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

August 4, 1994

To: Grant Buntrock, Administrator
Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service

From: Joel Berg *JB*
Director of National Service

Subject: AmeriCorps/USDA Training Conference

During the week of August 8-12, 1994, we will be conducting a training conference for managers of the AmeriCorps/USDA projects that will start operation in September of this year. We would appreciate your help kicking off this meeting, which will be attended by just over 200 people from every region of the country. We would request that you make a few welcoming remarks to the group on Monday afternoon, August 8, at around 2:00 p.m. Senator Patrick Leahy and Congressman Kika de la Garza are both expected to speak during this time slot, and Under Secretary Moos has also been invited.

Attached is a copy of the most recent meeting agenda. If you would prefer to speak to the group at another time, we will certainly try to accommodate your schedule as far as possible. You are more than welcome to attend and participate in as many of the conference events as you have the time and interest to do. We are especially excited about the Afternoon of Service project planned for Wednesday afternoon, where conference attendees will fan out to several anti-hunger and environmental project sites to perform service alongside existing youth service corps, just as the AmeriCorps participants will be doing throughout the next year.

You are also cordially invited to join us for the Tuesday evening "picnic" at the 4-H Center. This will be a good opportunity for conference participants to meet the key dignitaries and senior policy officials associated with AmeriCorps/USDA in a casual, conversational setting.

Please confirm your availability for opening remarks on August 8 and/or the picnic on August 9 as soon as possible, so that we can proceed with finalizing the agenda. Your response, and any questions you may have about the conference, should be directed to Donna Hines of my staff, at 690-0693, or to me, at 720-6350.

Thank you once again for your support of the AmeriCorps/USDA program.

To: Ned Garvey, Larry Winston

From: Joel Berg

2 pages

Per your request, attached is the document specifying ARS' commitment to providing \$100,000 in ARS FY95 funds to our year-long project at the Arboretum. It was provided to us and the Office of Budget and Program Analysis by Joseph Garbarino.



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

August 4, 1994

To: AmeriCorps/USDA Working Group
From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service *JB*
Subject: What to Bring to the AmeriCorps Staff Training

Staff attending next week's AmeriCorps/USDA staff training should bring the following items:

- 1) Casual clothes for the bulk of the training, along with perhaps one set of business clothes for the reception
- 2) The latest version of each project work plan, specifying what work will be accomplished on a weekly basis and what staff support, tools, equipment, supplies, and training will be needed to accomplish that work on a weekly basis
- 3) The latest version of each project's recruitment plan
- 4) Any press advisories already released or to be released
- 5) Any local recruitment materials already prepared
- 6) Any relevant clips from local newspapers
- 7) A list of any questions they would like answered about AmeriCorps in general, the USDA AmeriCorps program, or their specific site



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

August 4, 1994

To: AmeriCorps/USDA Working Group
From: Joel Berg JB
Subject: Sites for September 12 Launch Date

Yesterday at the Corporation for National and Community Service training program, the Corporation requested that we provide, by the close of business yesterday, specific information about our state of readiness on September 12. I have received an extension until close of business today. We need the following information for each and every project site.

- 1) On September 12, at each project site, what is the status of the Corps members:
 - a) All corps members ready to start work
 - b) All corps members ready to starting training
 - c) All corps members recruited and able to attend kick-off ceremony, but not quite ready to begin work or training
 - D) Final corps members still being recruited
- 2) On September 12, in which precise geographical location are you planning to place corps members for each project? *

* Note: The Corporation is planning to create certain regional kick-offs. For instance, corps members from Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska -- and possible Iowa and Oklahoma - will all meet in a kick-off ceremony in Kansas City on September 12. For this document today, ignore such regional or state events and simply state that location in which we would hold the kick-off if USDA were acting alone.



August 3, 1994

MEMORANDUM

To: Lamar Beasley, Lloyd Wright

From: Joel Berg *JB*

Subject: **Rural Development Team Regional Facilitators**

This memorandum is to inform you that the need for each of your agencies to provide three full-time Rural Development Team Facilitators is *not* negotiable.

In the legally-binding application the Department made to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) -- which was approved by both SCS and FS before the application was submitted in April -- the Department committed to creating such a full-time position in each region. (Attached is page 44 of the application, which makes that commitment.)

We reaffirmed this commitment after SCS Chief Johnson personally called CNCS to lobby on behalf of approval of the Rural Development Team.

The reason that your agencies originally committed this idea was to *reduce* the need for FTE's to run our Rural Development Team. Without this system -- in which Regional Facilitators will be provided on a proportional basis by each of the five agencies involved -- each agency would instead have to provide **11** FTE's. The need for full-time management of each of our programs has continually been stressed by CNCS. This need is further clarified by SCS' plan to intermingle Rural Development Team and Public Lands and Environmental Team members in the Midwest flood states.

ASCS, FmHA, and RDA have already named their Rural Development Team Regional Facilitators and are depending upon those to be named by SCS and FS. It is critical that the SCS Facilitators from New England, Great Lakes, and California and the FS Facilitators from Appalachia, Four Corners, and Pacific Northwest attend our staff training next week. They will need to learn how they can immediately start recruiting AmeriCorps members and planning the training programs in each of their regions that must start in September.

I must stress that I cannot approve our final projects on behalf of the Secretary until these positions are filled. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

CC. Paula Jones, Dave White, Lou Woltering, Joan Comanor

to place the participant permanently in the community. The eventual goal is for as many Rural Development Team graduates as possible to be permanently hired by host communities.

The program will, in essence, be a huge computer matching service for rural development. By May 1, 1994, USDA field offices, state and local government offices, state extension services, local non-profit organizations, and institutions of higher education will have identified priority service projects in their state or region that can reasonably be performed by a well-trained recent college or professional school graduate. Communities will apply for team members through an informal competitive process. Target communities will be asked what kind of resources will be offered enrollees -- such as office space, computer equipment, social support, travel, office support -- in exchange for their services. Extra credit will be given to communities that apply jointly for the services of a team member or members. Our program will strongly encourage partnerships and teamwork arrangements between and among adjacent jurisdictions, multi-county consortiums, and/or regional entities.



By May 10, 1994, each pilot region will have self-selected a Local Advisory Committee, staffed by the USDA employee who will be the Pilot Project Coordinator in that region. By May 15, 1994, the USDA national office and all Pilot Project Coordinators will have mailed recruitment materials and applications to all potential recruitment entities and interested individuals. Special emphasis will be placed on recruiting participants to serve in their home communities or in communities substantially similar to the communities in which they grew up.

Applicants will be asked to fill-out detailed descriptions of their education, training, practical work experience, and vocational interests. Applications will be due by June 30,



August 3, 1994

File

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File

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TO: LLOYD WRIGHT
COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

FROM: JOEL BERG
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL SERVICE

DATE: AUGUST 2, 1994

RE: TRANSPORTATION FOR TRAINING

I am writing with regard to the August 8 AmeriCorp/USDA training and two of the non-profits in Tennessee which were included in our application to the Corporation as part of a SCS Rural Development Team. As a result of a site visit to Tennessee last week, Katherine Gibney was informed that these non-profits had not received information about the training. On her return, Katherine discussed the issue with Paula Jones, who recommended that the non-profits call the SCS office in Nashville. In following up on her return, Katherine learned the people in Tennessee were told that SCS could not pay for transportation but would pay for room and board for training.

At this time, one member of the non-profit who makes \$7,000 is going to provide at least one ticket out of her own funds for another person to attend. I am concerned that these persons, who we included in our application and who live in one of the most poverty-stricken areas of our country, are being required to pay for transportation out of their own pockets, because their interest is so high in the AmeriCorps project.

In addition, since they did not know about training until last week, they are unable to get special airline rates. A ticket is going to cost about \$500 at this late date.

Because these non-profits are located in an extremely isolated area of Appalachia and they will be supervising at least five AmeriCorps participants, I think it is imperative that at least one of them attend training.

If the transportation is not funded, I am certain they will be the only conference participants paying their transportation out of their own pockets. I would like to request your help in getting transportation funded for these non-profits. If we can work this out by Thursday, they could fly on the government rate and save us some money.

Please feel free to contact me at 720-4369.

Denise will deliver to Lloyd
in 5230. If at all possible
could you follow up please?
If all else fails, perhaps they
could be reimbursed after
the fact. K.

in E-Mail

TO: LLOYD WRIGHT
COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

FROM: JOEL BERG
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL SERVICE

DATE: AUGUST 2, 1994

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United States
Department of
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Office of
Communications

Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

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August 2, 1994

To: Arlison Osborne, CNCS
From: Joel Berg, USDA JB
Subject: Scheduling Suggestions for the "Launch"

Listed below are the USDA AmeriCorps sites that Secretary Espy could possibly visit on September 12, alone or with the President, Vice-President, First Lady, or Second Lady.

I have based these recommended sites on three factors:

- 1) Where USDA will have more than one high-quality site in the general area ready to start by September 12.
- 2) Areas that have both urban and rural USDA projects nearby.
- 3) Media markets in which Secretary Espy is likely to get covered.

Milwaukee, WI (anti-hunger and flood relief sites)

St. Louis, MO (environmental and flood relief sites)

Houston, TX (environmental and rural development sites)

Additionally, even if neither the President nor the Vice-President visit an actual USDA site, I would recommend in the strongest terms possible that one of them visit at least one rural site (near a major media market) on launch day.

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This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

July

Divider Title: _____



July 28, 1994

To: Under Secretary Nash

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service *JB*

Subject: **Invitation to AmeriCorps/USDA Training Conference**

During the week of August 8-12, 1994, we will be conducting a training conference for managers of the AmeriCorps/USDA projects that will begin operations in September of this year. We would appreciate your helping us kick off this meeting, which will be attended by just over 200 people from every region of the country, including USDA employees and representatives from non-profit and youth service groups. We would appreciate if you and other members of the sub-cabinet could make a few welcoming remarks to the group on Monday afternoon (August 8) at around 2:00 p.m. Senator Patrick Leahy has tentatively agreed to also address the conference during this time slot.

Attached is a copy of the proposed meeting agenda, for your information. If you would prefer to speak to the group at another time, we will certainly try to accommodate your schedule as far as possible. You (or members of your staff) are more than welcome to attend and participate in as many of the conference events as you have the time and interest to do. We are especially excited about the Afternoon of Service project planned for Wednesday afternoon, where conference attendees will fan out to several anti-hunger and environmental project sites to perform actual service in teams, just as the AmeriCorps participants will be doing throughout the next year.

You are also cordially invited to join us for the Tuesday evening "picnic" at the 4-H Center. This will be a good opportunity for conference participants to meet the key dignitaries and senior policy officials associated with AmeriCorps/USDA in a casual, conversational setting.

Please confirm your availability for opening remarks on August 8 and/or the picnic on August 9 as soon as possible, so that we can proceed with finalizing the agenda. Your response, and any questions you may have about the conference, should be directed to Donna Hines of my staff, at 690-0693, or to me, at 720-6350. Thank you for your consistent support of the AmeriCorps/USDA program.



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July 28, 1994

To: Assistant Secretary Townsend *JB*
From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service
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United States
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Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

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To: Assistant Secretary Jensen

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service *JB*

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To: Assistant Secretary Lyons

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July 28, 1994

To: Assistant Secretary Haas

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service JB

Subject: Invitation to AmeriCorps/USDA Training Conference

During the week of August 8-12, 1994, we will be conducting a training conference for managers of the AmeriCorps/USDA projects that will begin operations in September of this year. We would appreciate your helping us kick off this meeting, which will be attended by just over 200 people from every region of the country, including USDA employees and representatives from anti-hunger and youth service groups. We would appreciate if you and other members of the sub-cabinet could make a few welcoming remarks to the group on Monday afternoon (August 8) at around 2:00 p.m. Senator Patrick Leahy has tentatively agreed to also address the conference during this time slot.

Attached is a copy of the proposed meeting agenda, for your information. If you would prefer to speak to the group at another time, we will certainly try to accommodate your schedule as far as possible. You (or members of your staff) are more than welcome to attend and participate in as many of the conference events as you have the time and interest to do. We are especially excited about the Afternoon of Service project planned for Wednesday afternoon, where conference attendees will fan out to several anti-hunger and environmental project sites to perform actual service in teams, just as the AmeriCorps participants will be doing throughout the next year.

You are also cordially invited to join us for the Tuesday evening "picnic" at the 4-H Center. This will be a good opportunity for conference participants to meet the key dignitaries and senior policy officials associated with AmeriCorps/USDA in a casual, conversational setting.

Please confirm your availability for opening remarks on August 8 and/or the picnic on August 9 as soon as possible, so that we can proceed with finalizing the agenda. Your response, and any questions you may have about the conference, should be directed to Donna Hines of my staff, at 690-0693, or to me, at 720-6350. Thank you for your consistent support of the AmeriCorps/USDA program.



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

July 27, 1994

To: Elaine Kamarck
From: Joel Berg JB
Subject: How the V.P. Can Boost the USDA AmeriCorps Program

Greetings from the trenches of the reinventing government struggle. I hope you are doing well.

I am sending you this memo to inform you of the success of the USDA AmeriCorps program and to ask for your help in ways that will be mutually beneficial to both the Vice President and Secretary Espy.

You may not be aware that I have made a move at USDA from Director of Public Liaison to Director of National Service in order to concentrate full-time on implementing the Department's AmeriCorps program.

Not only will USDA be running the largest and most ambitious federal agency AmeriCorps program, but we will be running the largest single AmeriCorps program in the nation.

Our program will engage 1,200 participants in projects in 32 states, working in or near over 100 different Congressional Districts. These participants will serve in 42 distinct programs fighting hunger, promoting rural economic development, or protecting the environment.

All our projects will be based on the mainstream vision that a socio-economic mix of participants (including those from middle class families) will work on projects that fill critical community needs.

As you know better than I, it is truly exciting that -- after years of writing and philosophizing about these issues -- we have the unique opportunity to put these ideas into action.

Our program should be of particular interest to the V.P. for three reasons:

1) The AmeriCorps/USDA program is a successful model of reinventing government in action.

The USDA program culminates a highly unusual process in which Federal agencies had to actually submit a detailed and comprehensive application to another federal entity in order to be considered for a grant.

In other words, USDA and other Cabinet agencies were required to go through a process similar to those we require of others. (In fact, our application to the Corporation for National and Community Service required a strategic plan similar to the types of strategic plans that USDA and HUD are requiring in Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community applications).

Unlike the way government usually operates, no one agency was guaranteed funding by a set formula. As a consequence of this open competition, Federal agencies were forced to work harder and more creatively to develop quality programs in their applications.

This USDA program also represents a triumph of Secretary Espy's vision for reorganizing the Department from 42 quasi-independent agencies into one Team USDA. Over a dozen USDA agencies have significant roles in managing this program. We have succeeded in getting these agencies to look past their parochial interests and turf to collaborate on how to best make this new program work.

Planning this program has required a host of other actions to reinvent government:

- * We have empowered front line workers by allowing career employees in Washington and in field offices to play key leadership roles in implementing this program. (In fact, I am the only political appointee significantly involved in this program). Half a dozen career employees stayed at work until 3:00 a.m. one morning to get our application in on time.

- * USDA agencies held extensive internal competitions to pick the highest quality proposals from around the country.

- * We have scrapped existing personnel regulations in favor of new ones we are creating for AmeriCorps participants.

- * We have forged creative new public/private partnerships with non-profit organizations such as youth service corps and anti-hunger groups.

- * We have already created a specific series of objectives for each of our 42 sites and are now creating comprehensive evaluation measures to test whether we meet objectives. Thus, we will be stressing outcomes, not inputs.

Perhaps most importantly, the USDA AmeriCorps program finds new and creative ways to meet our department's missions in a way that works better and costs less.

2) The AmeriCorps/USDA program will help bring the Information Superhighway to rural America.

Members of the USDA/AmeriCorps Team will eventually be hooked up to Internet and will be trained to teach others in rural communities how to utilize Internet. Some team members will plan how the rural communities in which they are located can gain access to "on ramps" to the Information Superhighway.

3) The AmeriCorps/USDA program will utilize innovative ways to protect the environment.

In the Public Lands and Environment Team, participants will work in 18 pilot locations -- seven urban and 11 rural -- to perform service helping communities reduce environmental hazards and working on public lands to conserve, restore, and sustain natural habitats. Some of these pilot locations will be run directly by USDA and some will be run in partnership with existing youth service corps. Participants will 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 in disaster recovery, and restore wetlands.

These projects will meet the Vice-President's goal of finding innovative new approaches to bridge the false division between protecting the environment and boosting the economy.

4) The AmeriCorps/USDA program will bolster the President's and the Vice-President's images as mainstream leaders.

The USDA program has, to date, proven to be highly popular. Our toll-free 800 line for recruitment has so far received over 1,100 calls from around the country. The USDA program will:

- * rebuild the sense of community that made America great
- * promote personal responsibility
- * expand educational and economic opportunity
- * reunite the interests of the middle class and the poor

Based on the four above ways in which this program mirrors the policy agenda of the President and the Vice-President, permit me to ask for help from your office in the following seven ways.

1) Request the Vice-President to attend either our staff training during the week of August 8 or our Departmental AmeriCorps kick-off following the President's AmeriCorps kick-off on September 12.

Both events would be an opportunity for the Vice-President to meet directly with the 200 or more USDA employees implementing our AmeriCorps program in the field, as well as countless other USDA employees who can view the proceedings across the country by satellite. Senator Pat Leahy, Senate Agriculture Committee Chair, has already expressed his interest in attending the training.

2) Request that the Vice-President visit a USDA AmeriCorps site.

At any time it would fit in his schedule, the Vice-President could visit any one of our 42 Anti-Hunger, Environmental, or Rural Development sites in 32 states in every region of the country.

3) Suggest that the Vice-President include references to the USDA AmeriCorps projects in his speeches.

The USDA AmeriCorps projects offer vivid examples of how this Administration is not just talking about reinventing government, we are getting results.

4) Ask the Vice-President to sign a letter to the USDA employees involved in this program that would be included in the manual distributed at our staff training.

I would be glad to provide a first draft of such a letter.

5) Present reinventing government awards or certificates to key USDA career employees who have made an extraordinary efforts to implement this program.

I would strongly nominate those employees who stayed until 3:00 a.m. one night to meet an important deadline.

6) If the Vice President cannot attend our staff training, I would hope you, someone else from your staff, or someone from the National Performance Review could attend to discuss how AmeriCorps fits in with the philosophy of reinventing government.

