized. Experts in connecting rural homes to municipal water systems will be matched up to areas with that need. Experts in tourism will be matched up with communities that want to develop their tourism. Experts in sustainable agriculture will be matched up with groups of farmers who need technical assistance in that area. Experts in grant writing will be matched up with communities that need grant writing. Experts in attracting small businesses will be matched up with communities that want to attract more small business. Experts in watershed protection will be matched up with areas that need such help. General planners would also be matched up with communities that need to develop overall economic plans.

Some possible job descriptions:

- * Assistant State Rural Development Coordinator - Assists USDA State Rural Development Coordinators in helping boost Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Collects data, provides outreach, coordinates community resources, helps develop strategic plans, helps implement the program, analyzes local data for agencies and organizations so that the needs of the under-served are considered.
- * Small Business Plan Developer and Information Broker - Assists in the assessment and development of markets for unique local products.
- * Regional Circuit Rider - Works part time in a number of towns in a region. Provides technical assistance to communities throughout a region in brokering, strategic planning, and community assessment.
- * Sustainable Agriculture Advisor - Works with farmers in the region to help them develop model sustainable agriculture farms. Directs 4-H volunteers to perform some of the labor intensive work, such as fence-building, needed for successful sustainable farming.
- * Volunteer Coordinators - The team member would recruit and supervise adult and youth volunteers as part of the SCS Earth Team.

- * Watershed Assistance Process Facilitator - Works to coordinate local watershed protection programs in order to save wetlands, guard drinking-water quality, and prevent flooding. The team member would explain watershed assistance programs, identify key potential participants in local watershed steering committees, arrange local organizational meetings, and facilitate the identification of watershed needs, problems, and concerns.
- * Natural Resource Specialist - Under the direction of a Soil Conservation Service professional employee, the team member would work in low-income and socially disadvantaged areas to assist in the acceleration of watershed protection, work with field engineers in the design and layout of community projects, and work with the local Resource Conservation & Development(RC&D) Coordinator for economic development for disadvantaged groups.
- * Landscape Architect - The team member would work with soil conservation districts, RC&D councils, and area conservationists to coordinate and include landscape architectural planning for the purpose of maintaining, enhancing, or restoring ecological, social, and economic conditions.
- * Recreation Specialist - The team member would provide technical assistance for all activities relating to recreation and tourism, including coordinating efforts among all government agencies, furnish recreation planning and design, and collect and disseminate information on what alternatives will best fit local needs.
- * Regional 4-H Youth Development Coordinator - The team member would work with county Extension agents and 4-H coordinators to manage local students involved in youth service.

Which of these jobs would be most useful for rural communities and regions? What role can SCS employees play in training and managing participants in these positions?

4) Specific Tasks for the Environment Team

The Public Lands and Environment Team would have both urban and rural components.

Participants could renovate urban and rural parks, plant trees, perform conservation work in national forests, teach environmental education, promote urban farming, test water quality, boost sustainable agriculture, clean-up rivers and lakes, help families weatherize their homes, instruct the public on how to dispose of household chemicals, and restore wetlands.

The urban component would be mostly non-residential and members would work on conservation projects on public and private lands in cities of various sizes. The rural component would be both residential and non-residential and would perform conservation-related work projects on private and public lands in rural America.

The urban and rural programs could be linked, with teams members having the option of transferring between the rural and urban settings. For example, a team member could work in a rural environment for ten months and then in an urban environment for another two months.

Some possible tasks:

- * Water quality assessments - Team members can conduct samplings and provide technical help with delivery systems. They can also work on sanitation and sewerage (wastewater treatment) system improvement.
- * Environmental Education -- Team --- going door-to-door, working in schools and speaking at civic clubs --- could teach a wide variety of topics: safe handling of food, how to make your household more eco-friendly, testing for radon, recycling and waste reduction, and reducing nonpoint-source pollution.
- * Energy Conservation- --- Team members could work in crews to provide the physical assistance in weatherizing homes and generally making them more energy efficient.
- * River and Streams Protection - We could possibly run river protection teams in conjunction with the Department of Interior and the Environmental Protection Agency. In a Hudson River Team, USDA participants could work with farmers in the river's watershed to reduce the run-off of agricultural pesticides.
- * Tree Planting - As part of the Administration's initiative to combat global warming, the Public Lands and Environmental team could play a lead role in tremendously expanding the number of trees planted annually in America. Plantings could take place in urban and rural areas on both public and private lands.
- * Urban Conservation Projects - Team members can repair facilities in public parks, paint murals, fix playgrounds and other facilities at public schools, run recycling programs, and run urban farming programs in which low-income individuals grow their own food.
- * Urban Farming Projects -Team members could help low-income urban residents to grow their own food. We could possibly run such a program at public housing complexes in tandem with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. We could possibly run a city-wide program in Chicago the Chicago high school of agriculture.

* Wetlands Restoration - The Department of Interior and the Environmental Protection Agency has expressed interest in potentially running a joint program to help restore the Everglades. We could also perform wetlands restoration tasks throughout the country.

* Sustainable Agriculture - Team members could work under the direction of Extension agents or other sustainable agriculture experts to help local farmers complete some of the labor intensive work -- such as constructing fences -- that is needed to implement a sustainable agriculture plan.

Which of these jobs would be most useful for rural communities and regions? What role can SCS employees play in training and managing participants in these positions?

6) Budget for Our Long-Term Programs -

Participants in non-residential Environmental Team projects will cost us approximately \$15,000 per year. Participants in residential Environmental Team projects would cost us approximately \$20,000 per year. Participants in the Rural Development Team would cost us approximately \$30,000 per year. Assuming that half of the Environmental participants are residential and half are non-residential, the following charts outlines various budgets for increasing numbers of participants.

Environment Team # of participants	Rural Development Team # of participants	Total Cost
250	50	5.875 million
500	100	11.750 million
1,000	200	21,000 million
1,500	300	33.750 million

Which, if any, of these budget levels might be realistic for SCS for FY'95?

7) Contracting Out With Existing Conservation Corps -

The Forest Service and the National Park Service frequently contract-out work projects to existing conservation corps throughout the nation. The corps provide work much more cheaply than private contractors.

How might SCS begin contracting-out levee repair or other work to existing youth service corps?

8) Midwest Flood Relief

Existing youth corps have played a vital role in the recovery of the flooded Midwest. Unfortunately, heavy flooding is possible again this Spring. Corps members, 4-H volunteers, and work-study students could provide physical labor so critical to short-term clean-up, as well as human services needed for long-term recovery. They could also assist in some of the long-term infrastructure repair such as levee re-building.

What role could SCS state and county offices play in Midwest flood relief this spring?

To: Susan Stroud
From: Joel Berg
Date: January 4, 1994
Subject: **Next Steps for AmeriCorps at USDA and Other Federal Agencies**

I hope you had a joyous holiday season. It's great to finally be in the year of AmeriCorps implementation. I love the video you guys produced and will be showing it to the Secretary and our sub-cabinet in the near future.

It is my firm belief that federal agencies should not simply act as a sub-grant-making entities providing yet another filter for the Corporation's funds, but that each agency should bring something unique to the table in actually helping manage AmeriCorps programs. This document lays out a series of six concrete steps (some of which I have recommended before) that would be helpful in enabling federal agencies to reach this goal.

Given the snail-like pace of federal agencies (including my own), I believe these steps should be taken in January if we are to start programs in September:

1. Obtaining Additional Budget Funds:

As you know, Secretary Espy has announced his intention for USDA to run three different types of AmeriCorps programs: a Rural Development Team, an Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, and a Public Lands and Environment Team. In the next few days, I will be presenting him three different funding options, each of which takes into account our goal of obtaining \$5 million from the Corporation to pay for educational vouchers for 1,000 participants.

Option A - \$19 million in USDA Funds: This option would fund 1,000 participants, including 400 in the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, 400 in the Public Lands and Environment Team, and 200 in the Rural Development Team. The Corporation would pay for the educational vouchers of all 1,000 participants, but USDA would pay all other costs.