Such a discussion could greatly benefit our employees by giving them a greater sense the magnitude of change they are helping implement.

7) Create a task force with representatives of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the National Performance Review, OMB, OPM, GSA, and the Federal agencies that will be running AmeriCorps programs.

There are still many key administrative issues standing as barriers to successful Federal AmeriCorps programs that need to be resolved on a multi-agency basis.

I will call you in a few days to follow-up on these issues.



July 26, 1994

MEMORANDUM

To: Agency Administrators

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service *JB*

Subject: **Need for Temporary Support Staff for 800 Line**

Since June, the Office of Communications has been running a toll-free 800 line to receive phone calls generated by Secretary Espy's public service announcement -- now running in dozens of major media markets -- asking citizens to sign-up for the USDA AmeriCorps national service program.

The public service announcement, along with our other public affairs efforts, has generated over 1,100 phone calls from around the nation. The level of calls is continuing to increase, creating a temporary workload that far exceeds the capacity of our small staff. The line will be in operation until September 20.

It is critical that we continue to be able to answer all calls from citizens wanting to participate in this exciting new USDA program.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could provide support staff to answer and record phone calls in any or all of the following manners:

- 1) one person on a full-time, two-month detail
- 2) rotating crews of support staff who will cover the lines from 9:00 - 5:00 p.m. EST for the next two months
- 3) any support staff you can lend for any amount of time between now and mid-September

Please have your staff contact Ron De Munbrun, USDA National Service Administrative Coordinator, at 690-3894 to discuss how you may help.

I thank you in advance for the additional assistance for this important Administration initiative.

DETERMINED TO BE AN
ADMINISTRATIVE MARKING

INITIALS: RCCR DATE: 09/02/23 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

EAD

July 26, 1994

File

To: Stephanie

From: Joel

Late Friday afternoon, without any warning or consultation, Lamar Beasley removed the two top Forest Service AmeriCorps coordinators, Kathryn Allen and Vertis Stovall, from the project. Beasley replaced them with his own hand-picked staff from administration, who have no experience in either national service or human resources.

Some points:

Why this change must be reversed

- * Allen and Stovall have worked on this issue for over a year, have direct experience in running Forest Service youth service programs, have planned excellent AmeriCorps programs scheduled to start this September, and have actively promoted Team USDA cooperation with SCS and other agencies
- * Allen, a woman, and Stovall, an African-American man -- both of whom have extensive experience -- were replaced by white males with no experience in the area. The move endangers our commitment to ensure diversity of both our program managers and our participants
- * At a recent meeting, one of the two was angrily reprimanded by Beasley for openly supporting a decision I made about the program; Beasley basically said that the Office of the Secretary couldn't tell the Forest Service what to do
- * Beasley is very aware that I have personally written to Jim Lyons and to Chief Thomas to praise the work of both Allen and Stovall
- * Beasley continues to demonstrate to his staff genuine hostility to national service and the general authority of the Clinton Administration
- * Wolterining told me that Forest Service sites may NOT be ready by the President's September 12th kick-off, even though SCS and FNS sites will certainly be ready; the excuses he gave me were based on incorrect information about the program
- * Congress, the media, the President, and the Secretary are all very excited about the programs we have already announced. If this attempt to harpoon AmeriCorps is not reversed, it will reflect poorly on those responsible

Other continuing problems with the Forest Service:

- * The national office has continually failed to send budget information to the field to allow them to start recruiting, thereby jeopardizing the whole program
- * The legislative office has given misleading information to Senator Bumpers' office about how ~~me~~ ^{we} may fund our programs
- * State and Private Forestry has still not finalized locations for their rural development sites
- * The Forest Service still has not provided payment to the DC summer program, which the Secretary personally ordered implemented

What actions I suggest:

- * Reinstate Allen and Stovall and give them clear authority to report directly to Chief Thomas or Associate Chief Unger
- * Remove Beasley from any direct line supervision over AmeriCorps or take other measures in this regard
- * Ask Joan Commoner to speed the process through which State and Private Forestry sites are selected and staffed
- * Make it clear, in an official memorandum to both Thomas and Johnson, that the law and regulations of AmeriCorps provide that each Federal AmeriCorps program is ultimately managed by the office of each cabinet secretary and that Secretary Espy has delegated that authority to me. Both agencies need to be reminded of the critical nature of cooperation as part of Team USDA.



July 24, 1994

To: Eli Segal

From: Joel Berg *JB*

Subject: **FY96 Budget Process**

I thank you once again for all your support that has made it possible for our large and high-quality program to begin this September. Yet once again, I must call on you for assistance. Your help is needed right now to ensure that Federal agencies have the ability to run AmeriCorps programs in FY96 as large or larger than the programs we will be running in FY95.

As you are well aware, USDA is able to run such a large AmeriCorps program in FY95 primarily because we have found over \$20 million in our own budget to support the program. Because USDA has over a \$60 billion dollar budget, we have found creative ways to take that money from dozens of separate appropriations lines within our own budget.

Due to our large budgets and significant personnel resources, major cabinet agencies such as USDA, Interior, Defense, Transportation, Education, and HHS provide AmeriCorps with the largest capacity to expand rapidly and meet the President's goal of having 100,000 AmeriCorps members in the field by FY96.

Much of the greatest work in starting such programs in a Federal agency occur in the first year -- right now we are working out key issues relating to payrolling, procurement, liability, etc. Thus, we will be able to dramatically expand our program in future years much more easily than we are able to start it this year.

For instance, at USDA alone -- if budget were not a constraint -- we could easily expand from 1,200 participants this September to at least 10,000 participants in quality slots next September. Without even considering our large capacity for expanding our Anti-Hunger Teams and Rural Development Teams, we could add the additional 8,800 participants simply by expanding our Public Lands and Environmental Teams by from sites on eight National Forests this September to sites on all 155 national Forests next September.

Other federal agencies surely also have this ability to expand exponentially.

That's the good news. The bad news is that money for AmeriCorps will be increasingly difficult to fund out of the USDA budget and out of other federal agency budgets.

As you are well aware, most appropriations sub-committees are becoming tougher and tougher. USDA's discretionary budget will be sliced for FY95, as will those of most other cabinet departments. FY96 is likely to be even worse.

That is why I am urging you to make a concerted effort right now to place specific line items in FY96 department budgets for AmeriCorps. The memo you sent to Cabinet Secretaries last summer about the FY95 budget last Summer from you and MacLarty was an important first step but its impact was limited. Neither Espy, the chief USDA budget officer, nor myself saw it when it was sent.)

I understand and appreciate your strong desire not to tell cabinet secretaries how to run their own departments, but the departments do need to receive clearer signals that the President and OMB are both very interested in including specifics AmeriCorps budget lines in FY96 agency budgets.

This time to act is now. Each federal agency must submit the first cut of its FY96 budget to OMB by September. I am more than aware of the late stage we are already in for FY96, but I am highly concerned that we will not be able to fund a quality program for FY97 if we do not fix the problems for FY96. I suggest a seven-pronged strategy for building federal agency AmeriCorps budgets:

- 1) Immediately send a memo signed by you, Leon Panetta, and Alice Rivlin through the White House Office of Cabinet Affairs requesting cabinet secretaries and their chief budget officers to prepare FY96 AmeriCorps budget requests. Ask cabinet secretaries to consider administrative or regulatory changes that could free-up more money for federal, state, or non-profit AmeriCorps initiatives. Ask Christine Varney to follow-up on this request in her daily conference call with Chief of Staffs.
- 2) Ask all cabinet secretaries and their chief budget officers to attend a meeting with you, Leon panetta, and Alice Rivlin to discuss those FY96 budget requests.
- 3) Ask Alice Rivlin to assign one point person on staff at OMB to oversee all AmeriCorps budgetary and administrative issues in the Federal government.
- 4) Work with Federal agencies to hold high level briefings on these budget requests with key Congressional committees members, their staff, and critical interest groups.

5) Ask all relevant Cabinet secretaries to brief their trade press on their FY96 budget request for AmeriCorps.

6) Appoint someone from your fundraising staff to work exclusively with federal agencies. We in federal agencies have a tremendous potential to raise corporate and non-profit funds for our programs, but we face significant legal and ethical restrictions on our ability to personally solicit funds. Your staff -- not under the same restrictions -- could help us greatly.

I look forward to working with you and your staff as we make AmeriCorps a permanent part of federal agencies.



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I look forward to working with you and your staff as we make AmeriCorps a permanent part of federal agencies.

FIP

July 22, 1994

To: Lloyd, Paula, Dee
From: Joel *JB*
Subject: Comments on Your Draft Operations Manual

Thank you for your help with the draft operations manual. It represents an important contribution, and we will discuss it at our working group meeting on Monday.

In the meantime, my comments:

1) The document should start with the "Background on AmeriCorps" section from my draft planning guide. It is critical that all our staff receive a broad overview on the philosophy and design on the USDA program.

2) Chapter 2, "Project Design and Development," needs to be closely related to the actual USDA projects, and time-lines should be included for each task mentioned.

3) Chapter 3, "Application Process," should be either deleted or significantly decreased and attached as an appendix. First, since our internal process is different than CNCS's process, this section will be confusing for our staff. Second, both our process and CNCS process may be significantly changed next year. Third, the operations handbook should be focused on getting our program off the ground this September, and worrying about next year may be unduly distracting and time-consuming right now.

4) On page 29, under the Secretary of Agriculture section, I would modify the last responsibility to: "monitoring USDA projects directly and through the national agency offices." I would also add the other responsibilities:

- A) Coordinating all public communications
- B) Coordinating intergovernmental relations
- C) Coordinating between USDA agencies
- D) Ensuring one Departmental identity for the program

5) Chapter 4, "Roles and Responsibilities," should be expanded to the management principles and key staff sections from my draft handbook. Separate charts should be included for each team and the "information flow lines" should be connected between each box.

Included

File

6) Ron will provide comments on Chapter 5, "Personnel/ Administrative Issues."

Included

7) Chapter 7, "Training Development," needs more specifics on how to create a training plan.

Included

8) Chapter 8, "Project Monitoring/Evaluation," needs more specifics on how to create an evaluation plan.

9) Chapter 9, Health, Safety, and Accident Control Program, is excellent and should definitely be stressed.

10) In general, the manual needs more information about exactly what task our staff have to complete in order to have quality programs running this September. The documents needs highly developed sections on:

- A) Creating a workplan
- B) Site visits
- C) Participant Development (experiential learning, weekly education workshops, etc.)
- D) Tools, Equipment, Supplies, and Uniforms
- E) Budget
- F) Intergovernmental Relations
- G) Congressional Relations
- H) Public Affairs
- I) Electronic communications
- J) September 12, Kick-Off

11) The manual definitely needs a time-line, explaining day-to-day tasks that must be completed at all levels by September 12.

I and my staff will work with you to make these changes and additions.

big mail

334

Phon

817-5401

Ext. 3211

Fax 817-334-5470

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Executive Secretariat
Official Clearance Sheet

09-30604-32
(Control Number)
Berg

	DRAFT	REWRITE	FINAL
AGENCY CCO: (Signature) (Date)	<i>Denver Browning</i> <i>6-27-94</i>		<i>File</i>
AGENCY HEAD: (Signature) (Title) (Date)			
OES: (Signature) (Title) (Date)			
OGC: (Signature) (Title) (Date)			
OSPA: (Signature) (Title) (Date)	<i>Lawrence Wachs</i> <i>Associate Director</i> <i>Office of Budget & Program Analysis</i> <i>7/13/94</i>		
OCR: (Signature) (Title) (Date)			
SUB-CAB CCO: (Signature) (Date)			
SUB-CAB: (Signature) (Title) (Date)			
ADDT'L CLEAR: (Signature) (Title) (Date)			
EXEC. ASST:			
SEC/AUTOPEN:			



July 21, 1994

DECISION MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM: Joel Berg
Director of National Service, Office of Communications

THROUGH: Ali Webb,
Director of Communications

SUBJECT: Remaining Issues for Implementing the USDA AmeriCorps Program

When we last spoke during your trip to Chicago, you indicated that you did not want me to request your approval for minor administrative decisions regarding the Departmental national service program. We agreed that I would simply manage the program based on my understanding of your goals and those of the President, and that you would, of course, notify me any time if you desired any changes in the program.

In order to formalize and institutionalize this understanding, this decision memos requests that you: formally delegate authority to the AmeriCorps/USDA national service program, approve a process for staffing and funding the program, communicate your desire to continue the program in FY 96, and indicate which national service events you may want to personally attend over the next few months.

By signing off on the issues on this memorandum, you will empower me to work with the sub-cabinet, agency administrators, OGC, and OBPA to run the large and high-quality program we have planned -- without you having to continually review lengthy decision memos about relatively unimportant technical issues. More importantly, you will ensure that this program will be able to become an institutionalized part of USDA that will continue to expand even after your four-year tenure.

My intention is for this memo to comprehensively cover the major national service decisions that need to be made for the next year.

ISSUE # 1 - Need for a Formal AmeriCorps Management Group:

Now that the Team USDA AmeriCorps national service program has moved from the planning stage to the actual implementation of projects, there is a need to formally establish the program within the Department's organizational structure. Such delegation is necessary now to avoid possible delays or obstacles to the USDA AmeriCorps program.

Background:

In September of 1993, Congress passed the National and Community Service Trust Act, which enables federal departments to manage national service programs individually or manage them in partnership with others. Using the authorities contained in the Act, I have worked with the Department's agencies and other federal departments to develop the Department's AmeriCorps program this year.

Sixteen different USDA agencies --- SCS, FS, FNS, FMHA, ASCS, RDA, REA, ARS, ES, AMS, OICD, NASS, ERS, APHIS, and FCIC --- will be actively involved in supporting AmeriCorps; some of these agencies will be providing funding and staff support while others will be providing critically needed technical assistance. While my effort to date to coordinate our planning efforts with all these sometimes competing agencies has been a difficult challenge, most of the USDA agencies have been ultimately supportive. The manner in which representatives from different agencies have worked together has been extremely encouraging to all those engaged in the process. What we have seen in developing this program is positive proof that the Secretary's vision for a reorganized and unified department will succeed. The national service program is demonstrating that there are significant benefits to the employees and to the public when we plan and act as a team and not a group of disparate agencies.

To date, my staff and I have been able to function within an informal structure guided by your expressed interest in the program and everyone's desire to do a quality job in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Now that we have reached the point where formal agreements must be established between the Department and CNCS, as well as between the Department and other federal, state, and local entities and non-profit organizations, there is a need for formal delegations of authority to allow the appropriate people to perform their duties. Specifically, there is a need for one person to be given the authority to oversee and coordinate the efforts of the Department's agencies in developing and managing national service programs. I am convinced that we need a strong, non-bureaucratic, but fully empowered mechanism for managing national service at the Secretarial level. This program is too important to the President and too visible to be left to the agencies alone to manage. It requires someone with the authority to establish priorities, create partnerships between agencies, and who has a clear picture of your vision and the President's vision.

Normally, the delegation of authority would be handled by identifying the organization that will manage the program and then amending the Code of Federal Regulations containing their existing authorities to add the national service program. However, given the status of the Department's reorganization efforts, it does not seem sensible to undertake the effort necessary to amend one entity's authorities when they may have to be changed again in the near future. At the same time, the Corporation's deadlines and the requirements for planning and operating the program make it imperative that a clear delegation of authority exist. Many key national service issues will have to be addressed immediately before most formal reorganization efforts are completed.

A decision memorandum relating to this issue has previously been submitted to you, but I am re-submitting this document to reflect the change of the name of Office of Public Affairs to the Office of Communications.

Options For Issue # 1 - Need for a Formal AmeriCorps Management Group:

- A. **Do not delegate authority** to anyone to centrally oversee, manage and coordinate the USDA AmeriCorps program.

PRO: The agencies might feel that they were not being burdened by another layer of bureaucracy and will have more freedom to implement national service. Another advantage is that no paperwork would have to be done.

CON: It would be impossible to guarantee that the USDA national service program could be successfully implemented without a central entity's being delegated authority to manage and coordinate the program. In fact, it is likely that the program would fail to meet our expectations of excellence, resulting in an undesirable outcome for the Administration, the Department, and the Secretary.

- B. **Amend the Office of Communications' Delegations of Authority** to reflect the management of the USDA AmeriCorps program.

PRO: The delegations made in this manner would be clearer from a technical standpoint.

CON: There is a substantial amount of work involved in amending existing delegations and the work might confuse or disrupt the ongoing reorganization efforts.

- C. **Use a Secretary's Memorandum** to delegate the authority to manage the USDA AmeriCorps program to the Director of the Office of Communications, who will further delegate the authority to the Director of National Service.

PRO: The Secretary's memorandum requires substantially less effort to develop and would not impede or preempt any of the Secretary's reorganization efforts but would delegate the authority necessary for the national service program to be centrally managed.

CON: A Secretary's Memorandum is not as formal as an amendment to the OC delegations of authority. Again, the agencies might view the establishment of a formal national service group as impinging on their authority.

RECOMMENDATION for Issue # 1 - Need for a Formal AmeriCorps Management Group:

I recommend you implement option "C." This option would achieve Departmental coordination with the least amount of paperwork. It is requested that you sign the attached Secretary's Memorandum to formally establish the USDA national service program and to delegate authority to manage this program to the Director of the Office of Communications who will in turn delegate this authority to the Director of National Service.

Agree _____ Date _____

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____

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

SECRETARY'S MEMORANDUM _____

USDA National Service Program

1 PURPOSE

This memorandum establishes the USDA National Service Program and designates the Director of the Office of Communications as the Department's manager for the program.

2 BACKGROUND

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 established the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and the Public Lands Corps. The intent of the legislation is to engage Americans of all ages and backgrounds in community-based service. This service will address the Nation's educational, public safety, human, and environmental needs to achieve direct and demonstrable results. In doing so, the Corporation will foster civic responsibility, strengthen the ties that bind us together as a people, and provide educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service. Federal departments are eligible to apply for funds to run national service programs directly or in partnerships with others.

3 POLICY

As the People's Department, it is the responsibility of all USDA agencies to strive for the maximum allowable participation by the Department in the area of national service. By identifying existing programs that can be used to support national service initiatives or proposing new programs or projects, agencies will strive to the fullest extent possible to use AmeriCorps grants, services, and educational awards to leverage existing resources and to integrate the national service concept more fully into agencies' programs and activities. The Department will run programs in which both the participants and the managers at every project site will represent a socio-economically diverse group of Americans. The Director of the Office of Communications will manage the USDA national service program and coordinate the Department's national service initiatives, including those involving the Public Lands Corps. The Director will also develop detailed guidelines and procedures for agencies to follow in planning, operating, staffing, and funding the program. The Director of National Service within the Office of Communication will have day-to-day responsibility for managing the Department's national service program.

ISSUE #2 - Funding and Staffing of a AmeriCorps Management Group:

The Office of Communications, in which the function of coordinating AmeriCorps is now housed, does not currently have either the budget or the FTE's to adequately support this expanding program. If you agree that the Team USDA AmeriCorps program should continue to have some centralized management group, then there is a need to institutionalize slightly expanded funding and staffing for that group.

BACKGROUND:

To date, the management group for these efforts has been composed of three people on full-time detail from the Office of Communications and various people on part-time detail from some of the agencies. Early start-up costs -- such as funding for travel and applications, copying the public service announcement you taped, and printing recruitment posters and brochures -- have been paid for primarily from the Office of Communications with some contributions from SCS and FS. As we move toward full implementation of the Team USDA AmeriCorps, it is important to implement a formal management structure to support the program, as well as prepare the agencies for their ever-increasing role in the Administration's national service initiatives. Without such a structure, it will not be possible to manage effectively the 42 separate programs USDA will be operating in FY 95.

OPTIONS for Issue 2 - Funding and Staffing the AmeriCorps Management Group:

- A. **Do not manage national service centrally**, leaving the management and funding up to each agency.

Pro: Agencies can proceed at their own pace in meeting their missions the best way each administrator sees fit.

Con: Initially this is the least time-consuming option because nothing has to be done. However, as each program moves into the implementation stage, each agency would have the burden of developing recruitment, training, and management procedures on their own. In addition, they would have to create a task force of sorts at various times in the year to deal with third-party partners engaged in their national service efforts. There would also be a need to create a Department-level task force to coordinate the agencies' efforts to submit an application to the Corporation for National and Community Service. The Corporation will only accept applications at the Departmental level and not from individual agencies.

In this option it falls to the individual agencies to determine how -- if at all -- their programs will interact with those of other USDA agencies.

- B. **Continue the present course of managing AmeriCorps centrally**, using a small three-person staff in the Office of Communications augmented by detailees from the agencies and supported by funds provided on a reimbursable basis from those agencies running or in the process of planning programs. This would combine the benefits of central management while reducing the burden on agency resources and, in fact, enhancing those resources through the training of agency personnel. The staff and funding requirements for this option are attached.

Pro: The program is managed centrally for the Secretary. No new organization has to be created. No separate budget has to be submitted. Detailees could be rotated into the national service support unit to learn Team USDA AmeriCorps procedures and policies and then return to their agencies to serve as a resource to manage the agency's individual program(s). Support and clerical staff would be detailed for six to eight months and professional staff would be detailed for 8 to 12 months. Details would be on a non-reimbursable basis.

Each agency would be "assessed" an amount to cover the cost for the national support organization within the Office of Communications to perform its duties. The amount of the assessment would be based on the size of the organization's existing programs and those planned for the next year which must be worked on during the current fiscal year.

Con: Agencies may think they are "losing" the services of the personnel detailed. However, if the agency is running a national service program or programs and the detailees are helping to manage or operate those programs, then their services are not "lost" to the agency.

Again agencies may feel they are "losing" dollars. However, if the Secretary is to be guaranteed consistent and accountable management of the Team USDA national service initiatives, this money is a necessary expense associated with implementing national service.

- C. **Establish a AmeriCorps Office in the Office of The Secretary.** Staff and fund this office by moving positions and funds from the largest agencies expected to participate in national service programs.

Pro: A clear line of authority would exist from the Secretary to the national service office and its personnel. Funding necessary to support the program would be clearly identified.

Con: At a time when the Secretary is seeking to consolidate and trim USDA's organizational structure, a new office would be created. In addition, this may lead some Congressional opponents to claim we are creating a new bureaucracy.

RECOMMENDATION for Issue 2 - Funding and Staffing a National Service Group::

I recommend you implement option "B," which would be a good compromise between either creating a large new formal office or simply letting the agencies work totally independently. This option achieves the objective of having an appropriate degree of central management while limiting the burden on the agency resources and leaving them with a substantial degree of flexibility in implementing national service projects. It is requested that you sign the attached memorandum directing the Under and Assistant Secretaries, agency administrators, and office heads to provide support to the Team USDA AmeriCorps national service program as outlined in the attachment to the memorandum. (The same memorandum also outlines FY 96 budget issues discusses in "Issue 4.")

Agree _____

Date _____

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____

ISSUE # 3 - Including AmeriCorps in the FY 96 USDA Budget

This year's USDA AmeriCorps program will be funded largely by approximately \$20 million in FY 95 funds appropriated to agencies for their regular activities. Working with the Office of General Counsel, the Office of Budget and Program Analysis, and the various agency administrators and their staffs, we have identified appropriations from which we can legally fund national service. However, this process places a great strain on agencies that are facing budget cuts and FTE reductions. Given that CNCS is unlikely to contribute significant new funds in the future to USDA AmeriCorps programs, the issue is whether the Department should ask Congress for specific AmeriCorps appropriations in the FY 96 budget.

BACKGROUND:

The President and former OMB Director Panetta have demonstrated their budgetary commitment to AmeriCorps by requesting funding for CNCS for FY 96 that would be double the amount funded in FY95. However, even if Congress grants most of that request, the amount of the CNCS funds available to federal agencies will still be minimal -- increasing from about \$17 million to \$34 million. Given the likelihood that CNCS will again grant operating funds to at least 15 federal agencies, USDA can not realistically expect to receive more than \$4 million in funding from CNCS for FY 96. It is for this reason that the White House and CNCS continue to push federal agencies to find funding for AmeriCorps from their existing agency budgets.

However, maintaining or expanding a significant AmeriCorps program could place a significant burden on USDA agency budgets. If USDA simply maintains the size of our AmeriCorps program at the same level in FY 96 as in FY 95 -- 1,200 participants -- then USDA agencies will have to provide at least \$18 million from their FY 96 budgets. Increasing the size of the USDA AmeriCorps program would be even more expensive -- increasing the program to 2,000 participants would cost USDA \$34 million; doubling the program to 2,400 participants would cost USDA \$41 million.

In addition, some agencies still do not take the need to support AmeriCorps seriously because it does not have its own appropriations within the USDA budget. This gives some agencies undue leverage in demanding that the USDA program meet their agency needs more than the needs of the Department or the American people.

One possible solution to these problems is to request Congress to appropriate to the Department funds specifically designated to support our AmeriCorps program Farm Bill. To accomplish this, USDA agencies would have to be asked immediately to include this program in their FY 96 budget requests.

OPTIONS for Issue # 3 - Including AmeriCorps in the FY 96 USDA Budget

A. Do not make AmeriCorps a part of the Department's formal budget.

PRO: Not including AmeriCorps in the USDA budget would lessen the potential that the Department would have to cut in other areas to meet budget caps. Some agencies may feel relieved of their perceived burden in supporting AmeriCorps. This option also limits attempts by Congress to "target" national service programs within the Department.

CON: It will be difficult to maintain -- and nearly impossible to expand -- the USDA AmeriCorps program without specific appropriations. Moreover, if AmeriCorps is not part of the formal budget process, most agencies will not consider it a "real" program. They certainly would not consider it a priority of either the Secretary's or the President's. This would also reduce the Department's ability to significantly impact the American people through AmeriCorps.

B. Send the attached memorandum from the Secretary to the Under and Assistant Secretaries, agency administrators, and office directors directing them to include AmeriCorps programs in their formal FY 96 budget requests.

PRO: This would probably allow the USDA AmeriCorps program to expand and would "institutionalize" the inclusion of national service within each of the agencies budgets. One difficulty we encountered this year was that many agencies said they could not support national service because they had not planned for it. This would allow them to plan and for the Secretary to oversee the priorities. Most significantly, it would move national service from something many of the agencies see as "hanging off the side" of the Department, into the realm of being acknowledged as a central priority of the Secretary's. It also opens the discussion of how the flexibility provided under the national service legislation can be used to support the Secretary's reorganization efforts and the Administration's re-invention of government initiatives. Some agencies, such as the Forest Service, have already been planning how to make specific requests for AmeriCorps funding in their FY 96 budget requests.

CON: Spending funds on AmeriCorps may make it more difficult for the Department to meet budget caps. Some agencies could argue that they are being forced to come up with national service programs just to satisfy someone else's desires at the expense of current sound programs.

RECOMMENDATION for Issue # 3 - Including AmeriCorps in the FY 96 Budget

I recommend you implement option B. It is requested that you sign the attached memorandum directing the Under and Assistant Secretaries to identify the national service programs in their formal FY 96 Departmental budget submissions.

Agree _____ Date _____

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____

MEMORANDUM TO:

UNDER SECRETARIES
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES
GENERAL COUNSEL
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS
OFFICE DIRECTORS

FROM MIKE ESPY

As I explained at our recent Departmental retreat, the AmeriCorps national service program is a priority for the President and for the Department. AmeriCorps will serve as an innovative and cost-effective mechanism for delivering the Department's services. I want to thank those agencies who have been so supportive of our current national service efforts. With your help the Department has been able to establish itself as the leader in federal national service programs.

To continue and expand this leadership role, I request that you take two steps:

1) Review how you may be able to detail staff -- either full time or part time -- to the centralized USDA AmeriCorps management group. Because national service will grow in scope in each succeeding year, it is necessary to establish a trained cadre of personnel within your agencies. It is also essential to limit the size of any organization devoted to Departmental management of national service. To develop the appropriate staff while keeping the management organization small, I have decided to use personnel detailed from the agencies to provide the bulk of the support for the management group. This will give the management group the resources it needs, while giving vital training to key agency personnel who will return to the agencies to support their growing national service efforts. The management group not only needs program specialists in hunger, the environment, rural development, and disaster relief, but also requires administrative experts in such areas as personnel, telecommunications, evaluation, and financial management. There is also the need to provide funds to support the activities of this group. The Office of Budget and Program Analysis will assist each agency in making the appropriate arrangements. A staffing plan and budget is attached.

2) Make recommendations as to the potential inclusion of AmeriCorps initiatives in your FY 96 budget requests. If appropriate, please be prepared to discuss the national service initiatives in your budget submission during the Deputy Secretary's Departmental budget review in August. Your national service projects may be new initiatives or they may be cases where you are using national service as an alternative to current program delivery methods.

In formally establishing the Team USDA AmeriCorps national service program, I have placed central coordinating responsibility for this program in the Office of Communications, while reserving for the agencies significant flexibility in the implementation of the program. Mr. Joel Berg, Director of National Service in the Office of Communications, is available to work with you in identifying and developing feasible AmeriCorps projects. He can be reached at 720-6350, room 538-A.

ISSUE # 4 - Speaking to USDA Management Team Training

From Monday, August 8th through Friday, August 12th, approximately 200 people who will be managing USDA AmeriCorps programs will gather in Washington and at the 4-H Center in Chevy Chase for an intensive training program. Most of those in attendance will be USDA employees, but some will be employees of anti-hunger groups or youth service organizations. For at least half a day during the week, all training participants will join the young people in our DC summer program to perform community service. I will invite Eli Segal, as well as USDA Under and Assistant Secretaries, to address the gathering or perform service with them.

I recommend you speak to the group or perform community service alongside them anytime during the week they will be in Washington. Your presence will send a powerful message that you support AmeriCorps and appreciate the work of the rank-and-file employees across the country who are working hard on this unique new initiative to reinvent government.

Agree to speak to training group _____

Date _____

Agree to perform service w/group _____

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____

ISSUE # 5 - Participating In the Fall Kick-Off of AmeriCorps

The President is scheduled to announce the start of the first-year of full-time AmeriCorps service on September 12th. The White House will strongly urge all Cabinet Secretaries to attend.

Immediately following that announcement, we will be starting a major internal communications campaign to explain AmeriCorps to all USDA employees. This is especially necessary given the strain caused by reorganization and downsizing and the likelihood that some USDA employees may be incorrectly worried that they will be replaced by AmeriCorps participants. This event could also be broadcast to television stations around the country.

I recommend that you attend both the kick-off with the President and an internal USDA kick-off to be held in the patio and broadcast by satellite to field offices and media around the country.

Agree to attend President's kick-off _____ Date _____

Agree to attend internal kick-off _____

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____



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

MEMORANDUM TO:

UNDER SECRETARIES
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES
GENERAL COUNSEL
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS
OFFICE DIRECTORS

FROM MIKE ESPY

As I explained at our recent Departmental retreat, the AmeriCorps national service program is a priority for the President and for the Department. AmeriCorps will serve as an innovative and cost-effective mechanism for delivering the Department's services. I want to thank those agencies who have been so supportive of our current national service efforts. With your help the Department has been able to establish itself as the leader in federal national service programs.

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Staffing
for
USDA National Service Group

POSITION ¹	NAME	GRADE ²	ORG ³	STATUS
Director	Joel Berg	ES-01	OC	permanent
Communications Coord.	Katherine Gibney	GM 13/14	OC	Permanent
Deputy Communications and Training Coordinator	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Administrative Coord.	Ron De Munbrun	GM 15	TBD	Permanent
Office Manager	Denise Bennet	GS 6/4	ASCS	Detailee
Anti-Hunger Coordinator	Donna Hines	GM 13/1	FNS	Detailee
FmHA Agency Liaison	Jim Coyne	GM 12/7	TBD	Detailee
EZ/EC and RDA Liaison	David Gibson	GM 14	TBD	Detailee
Extension Service and 4-H Liaison	TBD	TBD	ES	Detailee
Forest Service State and Private Forestry Liaison	TBD	TBD	TBD	Detailee
Evaluation Coordinator	TBD	TBD	TBD	Detailee
Resource Management Coordinator	TBD	GS 9/11	TBD	Detailee
Technology Support	TBD	GS 9/11	ES	Detailee
Clerical Support/Office Automation	TBD	GS 8	TBD	Detailee

¹ Some positions may be filled on a part time basis or they may filled on a rotating basis. This can be worked out between the Director and the agencies.

² Some grade levels are dependent on the grade of the current incumbent. Grade levels may increase or decrease as new personnel are rotated through the group and as requirements change.

³ The organization is determined by the subject matter of the position and/or the willingness or desire of an agency to lend support to the TEAM USDA national service group.

07/21/94

NATIONAL SERVICE GROUP
FY 95 BUDGET
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

SECTION I -----	OPERATING PLANS	ACTUAL OBLIGATIONS	PROJECTED COMMITMENTS	PROJECTED FOR YEAR	VARIANCE FROM PLAN
1100 Salaries:					
Salaries	118,953	0	0	0	118,953
Overtime	3,000	0	0	0	3,000
Awards	500	0	0	0	500
Lump Sum Payment	0	0	0	0	0
1200 Benefits	29,817	0	0	0	29,817
TOTAL, SECTION I	152,270	0	0	0	152,270

NOTE: Salary cost is 50% of the cost of the three OC staff permanently working on National Service. Detailee costs are not included here.

SECTION II -----	OPERATING PLAN	ACTUAL OBLIGATIONS	COMMITMENTS THROUGH	OBLIGATION/ COMMITMENTS	UNOBLIGATED AS OF
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	23,100	0	0	0	23,100
Rent/Etc., Subtotal	23,100	0	0	0	23,100
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	35,180	0	0	0	35,180
Contractors/Agreements	20,000	0	0	0	20,000
	0	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous	3,996	0	0	0	3,996
Fees	3,000	0	0	0	3,000
Other Ser., Subtotal	73,476	0	0	0	73,476
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	20,000	0	0	0	20,000
Equipment, Subtotal	21,000	0	0	0	21,000
4100 Prompt Payment Act	0	0	0	0	0
Greenbook Costs	64,140	0	0	0	64,140
	0	0	0	0	0
Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL, SECTION II	259,966	0	0	0	259,966
TOTAL, SEC. I & II	412,236	0	0	0	412,236

Please place
in Memo
Notebook



July 19, 1994

BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service *JB*
Subject: District of Columbia National Service Event on Thursday

The Event

On Thursday, July 21, from 3:30- 4:00 p.m., you will participate in a media event with Mayor Kelly relating to the special summer national service program we are running in partnership with the DC government and the DC Service Corps.

The event will be held at Watts Branch Park, at Banks Place and 62nd Street, SE. Mayor Kelly will meet you there. You and the Mayor will meet with about 45 of the 50 participants in the program. (Some have either dropped-out or been fired and we are now recruiting replacements.)

You and the Mayor will first spend about five minutes viewing the sites in the park where five to ten participants will be removing trash from a stream, trimming grass, and completing other work in the park. You and the Mayor will then spend five minutes shaking hands with the other 35-40 participants, who will have travelled from work projects in other parts of the city to meet with both of you.

Mayor Kelly will speak first and then introduce you. I would suggest you speak for just a few minutes and relate your personal commitment to service in the way you did at the Chicago project. You will then introduce Keith Canty, Executive Director of the DC Service Corps, who will then introduce one participant from each of the five teams in the program. Each of the five participants will then spend three to five minutes each explaining the unique work that their crew is performing.

You and/or the Mayor may want to ask questions of the participants and then make brief closing statements.

The DC Program

* While the program is NOT officially an AmeriCorps program, it is a national service program similar in almost all respects to AmeriCorps. The program will engage 50 participants in community service work, earning a \$147 stipend each week and a \$1,000 educational benefit at the successful completion of 10 weeks of service. The program differs from an official AmeriCorps project in only two respects: 1) it is not funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service and 2) because the participants in this program must be District of Columbia permanent residents, the program is comprised almost entirely of African-American young people and thus is not racially diverse -- however, the participants do represent a wide variety of educational levels from high school drop-out to college student.

* The work being performed by the approximately 50 participants will provide critical service to the people of the District of Columbia. The participants, ages 17-23, are working to clean-up parks and improve the environment in neighborhoods, renovate trails and maintain the plant collections at the U.S. Arboretum in Northeast Washington, and help implement the Summer Food Service Program.

* As a result of your personal direction, the program is being run an innovative public private partnership involving USDA, the District of Columbia, and the DC Service Corps. The DC Service Corps, one of the most respected youth service corps in the nation and a real model for the President's program, is running the day-to-day operations of the program. The District of Columbia is providing the 50 scholarships worth \$1,000 each. Based on your instructions, USDA is providing the rest of the budget -- \$200,190 --- as well as significant technical and administrative assistance.