Option B - \$29 million in USDA Funds: This option would fund 1,400 participants, including 500 in the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, 500 in the Public Lands and Environment Team, and 400 in the Rural Development Team. The Corporation would pay for the educational vouchers of participants in both the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team and the Public Lands and Environment Team, but USDA would pay for the educational vouchers of all the participants in the Rural Development Team. USDA would pay all other costs.

Option C - \$45 million in USDA Funds: This option would fund 2,400 participants, including 1,000 in the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, 1,000 in the Public Lands and Environment Team, and 400 in the Rural Development Team. The Corporation would pay for the educational vouchers of participants in the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, and USDA would pay for the educational vouchers of all the participants in the other two teams. USDA would pay all other costs.

I will recommend that Secretary Espy choose the \$29 million option, since I believe 1,400 participants -- at 30 pilot locations -- is a ambitious yet manageable goal for our first year. With this funding, we could meet 7% of the Corporation's total goal of placing 20,000 AmeriCorps participants in the first year.

While \$29 million seems like a great deal of money --- and it is --- such a sum would comprise less than one half of one percent of the \$62 billion USDA budget.

I would request that you take one or both of the following steps:

- * Send a letter from Eli to Espy requesting that the Secretary set-aside significant funds in the FY95 budget for national service. To my knowledge, neither Espy nor Chief of Staff Ron Blackley has seen Eli's original letter.
- * Have Eli request a meeting with Secretary Espy to discuss these and other matters.
- * Request OMB to approve a specific line-item for AmeriCorps programs in the USDA budget. This request must be granted in advance of the President's February 7 budget address.

Other federal agencies that desire to run AmeriCorps programs of their own will likely need similar help.

2) Securing Health Insurance and Child Care for Our Participants:

The provisions of the law which require us to provide health insurance and child care to all participants who need it could prove quite costly. Neither our existing Youth Conservation Corps run by the Forest Service nor existing state and local youth corps have much experience in providing these benefits. We also need to plan how our health provisions would change after enactment of the President's Health Security Plan. I recommend that the Corporation provide assistance to federal agencies in both these areas. Perhaps the Corporation could coordinate group health coverage for participants in the NCCC and AmeriCorps programs run by federal agencies.

3) Helping Federal Agencies with Administrative Tasks

Federal departments seeking to implement AmeriCorps programs of their own will face not only the unique challenges posed by youth service, but must also deal with traditional federal government problems dealing with procurement, employees performance evaluations, accounting, time and attendance of employees, etc. I suggest that the Corporation explore the possibility of establishing a central administrative entity to perform these functions for all federal AmeriCorps projects.

This administrative group could be developed jointly **at no cost to the Corporation** by using both volunteer executives from major corporations and federal employees on non-reimbursable details from federal agencies.

4) Communicating the Importance of National Service to Mid-Level Managers:

While the President has talked about the importance of AmeriCorps at two or more Cabinet meetings, that message has not filtered down to assistant secretaries, department budget staff, agency administrators, and other key mid-level agency administrators. To rectify this, I recommend the following:

- * Ensure that the President mentions AmeriCorps in his State of the Union address. He should specifically mention that he expects federal agencies to play significant roles in expanding the service infrastructure.
- * Require all 3,000 Schedule "C" political appointments in the federal government, as well as relevant members of the career Senior Executive Service, to attend briefings on AmeriCorps.
- * Ask the President to issue an executive order outlining how agencies should participate in AmeriCorps. The order should require each agency to set up offices of national service run by full-time coordinators. (Many agency coordinators are now able to devote only a small portion of their time to national service.)
- * Ensure that all members of the White House staff continually communicate internally and externally that AmeriCorps is a top priority of the President.
- * Set up a legal briefing on the National and Community Service Act for representatives from the offices of general counsel and the budget offices at each federal agency.

5) Working With Federal Agencies to Raise Private Money

Corporation staff should work with the agencies to develop joint Corporation/agency fundraising plans for each agency AmeriCorps program.

6) Raising Money From Federal Employees

Create a "National Federal Employee Serve-A-Thon" in which federal employees perform a day of community service on a designated Saturday in order to raise money for agency AmeriCorps projects. At USDA alone, if every employee raised \$100 from family and friends, we could collect \$10 million for our AmeriCorps programs. This would require the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to grant agencies a special exemption from the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).