* The Corporation for National and Community Service has just awarded USDA a grant to expand the program to a year-long operation. Thirty participants -- mostly graduates of the Summer program -- will continue the current projects, expand the anti-hunger work, and create a nature center on SCS land in Beltsville, Maryland. In this year long program, participants will earn a stipend of \$7,600 and an educational benefit of \$4,725 for a year of service.

Suggested Talking Points (Similar to Those for the Chicago Event)

* National service rebuilds the sense of community that made America great. By bringing together DC residents in community service work, this program will strengthen the cords that bind us together as a people. The "sweat equity" created by AmeriCorps can play an important role in bringing DC residents together. National service will fundamentally change the country because it creates a new civic compact in which any citizen can be tied to the nation by the simple virtue of making a difference in the lives of others.

* National service promotes personal responsibility. National service gives all Americans a new way of giving something back to the country. It reminds us that, along with rights we enjoy as citizens, we all have certain obligations to protecting those rights and aiding our own communities. Furthermore, national service gives young people a tangible way to take charge of their own lives.

* National service expands educational and economic opportunity. Participants in the program will receive a living stipend and will also receive an educational award. national service is one of the major Administration initiatives aimed at making post-secondary education once again affordable for most Americans.

* National service reinvents the interests of the middle class and the poor. There is NO economic needs test to participate in this program -- the only requirement to participate is a desire to serve the country. This program will greatly boost students from the previously forgotten middle class, who now are told their families "make too much money" to qualify for existing Federal aid programs. Yet the program will also help poor families for whom aid programs are insufficient.

July 18, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: KIM SCHNOOR

FROM: JOEL BERG JB

SUBJECT: Revised Response for Senator Grassley

The attached response has been revised based on comments made by Denis Kaplan of OBPA and Ken Cohen of OGC, with one exception. Mr. Kaplan feels that to be fully responsive to the question, USDA should provide specific dollar amounts in the reply. Given that our budgets are not final, I feel and the Corporation for National and Community Service feels that it would be premature to give specific dollar amounts at this time.

Suggested language in response to question #2 on USDA:

The Department of Agriculture is now planning to run an AmeriCorps program with 1,200 participants serving in 1994-1995, working towards a goal of performing 2,040,000 hours of service. The level of funding to be provided by USDA is still being determined and can not be finalized until two events occur: 1) Congress concludes the Department of Agriculture's appropriations process for FY95, and 2) final grant negotiations with the Corporation for National and Community Service are completed. The Department of Agriculture is also in the process of finalizing any funding that may be provided by state and local governments, and by private sources.

The USDA Director of National Service, who is in the Senior Executive Service, has a staff of two -- one at GS 15 and one at GS 12 -- who work in direct support of the USDA AmeriCorps program.

The Department of Agriculture expects all its AmeriCorps programs to be cost efficient, citing the experience of the one similar program it now runs through the Forest Service, the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC). In 1993, USDA sponsored 1,003 number of YCC participants, accomplishing \$1.43 worth of work for each dollar invested.

James G. Holman
Approved for legal sufficiency.
7/18/94

D. Kaplan
7/18/94

July 18, 1994

MEMORANDUM

To: Dennis Kaplan, Kenneth Cohen

From: Joel Berg 

Subject: Immediate Response Needed for Senator Grassley

On late Friday, Senator Charles Grassley issued a press release and letter to Eli Segal criticizing AmeriCorps. He specifically questioned a program to train migrant and seasonal farm workers in pesticide safety, which is NOT affiliated with USDA in any way.

Out of the multitude of questions Grassley asks, he asks one question specifically about the USDA program. He asks how many participants we will sponsor, how many hours of service they will perform, how much in USDA funds the Department will be spending, and what is the cost of my salary and that of my staff.

Over the weekend, the Corporation for National and Community Service issued to the media the attached talking points -- which do not mention USDA -- in response to the Grassley attack. The Corporation intends to send Grassley a full response today and has asked USDA to respond to the question about our program.

Attached is my suggested response, in which we directly answer all of his questions except for the one regarding USDA funding. As I indicate in the draft response, it is impossible to answer that question at this time. We are preliminarily planning to spend \$23.128 million of USDA funds from a variety of sources, most notably the Forest Service, SCS, FmHA, RDA, FNS, and ARS. If we maintain that funding level, our cost for participant will be \$19,274 -- which compares highly favorably to existing youth corps. However, the funding question can not be answered fully and publicly until a few weeks from now when our final grant negotiations with the Corporation for National and Community Service and the USDA FY95 appropriations process are complete.

Kim Schnoor asked me to run the attached language by by OBPA and OGC this morning before we release it.

Suggested language in response to question #2 on USDA:

The Department of Agriculture is now planning to run an AmeriCorps program with 1,200 participants serving in 1994-1995, working towards a goal of performing 2,040,000 hours of service. The exact funding to be provided by USDA is still being determined and can not be finalized until two events occur: 1) final grant negotiations with the Corporation for National and Community Service are completed, and 2) Congress concludes the Department of Agriculture's appropriations process for FY95. The Department of Agriculture is also in the process of finalizing any funding that may be provided by other federal agencies, by state and local governments, and by private sources.

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The Department of Agriculture expects all its AmeriCorps programs to be cost efficient, citing the experience of the one similar program it now runs through the Forest Service, the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC). In 1993, USDA sponsored 1,003 number of YCC participants, accomplishing \$1.43 worth of work for each dollar invested.

REPLY TO:

- ☐ 135 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1501
(202) 224-3744
TTY: (202) 224-4478
- ☐ 721 FEDERAL BUILDING
210 WALNUT STREET
DES MOINES, IA 50309-2140
(515) 284-4890
- ☐ 206 FEDERAL BUILDING
101 1ST STREET SE.
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52401-1227
(319) 363-8832

United States Senate

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1501

REPLY TO:

- ☐ 103 FEDERAL COURTHOUSE BUILDING
220 6TH STREET
SIOUX CITY, IA 51101-1244
(712) 233-1880
- ☐ 210 WATERLOO BUILDING
521 COMMERCIAL STREET
WATERLOO, IA 50701-5497
(319) 232-8857
- ☐ 116 FEDERAL BUILDING
131 E. 4TH STREET
DAVENPORT, IA 52801-1512
(319) 322-4331
- ☐ 307 FEDERAL BUILDING
8 SOUTH 6TH STREET
COUNCIL BLUFFS, IA 51501
(712) 322-7103

July 14, 1994

Mr. Eli J. Segal
Chief Executive Officer
Corporation for National
and Community Service
1100 Vermont Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20525

Dear Mr. Segal:

I am writing to you regarding the administration's "AmeriCorps" and "Summer of Service" initiatives. The benefits that these programs have provided or will provide are certainly to be commended.

However, the services provided are only one aspect of these programs. President Clinton stated it well in his remarks on signing the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993: "We want them to help reinvent our Government, to do more and cost less, by creating new ways for citizens to fulfill the mission of the public."

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 also contained language stating that one of the purposes of the Act was to "Reinvent government to eliminate duplication, support locally established initiatives, require measurable goals for performance, and offer flexibility in meeting those goals;."

It is my concern that AmeriCorps and Summer of Service are not meeting these goals of reinventing government. I fear that AmeriCorps and Summer of Service may join the many "Great Society" programs that were well-intentioned, but ultimately, costly failures.

AMERICORPS PROGRAM

My concerns about AmeriCorps are raised by the Abt Associates report contracted by the Commission on National and Community Service (CNCS) entitled, "Serving America: The First Year of Programs Funded by the Commission on National and Community Service," dated March 1994.

This report discusses the National Service Demonstration programs, which, as you know, were the precursors to AmeriCorps.

Committee Assignments:

FINANCE
AGRICULTURE NUTRITION AND FORESTRYJUDICIARY
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENTBUDGET
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Abt study shows that total reported funding for these demonstration programs was \$18.6 million, awarded in 1992 and 1993, of which 73% was from CNCS (page 18 of report). This funding provided for 725 participants who provided 557,587 total hours of participation, of which 367,614 hours were direct service.

Thus, the cost per hour (for the 557,587 hours) for the demonstration projects for AmeriCorps were \$33 per hour. When looking at direct service hours, the cost rises even higher to \$50.59 per hour (page 4 of report). Here again, this may not even include additional costs for federal administration of the program. It should also be noted that these claims for hours served were not independently verified by Abt or CNCS (page 30). Therefore, the cost per hour could be even higher.

Of concern to me also is the number of participants in these demonstration programs who ultimately completed their service. The demonstration programs started with 725 participants (page 4) and only 447, or 62%, completed their service. And of these 447, only 81%, or 362 completed their service satisfactorily (page 20) -- 50% of the total 725 original participants. This would be a cost of \$51,381 per participant who successfully completed his or her service as determined by CNCS' own guidelines. I recognize that these are tentative figures in the Abt report; however, the general picture is still troubling.

The questions raised by the demonstration programs persist with the recently announced AmeriCorps grants; for example, the AmeriCorps USA direct grant to the "American Farmworkers Opportunity Program" (AFOP), mentioned in your June 17, 1994 letter to me.

Based on consultations my staff had with the grant recipient, it is my understanding that, in addition to the \$1.2 million that AmeriCorps awarded to AFOP, AFOP also has to match these funds with approximately \$564,000 in funds from state and other sources for a total program cost of approximately \$1.7 million.

The program will provide for 61 AmeriCorps participants, according to your office. Given the \$1.7 million program cost, that equates to a total cost of \$28,229 per member or \$17 per hour per member. These figures assume that each member works a total of 1700 hours as required of full-time members of AmeriCorps. These figures do not include the AmeriCorps Educational Awards of \$4,725 per full-time member that these individuals will be eligible to receive, nor do they include federal administrative costs. I have several questions regarding this program (see question 1 of attached sheet) that I would appreciate your answering.

Not only am I concerned about the general high costs of AmeriCorps, I am particularly troubled by the amount of funding that is going into bureaucratic overhead. In your written testimony of June 13, 1994 before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies, you stated that

full-time participants would receive a stipend of approximately \$7,640. Thus, in the AFOP program, the AmeriCorps participant sees only \$7,640 of the \$28,929 spent per participant.

My question is how is the other \$21,289 being spent? While the grantee receives the equivalent of \$17 per hour, the participant only sees \$4.50, according to your testimony. I recognize that the participant is provided additional benefits, such as child care, but this cannot explain away an overhead cost of nearly 75%. And again, let me state, an overhead that does not even include federal administrative costs. These overhead costs are not in keeping with many federal programs, such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children, which has an administrative overhead of approximately 13%.

SUMMER OF SERVICE (SOS)

It is my understanding that in FY '93 SOS was funded at \$10 million. The program provided services for 8 weeks and involved approximately 1,464 young people. These young people worked a total of 466,191 service hours. This would equate to a total cost to the U.S. government of \$6,830.60 per volunteer or \$21.45 per hour. *Josh*

My source for this information is the Congressional Research Service Issue Brief: "The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993: Description and Related Programs," January 6, 1994, and a second report the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) contracted Abt Associates Inc. to produce: "Evaluation of the Summer of Service Program," dated October 25, 1993. I have several questions regarding SOS attached (see question 3).

In reviewing the second Abt report, my concerns about the SOS program are heightened. The Abt report notes that \$6.3 million in awards were made to 16 sites. Please detail how the remaining \$3.7 million was spent. Assuming only the \$6.3 million in awards to the program sites, the cost per participant per hour is \$13.51 given 466,191 service hours (page 8). However, this does not reflect the federal administrative costs as well as any matching funds.

The Abt report also asked SOS participants whether their experience had met their expectations. In 13 of the 16 categories of expectations for the SOS program, according to the participants themselves, the SOS program did not meet their expectations, or the stated goals of the program, in such areas as improving the lives of children, learning about health issues or obtaining marketable job skills (page 48).

The Abt report is critical of the administration of the SOS programs in the following areas:

"At some sites, negotiations with project partners and specifications of objectives were still in an (sic)

rudimentary stage when the program began."

"Many sites were not fully prepared for the extent of the administrative demands of the Summer of Service."

"Some sites did not fully accept the record-keeping and reporting responsibilities involved in the national evaluation."

"If the Corporation is interested in assessing program experience according to certain attributes, it should ensure that the grantees' programs are structured and funded in a way that allow those attributes."

What steps has the Corporation taken to address these fundamental problems raised by the Abt report (pages 57 - 64)? Also, I am concerned that it appears that the Abt report has provided no independent evaluation of the claimed outcomes made by grantees. What independent verification has been made of the claimed program outcomes? What audits have been performed on the expenditure of funds by the grantees? Was this performed by Abt? Was Abt awarded this contract on a competitive basis?

Catherine P

John
Gandy / John

John

Enclosed are further questions I have about the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), AmeriCorps, SOS, the Demonstration Programs and the National Service Trust Fund.

I appreciate your timely response to the questions and concerns that I have raised. I would ask for a response prior to Senate consideration of the VA/HUD appropriations bill.

In reviewing AmeriCorps and SOS, I am concerned that the objective of reinventing government is not being met. It seems the laudable goals of community service and reinventing government, which perhaps AmeriCorps and SOS were created, in part, to advance, are being undermined by the establishment and funding of a large and costly bureaucracy. Furthermore, the success of these programs must also be measured by their ability to foster in our young people a longterm desire to voluntarily serve their community without compensation. I am concerned that from what I've seen these programs may not achieve this goal.

Robert

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Dean Zerbe of my staff at 224-6135.

Sincerely,


Charles E. Grassley
United States Senate

QUESTIONS

1) It is my understanding that AFOP intends to meet part of its matching requirement by using other federal funds. Is this correct?

Please provide a complete breakdown of all estimated expenditures for this program including federal health care contributions, administrative costs, child care, and travel. Also, please confirm that while the 61 AmeriCorps participants will not begin work until March, 1995, the program staff will begin work in September, 1994 - a 6-month start-up period. What are the number of service hours that will be provided?

Related to the above, what is AmeriCorps' estimate of the amount of federal funds that will be used by all grantees for the purposes of meeting matching requirements?

2) Your June 17, 1994 letter also mentioned a \$2.6 million grant to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Please inform me of the number of participants and the number of hours worked. Also, what funding will be provided by USDA, by other federal agencies, and by state and local governments as well as private sources. In addition, what is the cost to the USDA Director of National Service and all support staff? Finally, do other government departments and agencies have offices for national service?

3) Please verify all of the figures I cite regarding SOS (and if any of these individuals are going to receive an educational award). Also, were any other federal funds used by the state programs; if so, where did the funds come from, and what, if any, matching funds were the states required to provide? In addition, please provide any and all evaluations of SOS conducted by the SOS programs, independent organizations, the Kennedy school, CNCS progress reports and the local evaluations. Finally, of the 466,191 hours performed, how many hours were spent in training participants and other activities that do not provide services to the public?

Please also provide a complete breakdown of all expenditures, especially state and federal administrative costs. Finally, please provide the above information for the "Summer of Safety" (SOS) program for FY 94.

4) There were several AmeriCorps demonstration programs. Please provide me a listing and description of these demonstration projects, total dollar expenditures (all sources), individual program expenditures, as well as the number of full-time and part-time participants and number of hours worked for each program and number of service hours provided.

5) It is my understanding that there were audits and evaluations of these demonstration programs. These evaluations should be reviewed

neg

Catherine

neg

Susan

Catherine
Jish

David O

Michael
JishMichael
Jish

by the administration and the Congress in considering funding for this program. Please provide copies of all completed evaluations and audits and estimated completion dates for draft evaluations and audits. In particular, your testimony of June 13 mentioned a "detailed report on the subtitle D's, which were the demonstration programs" which would be available in July -- please provide a copy of that report. Also, were these audits and evaluations conducted by organizations independent of CNCS? Do any of these evaluations independently verify the claims of service hours and accomplishments made by the grantees? Finally, what are your plans for independently evaluating and verifying the work of FY '94 grantees?

Judy
Rick

6) The FY '94 budget justification estimated 20,000 participants in the AmeriCorps program. Will you meet this goal of 20,000 participants by October 1, 1994?

Robert

7) What is the total number of AmeriCorps programs approved for FY '94? What is the total dollar amount in grants awarded? What is the total amount of matching dollars provided? What is the total number of participants? How many participants will be full-time or part-time? What will be the total hours worked and total service hours provided? What percentage of the total AmeriCorps budget will be for salaries and benefits for AmeriCorps participants? If you do not have specific figures, please provide projections.

Meg
Diana

8) Please provide a more complete breakdown of the CNCS budget. Specifically, all funding provided to AmeriCorps or in support of AmeriCorps programs. For example, what percentage of the FY '95 budget, Activity 4: "Audits and Evaluations" supports AmeriCorps? Please provide the percentage for all budget activities.

Gary

9) Please provide me the number of Presidential Appointee positions for CNCS and the number of Senior Executive Service employees. Also, how many employees have been hired to implement AmeriCorps and the summer service programs? Please provide a breakdown of the number of these employees that are hired under Schedule C and Schedule A. For all Schedule A employees, please provide a copy of their SF-171.

Phyllis

10) Please provide a state-by-state estimate of the number of AmeriCorps participants for FY '94 and FY '95. Please provide the amount of funding provided to states for administration of AmeriCorps. What are the number of AmeriCorps program employees state-by-state (federal/state/local/nongovernmental)? What other funding, such as development grants or planning grants, have been provided to assist states or organizations in establishing programs?

Meg
Diana

11) Please provide the estimated number of educational awards to be granted for FY '94 programs.

Gary

JUL 14 '94 04:46PM CNCS

To: General *4/13/94*
PERA

UNITED STATES SENATOR • IOWA

CHUCK GRASSLEY**PRESS RELEASE****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
Thursday, July 14, 1994**CONTACT:** Jill Hegstrom
202/224-1308**Grassley Examines Expensive Government "Volunteer" Programs
Iowa Senator Asks Full Accounting for Taxpayers**

Washington -- Protecting the interests of American taxpayers, Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) today asked for detailed information regarding the costs and benefits of Clinton administration volunteer initiatives which he said, "paint a troubling picture of a costly government program that doesn't deliver as promised."

Basing the inquiry on his own preliminary analysis of the "National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993," Grassley said the "laudable goals of community service and reinventing government, which perhaps 'AmeriCorps' and '808' were created, in part, to advance, are being undermined by the establishment and funding of a large and costly bureaucracy."

Grassley made his information request in a letter to the CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), which administers the "AmeriCorps" and "Summer of Service" volunteer programs. Signing into law last year his national service program, President Bill Clinton said, "We want them to help reinvent our government, to do more and cost less, by creating new ways for citizens to fulfill the mission of the public."

According to Grassley, data presented in two subsequent reports contracted by the CNCS from Abt Associates raise concerns about the effectiveness of the volunteer programs.

"While the benefits sought by these programs are commendable, my concern is that hardworking, middle-income taxpayers not be stuck unfairly with an expensive tab for volunteer services by students and exorbitant bureaucratic overhead costs of administrators," Grassley said. "I fear these efforts may join the many 'Great Society' programs that were well-intentioned, but ultimately, costly failures."

Grassley concerns regarding the AmeriCorps program focus on three areas:

Demonstration Projects: Based on total funding for the National Service Demonstration programs which were precursors to AmeriCorps, the cost per hour for service was as much as \$50.89. Only 447 of the 735 original participants completed service. And, only 362 completed service satisfactorily. Therefore, the cost per participant who successfully completed service as determined by CNCS guidelines was \$51,381.

Grants: The issue of cost persists with recently announced AmeriCorps grants. One program will provide for 61 AmeriCorps participants at a total cost of \$28,925 per member, or \$17 per hour per member. This assumes each member works the full-time requirement of 1700 hours. However, these figures do not yet include the AmeriCorps Educational Awards of \$4,725 per full-time member, for which these individuals are eligible, nor do they include federal administrative costs.

Administrative Costs: Congressional testimony submitted in June by CNCS stated that full-time participants would receive a stipend of about \$7,640. For the grant cited here, that would leave AmeriCorps participants with just \$7,640 of the \$28,925 spent per participant. Grassley said such an overhead cost of about 75 percent contradicts many federal programs, including Aid to Families with Dependent Children, which maintains administrative costs at about 15 percent.

JUL 14 '94 04:47PM CNCS

P.2/2

Grassley -- Add One

In addition, Grassley cited specific concerns in two areas of the Summer of Service (SOS) program:

Expense: In 1993, SOS received \$10 million in federal funds. The program provided services for 8 weeks and involved 1,464 young people, who worked a total of 466,191 hours. So, total cost would be \$6,830.60 per volunteer, or \$21.45 per hour. At the same time, a 1993 report by Abt Associates noted that \$6.3 million in awards were made to 16 sites. It does not account for the remaining \$3.7 in funding.

Assuming only the \$6.3 million in awards given, the cost per participant per hour is \$13.51. This figure does not reflect federal administrative costs or state matching funds.

Quality Work: The report also revealed that in 13 of 16 categories, participants said the SOS program did not meet their expectations or the stated goals of the program, including improving the lives of children, learning about health issues or obtaining marketable job skills.

In his letter, Grassley said, "Taxpayers deserve to know what steps have been taken to address the fundamental problems raised by these reports. What independent verification has been made of the claimed program outcomes? And, what audits have been performed on the expenditure of funds by the grantees?"

During the next month, the U.S. Senate is expected to consider the VA/HUD appropriations bill, which contains funding for the CNCS. Grassley asked for a response to his inquiry prior to this debate.

RESPONSE TO PRESS RELEASE
FROM SEN. GRASSLEY CRITICIZING NATIONAL SERVICE

Senator Grassley has requested substantial information on many important aspects of the President's national service program; a complete response is being prepared by the Corporation for National Service. Unfortunately, the Senator's office chose to issue a press release containing criticisms of the program based upon miscalculations and misinterpretations.

1. Demonstration Programs: The Commission for National and Community Service, established under President Bush, funded certain "national service demonstration projects". The Grassley press release's mathematics and assumptions are incorrect, culminating in a wildly inflated estimated cost per participant of \$51,381. The correct allocated cost was approximately \$17,000 per full time participant on average, roughly a third of the amount in the press release. [Please contact us directly for a detailing of the errors in the press release's methodology.]
2. Grants: The release criticizes one of the recently-announced AmeriCorps grants, to the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs, which will operate in the rural sections of 12 states (including Iowa). Inexplicably, the release roughly doubles the federal cost per participant for this program (the correct number is \$14,986, rather than \$28,929 as asserted). Further, as is the case throughout the release, there is no discussion of what the program will accomplish. AmeriCorps members will become the first state certified pesticide trainers in the nation (with specialized training under EPA guidelines), fanning out through the 12 states to teach farmworkers how to reduce their exposure to pesticides. Reduced healthcare costs will be only one benefit.
3. Administrative Costs: Based on the miscalculation of the Farmworkers grant, the release then concludes a 75% overhead cost for the program. Taking the very example the release chose, of the federal cost of \$14,986 per participant, \$11,229 is represented by the participant's minimum wage stipend, healthcare and related benefits and training. The remainder includes program evaluation and related items -- like all AmeriCorps grants, the administrative/overhead costs are capped at 5%.
4. Summer of Service 1993: Another program which precedes AmeriCorps, SOS was also mischaracterized in the press release, based upon an apparent misunderstanding of the ABT Report referenced in the release. The SOS program involved roughly 2.5 unpaid participants for each paid participant (often, the paid participant was coordinating a number of unpaid volunteers). Cost per total service hour averaged roughly \$9 per hour (rather than the \$21.45 given in the release). The release also erroneously concluded that SOS failed to meet either its goals or the participants' expectations. Only 12% of participants indicated dissatisfaction with the program.

More importantly, results from the 16 community-based programs were extraordinarily impressive: Building Up in L.A. was a consortium of more than 35 community organizations that had never worked together before -- an impressive accomplishment in a city struggling to re-knit a sense of community. But the program did far more: mentored and tutored 4,100 young students and instructed another 27,506 persons (mainly children) in health and safety issues. Those results were not unique: a program in New York City educated 18,000 families about the dangers of lead paint poisoning and referred 3,000 children to testing for that deadly poisoning; the program in Newark not only tutored 5170 at-risk children but helped to build 6 homes for needy families; and the program in New Orleans conducted a special summer school on four middle school sites.

That underscores the most saddening failure of the Grassley press release -- the failure to understand the power of service. The Congress' investment in national service makes appropriated funds work at least four times: because we insist on direct and demonstrable community results from our programs, our funds buy safer streets, smarter students, cleaner parks, and healthier babies. Because we involve tens of thousands of AmeriCorps members in substantial efforts to help our nation and their neighborhood, our funds work a second time, helping to instill the habits of citizenship that we know can last a lifetime.

Because we make college or training easier for those who have served, our funds work a third time, creating tens of thousands of better-educated and more-productive Americans, for the benefit of us all. Because we engage communities directly in the collective effort to reclaim their future, our funds work a fourth time, proving that our problems can be solved, if we act together -- by reknitting the fragile bonds that turn a mass of strangers into a community.

Protecting the interests of American taxpayers, President Clinton created AmeriCorps, to harness the energy, talent and commitment of Americans to change our neighborhoods and nation. A bi-partisan majority in Congress supported the concept and gave the Corporation for National Service the funds to begin its work just 10 months ago. Like any new investment, its full value will only be demonstrated over time. To make national service the best possible investment, all interested Americans should ask the tough questions -- and make the personal commitment to pitch in to help. The Grassley press release does not further that process.



July 17, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: Keith Collins
Assistant Secretary for Economics

FROM: Joel Berg *JB*
Director of National Service

Subject: Need for Evaluation Coordinator for National Service

Since we met a number of weeks ago to discuss the USDA AmeriCorps national service program, I have carefully studied the possible roles that various USDA agencies can play in supporting AmeriCorps.

I have come to the conclusion that, in this first year of pilot projects, rather than asking for all agencies to fund actual AmeriCorps positions out of their extremely scarce budgets, it would be wiser to request that some smaller agencies instead provide technical assistance to the program. The agencies you oversee could be most helpful in lending their unique expertise to our program by managing empirical evaluations of the effectiveness of our rural development sites.

As you know, USDA will not only be running the largest AmeriCorps program in the federal government, but we will be running the largest single AmeriCorps program in the nation. Starting this September, our programs will place 1,200 full-time participants in projects at 42 sites in 32 states in every region of the country. At least one quarter of these participants and one third of the sites will be focused on rural economic development projects.

The planning for this program has been a model of "Team USDA" interagency cooperation. The Soil Conservation Service alone is providing over \$10 million in funds for 1995 and has assigned a sizable number of professional staff to work full time on the program. The Forest Service, FNS, FmHA, RDA, ASCS, FSIS, APHIS, AMS, and ARS each are providing significant support.

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, under which we will be running our program, delineates very specific evaluation requirements for AmeriCorps programs. Furthermore, it is my intention to require that USDA programs undergo even more stringent evaluations.

For the short-term success of the program, it is critical to have ongoing monitoring that allows us to ensure continuous improvement of all our projects. For the long-term success of the program, it is crucial that we be able to demonstrate success at meeting specific, measurable goals that we can easily explain to the Secretary, the President, OMB, Congress, and the American people.

I have also already briefly discussed our evaluation needs with Kenneth Deavers and Donald Bay, who have both pledged the technical assistance of their agencies in helping us design evaluation measures.

It will be a massive task to implement our varied evaluation measures at dozens of separate and sometimes remote sites throughout the country. As I have discovered working with other USDA agencies on other aspects of this program, tasks such these are complicated and time-consuming and require full-time staff support. Therefore, I would like to request that you detail one-full time employee to my office for six months on a non-reimbursable basis. This employee would serve as Evaluation Coordinator for the USDA AmeriCorps Rural Development Team, helping design our evaluation measures and coordinating our data collection efforts.

While I am fully aware of the scarce resources of your agencies, I would hope they can make this contribution to the Team USDA/AmeriCorps effort.

Please contact me in 538A, 720-6350, if you would like to further discuss this manner.

CC. Kenneth Deavers, Administrator, ERS
Donald Bay, Administrator, NASS

F. J. D.

July 13, 1994

To: Paula, Dee
From: Joel
Subject: Site Information Still Needed

Prior to our meeting with Charles Sims tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the Midwest flood projects, it would be extremely helpful if we could get clarification on the following matters:

- 1) How many participants will be in each state and how will they be divided up in rural development vs. environmental?
- 2) Where specifically will the environmental teams in each flood state be sited?
- 3) Where will the cluster hub sites be in ~~Nebraska~~, South Dakota, and Wisconsin?
- 4) Champaign, Illinois is listed as the cluster hub site for Illinois, but Champaign is not in a disaster county and is at least 150 miles away from the main areas of flooding in Illinois near the Mississippi River. Will there be other cluster hub sites in Illinois?
- 5) An earlier draft of your site list included both Williamsburg and Atlantic as Iowa sites. Are they still cluster hub sites?
- 6) Is the Minnesota cluster hub site referred to in our original application also going to be the cluster hub site for the flood relief work?
- 7) Can you provide specific community service objectives for each environmental project and each rural development cluster hub site in the Midwest?

Beyond our meeting with Charles, I could use clarification on the following general issues regarding all the regions other than the Midwest:

- 1) Can you provide me with a document ASAP matching up each individual cluster hub site with community service objectives that have already been provided or have been recently created?

2) What is the status of our partnership with the Quebec Labrador Foundation/ Atlantic Center for the Environment (QLF/ACE)? As you know, our application to CNCS stated: "QLF/ACE will be a partner in helping to recruit, train, place, and evaluate applicants and the program. The USDA/SCS will transfer funds to the QLF/ACE under a memo of understanding that will provide specific details of cooperation." However, Elliot Gimble of QLF/ACE called me, claiming that he had been told by SCS that his group was no longer part of our program. Is this a misunderstanding or is there a problem with our Maine partnership?

Answer: 3) What is the status of our partnership with the Woodland Community Trust in Tennessee and the Whitley County Communities for Children in Kentucky? Our application to the CNCS specifies six positions location with these non-profit groups, however SCS has listed no cluster hub site in Kentucky.

4) Will all Mississippi participants work out of the same site in Southeastern Mississippi? If so, does that mean we have eliminated projects listed in our original application such as the fire protection project listed for Northeast Mississippi?

5) Is the Albuquerque, New Mexico cluster hub central to the work to be performed in the Four Corners? Would Gallup, Shiprock, Farmington, Zuni, or Aztec be closer?

6) Is the Price, Utah cluster hub central to the work to be performed in the Four Corners? Would Moab, Monticello, Bluff, or Montezuma Creek be closer?

July 11, 1994

TO: Agency AmeriCorps Contacts

RE: Purchase Orders for Training Conference

As we discussed in this morning's meeting, the National 4-H Center has agreed to accept purchase orders from the individual agencies to cover the cost of the conference. Each agency is responsible for providing the purchase order for the AmeriCorps staff/managers who will be attending so that we can stay within the \$25,000 maximum for sole source procurements.

You will need to send the purchase order directly to the 4-H Center, with a copy to me, no later than Thursday, July 14th, and preferably earlier. Failure to get these purchase orders in could cause us to lose the contract with the 4-H Center and consequently have to cancel the training at the last minute. The address for the purchase orders is:

National 4-H Council Training Center
ATTN: Barbara Roller, Sales Manager
7100 Connecticut Avenue
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815-4999

Be sure to state clearly that you are participating in the Department of Agriculture's AmeriCorps Training.

Please remember to include the following factors when you are computing the total of your agency's purchase order:

1. The total number of nights your staff will be staying overnight. Don't forget to include any Sunday-night arrivals and Friday-night stayovers, at the standard double-occupancy rate of \$40; single-occupancy rooms are \$54 each, so if you already know of some conference participants who will be staying alone, be sure to use the higher rate.
2. The total meals that the lodgers from your agency will be eating. Once again, don't forget to add in any meals that your early arrivals and late departures will be having. For simplicity's sake, I strongly encourage you to figure these extra meals only for breakfast on Monday and lunch on Friday. Also, we are planning to have one "special" (not cafeteria-style) lunch and 2 special dinners; these 3 meals will cost more than the \$8.35 rate -- probably more like \$11-\$12.95 per person, depending on the menu we select -- so you will need to factor in that extra cost. Don't forget that Wednesday night will be a "free evening," so be sure to deduct the \$8.35 per person for that one.

3. The \$8.00 per person nonresident (commuter) facility charge for as many of your agency staff as will be attending the conference from the local area.

We are attaching to this memo the sole-source justification for holding the conference at the National 4-H Training Center. **This justification should be attached to the purchase order.**

Thank you for your patience and assistance. If you have any questions, please let us know so we can search out the answers.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joel Berg".

Joel Berg
Director of National Service

Attachment

SOLE SOURCE JUSTIFICATION FOR SELECTION OF

4-H FOUNDATION CONFERENCE FACILITY FOR AMERICORPS/USDA TRAINING

The 4-H Foundation Conference Facility is the only possible contractor for the housing and food needs of the USDA employees participating in AmeriCorps/USDA training the week starting August 8, 1994; therefore it is justified as a sole source contractor.

There are three basic needs of the training that only the 4-H Foundation Conference Facility can fulfill:

- 1) The room and board for the participants should be nearby the site of most of the meetings. The meetings will be held mostly at the 4-H Foundation Conference Facility, yet there are no other lodging facilities nearby that Facility or easily accessible to that Facility by public transportation. Given that some meetings will start early in the morning and others will end in the evening, it is necessary that the participants must eat and sleep at the same site at which they are meeting.
- 2) The Facility is the only single location within a few miles of the District of Columbia that is available with such limited notice to provide room, board, and meeting space in the informal manner dictated by the AmeriCorps program design.
- 3) The Facility is the only similar facility with a few miles of the District of Columbia that is associated with a major national organization aimed at increasing citizen volunteer efforts. Thus, the 4-H Foundation is uniquely able to provide speakers at this site who can aid the AmeriCorps training program.



TO: KIM SCHNOOR
COUNSEL TO THE SECRETARY

FROM: JOEL BERG JB

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO RESPOND TO CHICAGO WOMAN'S QUESTIONS ABOUT
YOUTH SERVICE

DATE: JULY 11, 1994

With regard to your request that I respond to Ms. Carol Linzy of Chicago about youth service and the County Extension 4-H Program, Katherine Gibney of my staff spoke with her last Thursday. She is primarily interested in information about how she can volunteer with a youth service program in her area as her only child is already in college on a scholarship.

Katherine gave Ms. Linzy the name of Carzella Pritchett, our Soil Conservation Service employee who is working with our Summer of Service Project in Chicago. This project received funding to continue yearround beginning in September. Katherine knows Carzella personally and told Ms. Linzy to tell her that Katherine told her to call.

In addition, Katherine spoke with Ron Wolford of the Extension Service in Chicago who said he would call Ms. Linzy and send her information on 4-H Extension in Chicago. When Katherine spoke with Ms. Linzy last Thursday, she had not yet heard from Mr. Wolford. My office will continue to followup to make sure that Ms. Linzy talks with Mr. Wolford.



File

July 11, 1994

To: Meg MaGuire
From: Joel Berg JR
Subject: Suggested Modifications of Sample Participant Application

Additional Questions Needed for USDA Application

1) I am most interested in AmeriCorps programs to: (Check any box appropriate)

- ☐ To fight hunger
- ☐ To protect the environment
- ☐ To help the economies of rural communities

2) I am most interested in serving:

- ☐ only in or around my home town
- ☐ in my home state or region of the country
- ☐ anywhere in the country

Additionally, under your current "Section IV," the list is heavily slanted towards students with backgrounds in social sciences. We suggest adding other science disciplines such as: biology, environmental science, chemistry, botany, and agronomy.

Possible Deletions from Sample Application

There was a consensus among all members of the USDA AmeriCorps working group that the sample application might be biased against high school drop-outs or recent high school graduates because it asks so many detailed questions. We believe the questions may intimidate "at-risk youth" from even applying.

In addition, a shorter application will be much cheaper and easier to print, fax, and/or mail.

Some suggested changes:

- * Under "II. Personal Statement," eliminate "(500 word max.)" This may scare away those who think 500 words is a book.
- * Delete "Section III. Community Activities." This could be incorporated into the personal statement.
- * Shorten "V. Educational Background Section" to only one line, requesting only the last school attended.
- * Delete "VII. Employment Record." Asking for a job history confuses our message that AmeriCorps is NOT a jobs program. Besides, any relevant job history could be asked for in the personal statement.

Even if all the above-listed questions are deleted, the information can still be obtained from finalists through careful interviews. That approach would be less likely to scare away a socio-economically diverse mix of participants.



July 6, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: Leodrey Williams
Acting Administrator, Extension Service

FROM: Joel Berg *JB*
Director of Communications

Subject: Training and Electronic Communications Help for AmeriCorps

Since we met a number of months ago to discuss the USDA AmeriCorps national service program, I have carefully studied the possible roles that various USDA agencies can play in supporting AmeriCorps.

I have come to the conclusion that, in this first year of pilot projects, rather than asking for all agencies to fund actual AmeriCorps positions out of their extremely scarce budgets, it would be wiser to request that some smaller agencies such as yours instead provide technical assistance to the program. The Extension Service could be most helpful in expanding the technical assistance the agency has already provided in the areas of training and electronic communications.

As you may know, USDA will not only be running the largest AmeriCorps program in the federal government, but we will be running the largest single AmeriCorps program in the nation. Starting this September, our programs will place 1,200 full-time participants in projects at 42 sites in 32 states in every region of the country. At his staff retreat, Secretary Espy listed national service as one of his top priorities for the Department.

The planning for this program has been a model of "Team USDA" interagency cooperation. The Soil Conservation Service alone is providing over \$10 million in funds for 1995 and has assigned a sizable number of professional staff to work full-time on the program. The Forest Service, FNS, FmHA, RDA, ASCS, FSIS, APHIS, AMS, and ARS each are providing significant support.

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, under which we will be running our program, delineates very specific training requirements for both staff and participants in AmeriCorps programs. Furthermore, it is my intention to require that USDA conduct even more extensive training.

It will be a massive task to implement training at 42 distinct sites. As I have discovered working with other USDA agencies on other aspects of this program, tasks such as these are complicated and time-consuming and require full-time staff support. Alma Hobbs and Steve Mullen have provided extraordinarily important help to date, but we now require a larger time commitment than either of them could possibly provide without harming their other critical duties. Therefore, I would like to request that you detail one-full time employee from your 4-H and Youth Development Staff to my office for six months on a non-reimbursable basis to serve as Training Coordinator for the USDA AmeriCorps program.

Additionally, our program needs more help in ensuring that all our participants have the ability to communicate with each other electronically. We also want our participants to provide rural Americans with "on ramps" to the Information Superhighway. Tom Tate of your staff has already provided very useful advice on how we might accomplish these objectives. While the Rural Electrification Administration is donating a significant number of computers and providing technical assistance to this effort, we need the Extension Service to assign staff and provide other resources for the specific purpose of advancing electronic communications through AmeriCorps.

While I am fully aware of the scarce resources of your agency, I would hope you can make this contribution to the Team USDA/AmeriCorps effort.

Please contact me in 538A, 720-6350, if you would like to further discuss this manner.

CC. Alma Hobbs
Steve Mullen
Tom Tate



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Communications

Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

*Memo
Kerry
Fil*

July 5, 1994

To: AmeriCorps/USDA Working Group

From: Joel Berg *JB*

Subject: **PROPOSED SITE VISITS**

I believe it is critical for us to personally visit each of our AmeriCorps sites before the September 19th kickoff.

Documents and phone conversations with the field have been helpful --- and the week of face-to-face interaction during staff training will be even more helpful -- but there is no substitute for actually seeing the service site and personally meeting all the local partners. A pre-September site visit is essential to adequately learn the strengths and weaknesses of each project in order to make adjustments before it is too late.

Our recent site visit to the Chicago summer program further demonstrates the critical nature of these visits.

At each site, we should visit the actual location of at least some of the work to be performed. This could be a soup kitchen or food stamps office site, a campground or trail in a National Forest, a river that will be protected or windbreak section that will be renovated, or a rural community that will receive help from the Rural Development Team. We should also have extensive meetings with the project managers, crew leaders, recruitment coordinators, and leadership from any local organization that serves as a partner in the project.

If possible, we should also meet with local youth corps leaders (if local youth corps exists), local government officials, staff from state commissions on national service and community service, and local leaders from such organizations as FFA, the Urban League, and 4-H. Wherever possible, we should spend an entire day each trip at a local youth service corps. In flood states, we should also meet with representatives of FEMA, the Army Corps of Engineers, and each governor's disaster relief office.

We should also maximize public affairs activities that would aid in recruitment. We should visit local television stations, meet with newspaper editorial boards, and appear on radio call-in shows. We should hold community meetings with local USDA employees and attempt to speak at luncheons of local organizations such as the Rotary Club or the Chamber of Commerce.

In short, I would hope that each trip would be very tightly scheduled with multiple activities that will be useful to the site staff and/or educational to us.

Denise Bennett, who has just been detailed to my staff from ASCS, will work with your office to arrange the details of each trip.

Below, I have listed preliminary travel schedules for the upcoming two months. We still need to decide which members of the Departmental team, as well as which agency participants, will make trips; each travelling party should have a small mix of people from both. I expect that agencies will be able to cover the costs of our travel to their individual sites.

I would suggest that each trip begin on Tuesday nights, in order to allow the first two work days of each week to be reserved for Washington meetings and to ensure that the week's assignments are properly delegated. Return will be scheduled for either Friday or Saturday nights, or possibly even Sunday mornings, depending on the number of sites to visit and the availability of local contacts to attend Saturday meetings. Under this arrangement, we would always have most of each Sunday to rest our bodies and clear our heads before another arduous work week.

The schedule is very tentative and subject to much change, based upon your input and other factors:

Week of July 11

New England (ME,VT,NH,NY)

(Possibly time at City Year program during training)

Week of July 18

Mississippi Delta (MS,LA,AR)

Week of July 25

Pacific Northwest/Northern California

Week of August 1

NO TRAVEL (except possibly two day trips to VA or WV sites)

(Prepare for staff training)

Week of August 8

NO TRAVEL

(Staff training in DC)

Week of August 15

Midwest, Great Lakes

(Spend two days with Milwaukee Service Corps)

Week of August 22:

Southern California, Four Corners, Arizona

(Possible quality time with Los Angeles Conservation Corps)

Week of August 29:

Texas, Oklahoma

Week of September 8:

Appalachia, South Carolina

Week of September 12:

NO TRAVEL

(Prepare for kick-off)

September 19: KICK-OFF



July 5, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: Keith Collins
Assistant Secretary for Economics

FROM: Joel Berg *JB*
Director of National Service

Subject: **Need for Evaluation Coordinator for National Service**

Since we met a number of weeks ago to discuss the USDA AmeriCorps national service program, I have carefully studied the possible roles that various USDA agencies can play in supporting AmeriCorps.

I have come to the conclusion that, in this first year of pilot projects, rather than asking for all agencies to fund actual AmeriCorps positions out of their extremely scarce budgets, it would be wiser to request that some smaller agencies instead provide technical assistance to the program. The agencies you oversee could be most helpful in lending their unique expertise to our program by managing empirical evaluations of the effectiveness of all our project sites.

As you know, USDA will not only be running the largest AmeriCorps program in the federal government, but we will be running the largest single AmeriCorps program in the nation. Starting this September, our programs will place 1,200 full-time participants in projects at 42 sites in 32 states in every region of the country.

The planning for this program has been a model of "Team USDA" interagency cooperation. The Soil Conservation Service alone is providing over \$10 million in funds for 1995 and has assigned a sizable number of professional staff to work full time on the program. The Forest Service, FNS, FmHA, RDA, ASCS, FSIS, APHIS, AMS, and ARS each are providing significant support.

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, under which we will be running our program, delineates very specific evaluation requirements for AmeriCorps programs. Furthermore, it is my intention to require that USDA programs undergo even more stringent evaluations.

For the short-term success of the program, it is critical to have ongoing monitoring that allows us to ensure continuous improvement of all our projects. For the long-term success of the program, it is crucial that we be able to demonstrate success at meeting specific, measurable goals that we can easily explain to the Secretary, the President, OMB, Congress, and the American people.

I have also already briefly discussed our evaluation needs with Kenneth Deavers and Donald Bay, who have both pledged the technical assistance of their agencies. ARS has also agreed to measure the effects of our programs on human nutrition and sustainable agriculture.

It will be a massive task to implement our varied evaluation measures at 42 distinct sites. As I have discovered working with other USDA agencies on other aspects of this program, tasks such these are complicated and time-consuming and require full-time staff support. Therefore, I would like to request that you detail one-full time employee to my office for six months on a non-reimbursable basis. This employee would serve as Evaluation Coordinator for the USDA AmeriCorps program and would coordinate all ERS, NASS, and ARS evaluation efforts to measure the results of our AmeriCorps programs.

David Sears of ERS has volunteered for this assignment. Having met with him, I believe he would be excellent for this position, but I would, of course, leave the selection up to you and your agency administrators.

While I am fully aware of the scarce resources of your agencies, I would hope they can make this contribution to the Team USDA/AmeriCorps effort.

Please contact me in 538A, 720-6350, if you would like to further discuss this manner.

CC. Kenneth Deavers, Administrator, ERS
Donald Bay, Administrator, NASS

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

June

Divider Title: _____

Nemo
from
Joel

From: Joel Berg (JBERG)
To: OPAWP 1:SIESNET:SIESNET:OP1:OP1:BWATERS
Date: Thursday, June 30, 1994 4:46 pm
Subject: AMERICORPS-Personnel Involvement -Reply

The Office of Personnel should indeed have a very valuable role to play in planning the AmeriCorps program, but this role will likely be different than the role traditionally played by OP.

It is true that this program will not operate under the usual civil service and personnel rules. The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, under which our AmeriCorps program will operate, makes it clear that program participants are NOT federal employees, are NOT counted towards FTE ceilings, are NOT hired under traditional federal hiring policies, and are NOT covered by existing regulations for promotion, discipline, RIFS, etc.

Thus, we are not REQUIRED by law or by regulation to follow existing federal personnel procedures. However, we WILL certainly need personnel procedures for this program. We will need to clarify recruitment guidelines, formalize methods of collecting data about participants and evaluating their performance, ensure that EEO and civil rights concerns are met, set disciplinary rules and codes of conduct, inform participants of future possibilities for employment with USDA, and ensure accessibility for disabled participants. For each of those above areas, we now face the choice of either voluntarily adopting existing guidelines or creating new ones. Consequently, we need advice for OP on each of those matters. With your help, we will be able to fully realize this opportunity to create our AmeriCorps program as a model for reinventing government.

Furthermore, as has been suggested by Ms. White, we need to implement a massive internal communications campaign to inform USDA employees about AmeriCorps and assure them that AmeriCorps participants will not be taking their jobs.

Katherine Gibney is in charge of both our recruitment efforts and our internal recruitment efforts. She will contact you in the next few days to set-up a meeting with you over these issues. Ron De Munbrun is coordinating the administrative issues relating to personnel. He will invite you to an administrative task force meeting as soon as he returns from personal leave next week.

Thank you for your continued interest.

CC: EWHITE

Memo

From: Waters, Betty (BWATERS)
To: JBerg
Date: Thursday, June 30, 1994 4:14 pm
Subject: AMERICORPS-Personnel Involvement

This is from Marge Brining (720-3286). Reply should be sent to Betty Waters. My PC is unavailable at this time.

I sent a message to RDeMunbrun on 6/29/94 before I realized he was to be out until 7/14/94. I am the OP representative that has been attending the past AMERICORPS meetings. With all the discussions that have transpired at the previous meetings I do not understand the role of OP with AMERICORPS. OP is committed to supporting the Secretary's initiatives and believes in Team USDA. However, in order to be part of the team we need to have a clear understanding of our role as relates to the initiative.

No one on your staff has approached me with any questions or concerns as relates to personnel issues related to AMERICORPS. On June 15th when I expressed a concern over the application you stated that the rules that apply under Civil Service do not apply under the Corporation. Therefore, I ask your indulgence in sharing with me OPs role in AMERICORPS, so that, I may be responsive to you and AMERICORPS.

I may be reached on 720-3286 to discuss the above; or, you and I can set up an appointment to discuss the above. I look forward to receiving clarification on the issues.

CC: EWhite

Memo

June 27, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR STEVE DEWHURST, DIRECTOR OBPA, AND JAMES
MICHAEL KELLY, ASSOCIATE GENERAL COUNSEL

FROM: Joel Berg
Director of National Service, Office of Communications

SUBJECT: Team USDA AmeriCorps National Service Issues

Over the past few months, my staff and I have had the pleasure of working with you and your staffs to develop the Team USDA AmeriCorps national service program. During the course of that work we have defined a national service program for FY95 that is not only the largest in the Federal government, but will be the single largest national service program in the country. Without your help and guidance we would not have been able to achieve such a success in our first program development effort.

Now that we are poised to move to the next phase of actually implementing and running the national service program, it is necessary to once again call on your expertise. The issues we face as we begin implementation of the national service program require the Secretary to make several decisions concerning the program's organizational structure, staffing, and funding. Working with your staffs, I have prepared the attached Decision Memorandum for the Secretary. I think the approach we have developed is a sound one. By relying on detailees for staffing, this strategy will not create a large new centralized "empire" --- it focuses on giving agency personnel expertise and skills they can carry back to their agencies and replicate. This approach should also keep to a minimum the funding necessary for the management of the program.

Because we are at the point where we must begin recruitment and training for our programs, I would ask that you review the attached decision memorandum as quickly as possible and give me your comments and suggestions. To save time, I think it is best if we do a concurrent review. I will consolidate all the comments and give each of you a copy for signing before sending it on to the Secretary.

Again, I want to thank you for your assistance and I look forward to receiving your comments. Mr. Ron De Munbrun of my staff, 690-3894 will be coordinating this effort for me. Please feel free to call him if you or your staffs have any questions.

June 27, 1994

DECISION MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM: Joel Berg
Director of National Service, Office of Communications

THROUGH: Ali Webb,
Director of Communications

SUBJECT: Remaining Issues for Implementing AmeriCorps Program

As we have discussed, the USDA AmeriCorps national service program is progressing extremely well. Our summer project in Chicago has already started and our summer project in the District of Columbia is slated to begin the first week in August.

We are now making final preparations to start our year-long projects this September, which will place 1,200 participants in 42 different anti-hunger, environmental, and rural development project sites in 32 states in every region of the country. In addition to granting USDA the 1,200 educational benefits worth \$4,725 each, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has also granted USDA \$2.6 million in operating funds to supplement our own funds.

Our program will not only be the largest AmeriCorps program in the federal government, but it will be the single largest national service program of any kind in the nation. Eli Segal, the CEO of CNCS, is exceedingly pleased with the support you have provided to this program and will likely relate that appreciation to President Clinton.

However, there are still issues regarding budget and administration that must be resolved in order to implement our program this Fall and expand in the future. In addition, I request that you make preliminary decisions about what national service events you may want included in your personal schedule over the next few months.

My intention is for this memo to comprehensively cover the major national service decisions that need to be made for the next year.

ISSUE # 1 - Need for a Formal AmeriCorps Management Group:

Now that the Team USDA AmeriCorps national service program has moved from the planning stage to the actual implementation of projects, there is a need to formally establish the program within the Department's organizational structure. Such delegation is necessary now to avoid possible delays or obstacles to the USDA AmeriCorps program.

Background:

In September of 1993, Congress passed the National and Community Service Trust Act, which enables Federal Departments to manage national service programs individually or manage them in partnership with others. Using the authorities contained in the Act, I have worked with the Department's agencies and other Federal Departments to develop the Department's AmeriCorps program this year.

Sixteen different USDA agencies --- SCS, FS, FNS, FMHA, ASCS, RDA, REA, ARS, ES, AMS, OICD, NASS, ERS, APHIS, and FCIC --- will be actively involved in supporting AmeriCorps; some of these agencies will be providing funding and staff support while others will be providing critically-needed technical assistance. While my efforts to date to coordinate our planning efforts with all these sometimes competing agencies has been a difficult challenge, most of the USDA agencies have been ultimately supportive. The manner in which members from different agencies have worked together has been extremely encouraging to all those engaged in the process. What we have seen in developing this program is positive proof that the Secretary's vision for a reorganized and unified department will succeed. The national service program is demonstrating that there are significant benefits to the employees and to the public when we plan and act as a team and not a group of disparate agencies.

To date, my staff and I have been able to function within an informal structure guided by your expressed interest in the program and everyone's desire to do a quality job in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Now that we have reached the point where formal agreements must be established between the Department and CNCS, as well as between the Department and other Federal, State, and local entities and non-profit organizations, there is a need for a formal delegations of authority to allow the appropriate people to perform their duties. Specifically, there is a need for one person to be given the authority to oversee and coordinate the efforts of the Department's agencies in developing and managing national service programs. I am convinced that we need a strong, non-bureaucratic, but fully empowered mechanism for managing national service at the Secretarial level. This program is too important to the President and too visible to be left to the agencies alone to manage. It requires someone with the authority to establish priorities, create partnerships between agencies, and who has a clear picture of your vision and the President's vision.

Normally, the delegation of authority would be handled by identifying the organization that will manage the program and then amending the Code of Federal Regulations containing their existing authorities to add the national service program. However, given the status of the Department's reorganization efforts, it does not seem sensible to undertake the effort necessary to amend one entity's authorities when they may have to be changed again in the near future. At the same time, the Corporation's deadlines and the requirements for planning and operating the program make it imperative that a clear delegation of authority exist. Many key national service issues will have to be addressed immediately before most formal reorganization efforts are completed.

A decision memorandum relating to this issue has previously been submitted to you, but I am re-submitting this to reflect the change of the name of Office of Public Affairs to the Office of Communications.

Options For Issue # 1 - Need for a Formal AmeriCorps Management Group:

- A. **Don't delegate authority** to anyone to centrally oversee, manage and coordinate the USDA AmeriCorps program.

PRO: The agencies might feel that they were not being burdened by another layer of bureaucracy and will have more freedom to implement national service. Another advantage is that no paperwork would have to be done.

CON: It would be impossible to guarantee that the USDA national service program could be successfully implemented without a central entity being delegated authority to manage and coordinate the program. In fact, it is likely that the program would fail to meet our expectations of excellence, resulting in an undesirable outcome for the Administration, the Department, and the Secretary.

- B. **Amend the Office of Communications' Delegations of Authority** to reflect the management of the USDA AmeriCorps program.

PRO: The delegations made in this manner would be clearer from a technical standpoint.

CON: There is a substantial amount of work involved in amending existing delegations and the work might confuse or disrupt the on-going reorganization efforts.

- C. **Use a Secretary's Memorandum** to delegate the authority to manage the USDA AmeriCorps program to the Director of the Office of Communications, who will further delegate the authority to the Director of National Service.

PRO: The Secretary's memorandum requires substantially less effort to develop and would not impede or preempt any of the Secretary's reorganization efforts, while at the same time it would delegate the authority necessary for the national service program to be managed centrally.

CON: A Secretary's Memorandum is not as formal as an amendment to the OC delegations of authority. Again, the agencies might view the establishment of a formal national service group as impinging on their authority.

RECOMMENDATION for Issue # 1 - Need for a Formal AmeriCorps Management Group:

I recommend you implement option "C." This option would achieve Departmental coordination with the least amount of paperwork. It is requested that you sign the attached Secretary's Memorandum to formally establish the USDA national service program and to delegate authority to manage this program to the Director of the Office of Communications who will in turn delegate this authority to the Director of National Service.

Agree _____

Date _____

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____

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

SECRETARY'S MEMORANDUM _____

USDA National Service Program

1 PURPOSE

This memorandum establishes the USDA National Service Program and designates the Director of the Office of Communications as the Department's manager for the program.

2 BACKGROUND

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 established the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and the Public Lands Corps. The intent of the legislation is to engage Americans of all ages and backgrounds in community-based service. This service will address the Nation's educational, public safety, human, and environmental needs to achieve direct and demonstrable results. In doing so, the Corporation will foster civic responsibility, strengthen the ties that bind us together as a people, and provide educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service. Federal departments are eligible to apply for funds to run national service programs directly or in partnerships with others.

3 POLICY

As the People's Department, it is the responsibility of all USDA agencies to strive for the maximum allowable participation by the Department in the area of national service. By identifying existing programs that can be used to support national service initiatives or proposing new programs or projects, agencies will strive to the fullest extent possible to use AmeriCorps grants, services, and educational awards to leverage existing resources and to integrate the national service concept more fully into agencies' programs and activities. The Department will run programs in which both the participants and the managers at every project site will represent a socio-economically diverse group of Americans. The Director of the Office of Communications will manage the USDA National Service program and coordinate the Department's national service initiatives, including those involving the Public Lands Corps. The Director will also develop detailed guidelines and procedures for agencies to follow in implementing the program. The Director will have the ability to further delegate these responsibilities to the Director of National Service.

ISSUE #2 - Funding and Staffing of a AmeriCorps Management Group:

The Office of Communications, in which the is function of coordinating AmeriCorps is now housed, does not currently have either the budget or the FTEs to adequately support this expanding program. If you agree that the Team USDA AmeriCorps program should continue to have some centralized management group, then there is a need to institutionalize slightly expanded funding and staffing for that group.

BACKGROUND:

To date, the management group for these efforts has been comprised of three people on full-time detail from the Office of Communications and various people on part-time detail from some of the agencies. Early start-up costs -- such as funding for travel and applications, copying the public service announcement you taped, and printing recruitment posters and brochures -- have been paid for primarily from the Office of Communications with some contributions from SCS and FS. As we move toward full implementation of the Team USDA AmeriCorps, it is important to implement a formal management structure to support the program, as well as prepare the agencies for their ever-increasing role in the Administration's national service initiatives. Without such a structure it will not be possible to effectively manage the 42 separate programs USDA will be operating in FY 95.

OPTIONS for Issue 2 - Funding and Staffing the AmeriCorps Management Group:

- A. **Do not manage national service centrally**, leaving the management and funding up to each agency.

Pro: Agencies can proceed at their own pace in meeting their mission the best way each administrator sees fit.

Con: Initially this is the least time consuming option because nothing has to be done. However, as each program moves into the implementation stage, each agency would have the burden of developing recruitment, training, and management procedures on their own. In addition, they would have to create a task force of sorts at various times in the year to submit applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service and to deal with third-party partners engaged in their national service efforts.

In this option it falls to each agency to determine how -- if at all -- their programs will interact with those of other USDA agencies.

- B. **Continue the present course of managing AmeriCorps centrally,** using a small three person staff in the Office of Communications augmented by detailees from the agencies and supported by funds provided on a reimbursable basis from those agencies running or planning programs. This would combine the benefits of central management while reducing the burden on agency resources and, in fact, enhancing those resources through the training of agency personnel.

Pro: The program is managed centrally for the Secretary. No new organization has to be created. No separate budget has to be submitted. Detailees could be rotated into the national service support unit to learn Team USDA AmeriCorps procedures and policies and then return to their agencies to serve as a resource to manage the agency's individual program(s). Support and clerical staff would be detailed for six to eight months and professional staff would be detailed for 8 to 12 months. Details would be on a non-reimbursable basis.

Each agency would be "assessed" an amount to cover the cost for the national support organization within the Office of Communications to perform its duties. The amount of the assessment would be based on the size of the organization's existing programs and those planned for the next year which must be worked on during the current fiscal year.

Con: Agencies may think they are "losing" the services of the personnel detailed. But, if the agency is running a national service program or programs and the detailees are helping to manage or operate those programs, then their services are not "lost" to the agency.

Again agencies may feel they are "losing" dollars. However, if the Secretary is to be guaranteed of consistent and accountable management of the Team USDA national service initiatives, this money is a necessary expense associated with implementing national service.

- C. **Establish a AmeriCorps Office in the Office of The Secretary.** Staff and fund this office by moving positions and funds from the largest agencies expected to participate in national service programs.

Pro: A clear line of authority would exist from the Secretary to the national service office and its personnel. Funding necessary to support the program would be clearly identified.

Con: Just at a time when the Secretary is seeking to consolidate and trim USDA's organizational structure, a new office would be created. In addition, this may lead some Congressional opponents to claim we are creating a new bureaucracy.

RECOMMENDATION for Issue 2 - Funding and Staffing a National Service Group::

I recommend you implement option "B," which would be a good compromise between the either creating a large new formal office or simply letting the agencies work totally independently. This option achieves the objective of having an appropriate degree of central management while limiting the burden on the agency resources and leaving them with a substantial degree of flexibility in implementing national service projects. It is requested that you sign the attached memorandum directing the Under and Assistant Secretaries, agency administrators, and office heads to provide support to the Team USDA AmeriCorps national service program as outlined in the attachment to the memorandum. (The same memorandum also outlines FY96 budget issues discusses in "Issue 4.")

Agree _____ Date _____

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____

ISSUE # 3 - Including AmeriCorps in the FY96 USDA Budget and/or the farm Bill

This year's USDA AmeriCorps program will be funded largely by approximately \$20 million in FY95 funds appropriated to agencies for their regular activities. Working with the Office of General Counsel, the Office of Budget and Program Analysis, and the various agency administrators and their staffs, we have identified appropriations from which we can legally fund national service. However, this process places a great strain on agencies that are facing budget cuts and FTE reductions. Given that CNCS is unlikely to contribute significant new funds in the future to USDA AmeriCorps programs, the issue is whether the Department should ask Congress for specific AmeriCorps appropriations in the FY96 budget.

BACKGROUND:

The President and OMB Director Panetta have demonstrated their budgetary commitment to AmeriCorps by requesting funding for CNCS for FY96 that would be double the amount funded in FY95. However, even if Congress grants most of that request, the amount of the CNCS funds available to federal agencies will still be minimal -- rising from about \$17 million to \$34 million. Given the likelihood that CNCS will again grant operating funds to at least 15 federal agencies, USDA can not realistically expect to receive more than \$4 million in funding from CNCS for FY96. It is for this reason that the White House and CNCS continue to push federal agencies to find funding for AmeriCorps from their existing agency budgets.

However, maintaining or expanding a significant AmeriCorps program could place a significant burden on USDA agency budgets. If USDA simply maintains the size of our AmeriCorps program at the same level in FY96 as in FY95 -- 1,200 participants -- then USDA agencies will have to provide at least \$18 million from their FY96 budgets. Increasing the size of the USDA AmeriCorps program would be even more expensive -- increasing the program to 2,000 participants would cost USDA \$34 million; doubling the program to 2,400 participants would cost USDA \$41 million.

In addition, some agencies still do not take the need to support AmeriCorps seriously because it does not have its own appropriations within the USDA budget. This gives some agencies undue leverage in demanding that the USDA program meet their agency needs more than the needs of the Department or the American people.

One possible solution to these problems is to request Congress to give USDA appropriations specifically designated to support our AmeriCorps program and/or to formalize our program in the Farm Bill. To accomplish this, USDA agencies would have to be asked immediately to include this program in their FY96 budget requests and or in their Farm Bill recommendations. This issue could also be reviewed by the Farm Bill task forces you have appointed.

OPTIONS for Issue 3 - Including AmeriCorps in the FY96 USDA Budget and/or the Farm Bill

A. Do not make AmeriCorps a part of the Department's formal budget and Farm Bill process.

PRO: Not including AmeriCorps in the USDA budget would lesson the potential that the Department would have to cut in other areas the meet budget caps. Some agencies may feel relieved of their perceived burden in supporting AmeriCorps. This option also limits attempts by Congress to "target" national service programs within the Department.

CON: It will be difficult to maintain -- and nearly impossible to expand -- the USDA AmeriCorps program without specific appropriations. Moreover, if AmeriCorps is not part of the formal budget process, most agencies will not consider it a "real" program. They certainly would not consider it a priority of either the Secretary's or the President's. The would also reduce the Department's ability to significantly impact the American people through AmeriCorps.

B. Send the attached memorandum from the Secretary to the Under and Assistant Secretaries, Agency Administrators, and Office Heads directing them to include AmeriCorps programs in their formal FY 96 budget requests. Also remind them that they should consider any ways in which the Farm Bill can be used to strengthen the Department's national service program.

PRO: This would probable allow the USDA AmeriCorps program to expand and would "institutionalize" the inclusion of national service within each of the agencies budgets. One difficulty we encountered this year was that many agencies said they could not support national service because they had not planned for it. This would allow them to plan and for the Secretary to oversee the priorities. Most significantly, it would move national service from something many of the agencies see has "hanging off the side" of the Department, into the realm of being acknowledged as a central priority of the Secretary's. It also opens the discussion of how the flexibility provided under the national service legislation can be used to support the Secretary's reorganization efforts and the Administration's re-invention of government initiatives. Some agencies, such as the Forest Service, have already been planning how to make specific requests for AmeriCorps funding in their FY96 budget requests.

CON: Spending funds on AmeriCorps may make it more difficult for the Department to meet budget caps. Some agencies could argue that they are being forced to come up national service programs just to satisfy someone else's desires at the expense of current sound programs.

RECOMMENDATION for Issue 3 - Including AmeriCorps in the FY96 USDA Budget

I recommend you implement option B. It is requested that you sign the attached memorandum directing the Under and Assistant Secretaries to include national service programs as part of their formal FY96 Departmental budget submissions and to consider ways to incorporate AmeriCorps into the Farm Bill.

Agree _____ Date _____

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____

July __, 1994

MEMORANDUM TO:

UNDER SECRETARIES
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES
GENERAL COUNSEL
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS
OFFICE HEADS

FROM MIKE ESPY

As I explained at our recent Departmental retreat, the AmeriCorps national service program is a priority for the President and for the Department. AmeriCorps will serve as an innovative and cost-effective mechanism for delivering the Department's services. I want to thank those agencies who have been so supportive of our current national service efforts. With your help the Department has been able to establish itself as the leader in Federal national service programs.

To continue and expand this leadership role, I request that you take two steps:

1) Review how you may be able to detail staff -- either full-time or part-time, to the centralized USDA AmeriCorps management group. Because national service will grow in scope in each succeeding year, it is necessary to establish a trained cadre of personnel within your agencies. It is also essential to limit the size of any organization devoted Departmental management of national service. To develop the appropriate staff while keeping the management organization small, I have decided to use personnel detailed from the agencies to provide the bulk of the support for the management group. This will give the management group the resources it needs, while giving vital training to key agency personnel who will return to the agencies to support their growing national service efforts. The management group not only needs program specialists in hunger, the environment, rural development, and disaster-relief, but also requires administrative experts in such areas as personnel, telecommunications, evaluation, and financial management.

2) Make recommendations as to potentially including AmeriCorps initiatives into your FY96 budget requests and/or in the Farm Bill. If appropriate, please identify in your budget submission your national service projects along with the funding and staffing required to support them. Your national service projects may be new initiatives or they may be cases where you are using national service as an alternative to current program delivery methods.

In formally establishing the Team USDA AmeriCorps national service program, I have placed central coordinating responsibility for this program in the Office of Communications, while reserving for the agencies significant flexibility in the implementation of the program. Mr. Joel Berg, Director of National Service in the Office of Communications is available to work with you in identifying and developing feasible AmeriCorps projects. He can be reached in room 538-A or at 720-6350.

ISSUE # 4 - Visiting DC Summer Program

Per your direction, I have worked with the District of Columbia Government to create a summer national service project with 50 participants. The project is now scheduled to start work on July 25 and end in late August. Thirty participants will be working to clean-up the local environment, ten will be working to renovate the collections at the U.S. Arboretum, and ten will be working to increase access to USDA feeding programs.

I recommend you visit the program -- along with the media -- sometime this summer. I recommend that you join Mayor Kelly in either kicking-off the program in early July or touting the successes of the program near its completion in late August.

Agree to visit in early July _____ Date _____

Agree to visit in late August _____

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____

ISSUE # 5 - Speaking to USDA Management Team Training

From Monday, August 8th through Friday, August 12th, approximately 200 people who will be managing USDA AmeriCorps programs will gather in Washington for an intensive training program. Most of those in attendance will be USDA employees, but some will be employees of anti-hunger groups or youth service organizations. For at least half a day during the week, all training participants will join the young people in our DC summer program to perform community service. I will invite Eli Segal, as well as USDA Under and Assistant Secretaries, to address the gathering or perform service with them.

I recommend you speak to the group or perform community service alongside them anytime during the week they will be in Washington. Your presence will send a powerful message that you support AmeriCorps and appreciate the work of the rank-and-file employees across the country who are working hard on this unique new initiative to reinvent government.

Agree to speak to training group _____ Date _____

Agree to perform service w/group _____

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____



FS + FNS 1st + 2nd

June 27, 1994

Dear AmeriCorps/USDA Project Manager:

Congratulations on being named as an official AmeriCorps/USDA grant recipient. All your hard work during the planning stage has paid off and you have just "won" a very difficult internal and external competition.

You are now on the cutting edge of creating a new kind of domestic Peace Corps that has captured the imagination of the American people. This program is a top priority of both President Clinton and Secretary Espy.

Not only will USDA be running the largest AmeriCorps program managed by a federal agency, we will be running the largest single national service program of any kind in the country.

Now that the really hard work -- the work of actually managing these new and unique programs -- will begin, you should never forget our long-term goal of dramatically transforming American society with a reinvigorated ethic of civic service.

Within the next few days, you will receive in the mail a detailed guide outlining the concrete steps you will need to take between today and the actual start of our projects on September 19th.

However, you should immediately take the following steps:

1) Clear the week of August 8 on your calendar for travel to a national training program.

During that week, USDA will run an extensive AmeriCorps training program. All project managers and "crew leaders" should plan to attend this training. You will receive details within the next week.

2) Familiarize yourself with the overall philosophy and structure of AmeriCorps.

Please carefully read the attached memorandum to USDA/AmeriCorps staff.

3) Prepare to take calls from prospective participants.

Our office in Washington has already begun taking recruitment calls on a toll-free 800 number mentioned in a television public service announcement featuring Secretary Espy sent to your media market. As of this Wednesday, June 22, we will start referring callers in your region to you directly. You should be prepared to explain the specifics of your service project, as well as the general program design and philosophy of AmeriCorps, to all those who call you.

4) Create a computer or clerical system to record basic information from people who call about possibly joining the program.

At a minimum, you should collect their name, address, phone number, and educational level. You should also inform them that they will receive from an official application from us within a few weeks.

5) Create a local recruitment plan and submit it to your Washington office by Monday, July 5th.

While we in the national office will be supplying you with names from both the Corporation for National and Community Service's recruitment pool and USDA's national recruitment pool, each local project manager is ultimately responsible for recruiting a diverse group of participants for your program. To aid your efforts, we will be sending you 500 recruitment brochures and 15 recruitment posters within the next few weeks. We will also work with your agency's local and regional public affairs staff to create and implement a local media plan to build awareness in your area.

Your goal should be to receive four applications from a socio-economic mix of people for every participant you can eventually accept. In other words, if you have a 20-person program, you should attempt to obtain at least 80 applications; if you have a 50-person program, you should attempt to obtain 200 applications. You should make it clear to all applicants that there will be a tough competition to get accepted to the program. Yet you should make sure that applicants know they will not be judged so much on their past education or accomplishments as they will on their sincere desire to work hard at performing community service.

Your recruitment plan (sample outline attached) should detail exactly how you plan to obtain a high quality and diverse group of applications. Your plan needs to specify how you will go beyond just the "usual suspects," i.e. friends, family, and associates of USDA employees. The plan should detail, with a specific timetable for each task:

- * How and where you will distribute the recruitment brochures and posters;
- * Which civic groups or summer youth programs to which you will make presentations;

- * Specify the guidance counselors, principals, clergymen, college departmental chairs, college and vocational school financial aid officers, college student activities coordinators, school community service coordinators, and other community leaders with whom you will meet;

- * Specify community events where you will distribute brochures or have a booth; and

- * How and when you will personally interview all finalists.

6) Specifically plan how you will recruit participants of diverse races, classes, genders, educational levels, and physical abilities.

You will need to make a special effort to include in your plan a step-by-step discussion of how you will recruit a group of participants that fully represents the varying races, educational levels, ethnic backgrounds, economic classes, religions, genders, and physical abilities of citizens in your areas. You should be clear that AmeriCorps is NOT a jobs program just for the disadvantaged and it is NOT an educational supplement just for college students. Rather, AmeriCorps is a service program for all Americans who are willing to sweat for their communities.

While our projects will absolutely not have recruitment quotas, each program should have the basic look and feel of the people who live in that region. For instance, a program in Vermont should have a diverse mix of Anglo-Americans and Americans of French descent. A program in the District of Columbia or Chicago or Los Angeles should have a diverse mix of African-Americans, Caucasians, Latinos, and Asians. A program in South Dakota should have a diverse mix of caucasians and Native Americans.

All projects should seek people with a diverse mix of educational levels, ranging from high school dropouts to professional school graduates. All projects should recruit people with a diverse level of family incomes. (There is NO income eligibility for this program). All projects should seek participants who are roughly 50% male and 50% female. All projects should make special efforts to recruit participants with disabilities.

We fully realize how difficult it will be to achieve the recruitment goals outlined above, but diversity is fundamental to our program and we will not allow any project to go forward if it does not adequately represent the surrounding community. Your recruitment plan should specify the exact ways you will take steps to such obtain diverse applications.

7) Work towards having all participants selected by August 20.

Aim to select at least 20 percent of your participants from Corporation's recruitment pool gathered from its own 1-800 line, which will include names from your area, along with a list of people from your area from the USDA 1-800 line.

* By August 1, we will mail you a list of the names of residents in your area that the Corporation has gathered from its own 1-800 recruitment line, as well as a list of prospective participants from the USDA 1-800 line.

* The application deadline should be August 5th and interviews with applicants should have taken place by August 18th.

* Please bring copies of the finalists' applications to the training in Washington.

* By August 18, send a list of your suggested selections and their socio-economic data to the national office.

* Calls and letters will go out to those selected by August 22.

We certainly have our work cut out for us in the months ahead, but if we all work together as TEAM USDA, focused on achieving a common purpose, we will run the highest quality AmeriCorps program in the country.

If you have any additional questions or advice, please contact your agency national service coordinator or feel free to contact me at (202)-720-6350, Katherine Gibney at (202) 720-4369, or Donna Hines at (202) 690-0639. You can fax materials to any of us at (202) 720-4614.

Thank you for your commitment to building a better America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joel Berg".

Joel Berg
Director of National Service

SAMPLE RECRUITMENT PRESS RELEASE

(UNDERLINED SECTIONS SHOULD BE INDIVIDUALIZED AND PLACED ON USDA STATIONARY -- YOU SHOULD APPROVE YOUR VERSION WITH THE NATIONAL OFFICE BEFORE DISTRIBUTION)

Contact:

Joel Berg, (202) 720-6350

USDA Director of National Service

Jane Doesmith, (313) 555-1212

Illinois Public Affairs Officer

EAST ST. LOUIS AMERICORPS NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAM BEGINS RECRUITMENT

EAST ST. LOUIS, ILLINOIS -- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced today that it has begun recruitment for the AmeriCorps national service project that the Department will run in East St. Louis starting this September.

AmeriCorps is President Clinton's national service initiative that allows diverse groups of young people to earn college or vocational school scholarships while performing critical service to meet human, environmental, public safety, and educational needs. Participants in the program will work for a year earning a stipend of at least \$7,500, and then receive an educational award worth \$4,725.

The 20 participants in the East St. Louis program will restore neglected and abandoned lots in residential neighborhoods, clean up and beautify State Community College, renovate the greenhouse at East St. Louis Service High School, and renovate local parks.

Any citizens age 17 or older from the St. Louis Metropolitan Area are eligible to apply for the program. There is no maximum or minimum family income required to apply. Applications will be accepted until August 5th.

To apply for the program or obtain more information, call Jon Jones at (333) 777-2222 or the toll-free national USDA AmeriCorps hot line at 1-800-880-4183.

Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy urged all interested Americans to apply. Said Espy, "AmeriCorps is grounded in the mainstream values of community, responsibility, and opportunity. It is good for the participants, who benefit from their increased ability to attend college or vocational school --- good for communities, which benefit from their service --- and good for the country, which benefits from a renewed civic spirit."

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AMERICORPS/USDA

LOCAL RECRUITMENT PLAN OUTLINE

Tuesday, July 5: Send press release to all area media outlets, including minority newspapers and radio stations; follow-up with phone calls to each outlet

By Friday, July 8: Have met with all financial aids counselors, community service coordinators, student deans, job placement coordinators, student activities coordinators at all universities, colleges, and vocational schools in the area -- including historically African-American, Hispanic, and American Indian institutions

By Friday, July 15: Have met with all Principals, Vice-Principals, guidance counselors, coaches, and student activities coordinators from all local public and private high schools

By Monday, July 18: Receive package of 500 recruitment brochures and 15 recruitment posters from national office; immediately place labels listing local contact number on all brochures and posters

Tuesday, July 19: Hold meeting with key community leaders, FFA coordinators, clergymen, business leaders, and 4-H coordinators

By Wednesday, July 20: Have hand-delivered or mail brochures to all recruitment contacts previously located

Thursday, July 21: Speak at Chamber of Commerce lunch

By Friday, July 22: Have personally placed all fifteen posters at key sites in the area where young people congregate; hold brochure distributing blitz to distribute brochures at local swimming, pools, parks, Summer feeding sites, public assistance offices, college campuses, and recreation centers

Monday, July 25: Speak at monthly meeting of local urban league chapter

Tuesday, July 26: Meet with local leaders from organization representing the disabled

Wednesday, July 27: Spanish-speaking member of staff appears on call-in show on local Hispanic radio station

Thursday, July 28: Make presentation at local FFA chapter meeting

Friday, July 29: Speak at local rotary club

By Monday August 1: Obtain lists of local residents interested in program who have called into the USDA and the Corporation for National and Community Service 800 lines

Friday, August 5th: Last day to receive applications; select finalists for interviews; will interview twice as many applicants as there are slots in the program

Monday, August 8: Bring xerox copies of all finalists' applications to USDA AmeriCorps staff training in Washington, D.C.

By Friday, August 12: Obtain approval of finalist list from national office

Monday, August 15: Begin interviewing finalists

By Thursday, August 18: Send list of final selections to national office for approval

Monday, August 22: Selections are finalized; local office calls all of those selected and as many of those not selected as possible; national office sends letters from Secretary Espy to all those who were and were not selected



*Memo
from
June*

June 23, 1994

BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service *JB*
Subject: Chicago National Service Event on Tuesday

The Event

On Tuesday, June 28, from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., you will participate in a media event relating to the Summer of Safety national service program we are running in Chicago in partnership with the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences.

The event will be held at the Ida B. Wells public housing development, where most of the program's project work will be performed. Major Chicago media outlets -- including minority media outlets -- will be invited to attend.

You will meet with all 50 of the program participants, who represent a diverse mix of participants from throughout the Chicago area. I suggest that you personally meet each of the individuals and then make very informal comments lasting about ten minutes. Your talk should be aimed jointly at the participants and the media. I suggest that the comments outline your personal background, the philosophy of the President's program, and your vision of service. You will also tour the housing development and visit run-down areas at which our gardens and trees will be planted.

As you can see from the attached clips from both the Tribune and Sun-Times, this program has already received glowing press coverage. Since the articles focused on the details of how the program will work, I would suggest that the Tuesday event focus on stressing the personal commitment that you have made to service.

The Project

* President Clinton will announce the kick-off of the Summer of Safety, of which our Chicago program is a part, this Friday in St. Louis. Our Chicago project is one of the 91 Summer of Safety national service projects, engaging 7,000 participants in anti-crime projects throughout the country.

* The program is being funded primarily by a grant made to a foundation affiliated with the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences. USDA helped write the grant application and is coordinating efforts with the U.S. Department of Justice and the Chicago Housing Authority. The grant was awarded by the Corporation for National Service, the new federal agency administering the President's national service initiative.

* The program is engaging a socio-economic mix of 50 participants in community service work in Chicago creating urban gardens, tree planting, renovating playgrounds, and patrolling those areas to create "safe havens" with reduced crime. The total grant awarded for the summer is only \$180,000, proving that innovative projects such as this really can reinvent government to get more results for less taxpayer money.

* The participants in the program will earn a small living allowance and a \$1,000 educational award in exchange for their vital service to the community.

* The program will also receive staff support from USDA. ASCS, FS, and SCS will each provide employees on detail to work with the young people in the program.

* Hands-on training has already started for the participants. Service at Ida B. Wells will begin in a few days. This Administration doesn't just talk about problems, we get results.

* This program won't solve all of Chicago's problems overnight, but it will make a difference. One Chicago neighborhoods will be just a little safer and just a little greener this summer because of our program.

* The Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences is an excellent institution to run this program. You have visited the school, spoken at its commencement, and are highly impressed with its outstanding track record.

*** The Corporation for National and Community Service has just awarded USDA a grant to expand the program to a year long operation.** Twenty participants from the summer program will continue the current projects, teach environmental education in Chicago public schools, and expand work sites next spring. USDA will also run a small flood-relief team in southern Illinois and an anti-hunger team in nearby Milwaukee. All three programs are part of the 1,200-participant AmeriCorps program run by USDA starting this September.

The Philosophy of the Program

*** AmeriCorps rebuilds the sense of community that made America great.** By bringing together Americans of all races, classes, genders, religions, sexual orientations, and physical abilities to work side-by-side, AmeriCorps will strengthen the cords that bind us together as a people. The "sweat equity" created by AmeriCorps can play an important role in healing the nation's wounds and bridging our divisions. AmeriCorps will fundamentally change the country because it creates a new civic compact in which any citizen can be tied to the nation by the simple virtue of making a difference in the lives of others.

*** AmeriCorps promotes personal responsibility.** AmeriCorps gives all Americans a new way of giving something back to the country. It reminds us that, along with rights we enjoy as citizens, we all have certain obligations to protecting those rights and aiding our own communities. Furthermore, AmeriCorps gives young people a tangible way to take charge of their own lives.

*** AmeriCorps expands educational and economic opportunity.** Participants in the program will receive a living stipend and will also receive an educational award. AmeriCorps is one of the major Administration initiatives aimed at making post-secondary education once again affordable for most Americans.

*** AmeriCorps reinvents the interests of the middle class and the poor.** There is NO economic needs test to participate in this program -- the only requirement to participate is a desire to serve the country. This program will greatly boost students from the previously forgotten middle class, who now are told their families "make too much money" to qualify for existing Federal aid programs. Yet the program will also help poor families for whom aid programs are insufficient.

June 22, 1994

TALKING POINTS FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Director of National service

Subject: **Press Availability in Chicago**

Your speech text for your Chicago appearance includes a short section announcing the national service program with the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences. However, Steve Kinsella suggested that I also provide you the following talking points on the topic so that you can also mention the issue in your press availability:

- * USDA just helped obtained a grant for a foundation affiliated with the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences to run a national service program this summer. The grant was awarded by the Corporation for National Service, the new federal agency administering the President's national service initiative. The U.S. Department of Justice will also help the summer program.
- * The program will engage a socio-economic mix of 50 participants in community service work in Chicago creating urban gardens, tree planting, renovating playgrounds, and patrolling those areas to create "safe havens" with reduced crime. The total grant awarded for the summer is only \$180,000, proving that innovative projects such as this really can reinvent government to get more results for less taxpayer money.
- * The participants in the program will earn a small living allowance and a \$1,000 educational award in exchange for their vital service to the community.

* The program will also receive staff support from USDA. ASCS, FS, and SCS will each provide employees on detail to work with the young people in the program.

* The program will operate at one public housing development and at other empty lots in crime-ridden sections of Chicago. The exact work sites have not yet been finalized. and the Ida B. Wells Resident Advisory Council. The other neighborhood site, in which an empty lot will be turned into a community garden, has not yet been named.

* Service will begin this June. This Administration doesn't just talk about problems, we get results.

* This program won't solve all of Chicago's problems overnight, but it will make a difference. A few Chicago neighborhoods will be just a little safer and just a little greener this summer because of our program.

* National service will fundamentally change the nation because it creates a new civic compact in which any citizen can be tied to the nation by the simple virtue of making a difference in the lives of others. There is NO economic needs test for this program. The only requirement to participate is a desire to serve the country.

* You are pleased to help the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences run a program that has such-wide spread community support. You have visited the school, spoken at its commencement, and are highly impressed with its outstanding track record of achievement. It will run an excellent program.

Memo

June 20, 1994

To: Eloise Thomas, Kim Schnoor

From: Joel Berg

Subject: White House National Service Announcement Today

Just in case the Secretary does attend today's White House national service event, I have prepared a draft statement and a background briefing for him.

I was unfortunately unable to have these materials prepared sooner because I did not learn until the middle of the day on Friday that it was even a possibility that the Secretary might attend.

Please let me know if you or the Secretary would like changes in these drafts or require more information. Also, please inform me if the Secretary approves the quotes in the press release -- which should be released today regardless of whether he attends the event.

Thank you for your help.



Memo

June 20, 1994

BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service *JB*

Subject: TODAY'S WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

At 1:30 today, following Dee Dee Meyer's daily briefing in the White House press conference room, Eli Segal will hold a media briefing with Secretaries Babbitt, Cisneros, and Shalala, Attorney General Reno, Administrator Browner, and yourself.

Eli will speak first and then introduce the other speakers. I have not yet been able to find out what the speaking order will be and how long they would like you to speak. However, given the large number of speakers, I estimate they will want you to speak for about two minutes. (Attached is a draft, two-minute, statement for you.) If you choose to speak without a prepared text, this memo outlines suggested talking points.

The event will likely be covered by the regular White House press corps and some trade press from the Departments involved. We will also have USDA television and radio crews covering the event in order to distribute video and audio clips from the event through our usual means.

THE SPECIFICS OF TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Today's briefing will announce the first round of grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to Federal agencies and national non-profit organizations.

CNCS, under the direction of Special Assistant to the President and Chief Executive Officer Eli Segal, runs the President's national service initiative, also known as AmeriCorps. CNCS is also governed by a board appointed by the President, but most of the Clinton appointees have yet to be confirmed by the Senate. A handful of Cabinet Secretaries -- including yourself -- also sit on the board as ex-officio, non-voting members.

However, the vast majority of AmeriCorps programs will not be "run" directly by CNCS -- they will be run by non-profit organizations, state and local governments, and Federal government agencies to whom CNCS makes competitive grant awards. CNCS grants are broken down into two different types: **direct grants** and **state commission grants**.

State commission grants, which will be announced in a few weeks, comprise two-thirds of the total funding for AmeriCorps programs. These grants are funnelled through commissions in each state that are appointed by each state's governor.

Direct grants, the first year of which are being announced today, comprise the other one third of the AmeriCorps funding. Of that one-third, no more than a third of that (11% of the total) may be awarded to Federal agencies. Based on the funds appropriated in FY94, that formula allowed for \$17.6 million in grants to Federal agencies, not including the additional cost of the educational benefits. The remainder of the direct grants will go to non-profit organizations that will run AmeriCorps projects that cross state lines.

In this competitive process, USDA fared extremely well:

* Out of the approximately 2,500 AmeriCorps slots awarded to Federal agencies, USDA received 1,200 -- almost half. USDA will have 42 different projects operating in 32 different states.

* The USDA program will have over twice as many participants as the next largest program in the Federal government. Additionally, USDA has taken the extraordinary step of running three distinctly different national programs in three distinctly different mission areas.

* In addition to allotting funds for 1,200 educational awards, CNCS is awarding \$2.6 million in operating funds to USDA. This monetary award is also the largest awarded to a Federal agency.

* The USDA program will not only be the largest Federal agency program, but will be the largest single AmeriCorps program of any kind. The largest grant to a non-profit organization will be for 1,000 participants. In addition, the National Civilian Community Corps, the one AmeriCorps program actually run directly by CNCS, will have 1,000 participants.

* Federal agencies, including USDA, have engaged in comprehensive planning efforts for over a year. USDA's final application exceeded 300 pages.

* This grant process is proof positive that the Clinton Administration is not just talking about reinventing government, we're getting concrete results. Today's announcement culminates a highly unusual process in which Federal agencies had to actually submit a detailed and comprehensive application to another federal entity in order to be considered for a grant. In other words, USDA and other Cabinet agencies were required to go through a process similar to those we require of others. (In fact, our application to CNCS required a strategic plan similar to the types of strategic plans that USDA and HUD are requiring in Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community applications). Unlike the way government usually operates, no one agency was guaranteed funding by a set formula. As a consequence of this open competition, Federal agencies were forced to work harder and more creatively to develop quality programs in their applications. The grants to 15 different Federal agencies announced today prove that this new process of competition boosts excellence and innovation in government.

WHY AMERICORPS IS CENTRAL TO THE PRESIDENT'S AGENDA

* AmeriCorps rebuilds the sense of community that made America great. By bringing together Americans of all races, classes, genders, religions, sexual orientations, and physical abilities to work side-by-side, AmeriCorps will strengthen the cords that bind us together as a people. The "sweat equity" created by AmeriCorps can play an important role in healing the nation's wounds and bridging our divisions. AmeriCorps will fundamentally change the country because it creates a new civic compact in which any citizen can be tied to the nation by the simple virtue of making a difference in the lives of others.

* AmeriCorps promotes personal responsibility. AmeriCorps gives all Americans a new way of giving something back to the country. It reminds us that, along with rights we enjoy as citizens, we all have certain obligations to protecting those rights and aiding our own communities. Furthermore, AmeriCorps gives young people a tangible way to take charge of their own lives.

* AmeriCorps expands educational and economic opportunity. Participants in the program will receive a living stipend and will also receive an educational award worth \$4,725 for each year of service successfully performed. AmeriCorps is one of the major Administration initiatives aimed at making post-secondary education once again affordable for most Americans.

* AmeriCorps reinvents the interests of the middle class and the poor. There is NO economic needs test to participate in this program -- the only requirement to participate is a desire to serve the country. Thus, this program will greatly benefit students from the previously forgotten middle class, who now are told their families "make too much money" to qualify for existing Federal aid programs. Yet the program will also help poor families for whom existing Federal aid programs are insufficient.

HOW THE AMERICORPS PROGRAM WILL WORK GENERALLY

* Most AmeriCorps projects will begin this September, placing 20,000 participants in projects throughout the country. All USDA programs will begin shortly after Labor Day, with the exception of our DC and Chicago programs which will begin this summer and the New Hampshire, program which will begin January 1995. While the 20,000 number may seem modest, it is larger than the highest-ever yearly number of people in the Peace Corps. Furthermore, the number of participants will grow dramatically each year. This Administration doesn't just talk about problems, we get results.

* Service will be focused on meeting unmet human, environmental, public safety, and educational needs. The slogan of CNCS is "Getting Things Done" and AmeriCorps will continually focus on accomplishing useful and measurable work of high quality. AmeriCorps is NOT a jobs program, it is a service program.

* Individuals may apply for the program either through CNCS or through the individual projects at each location. Both CNCS and USDA will have their own toll-free 800, lines for recruitment. Recruitment will start immediately for the fall programs.

* AmeriCorps will recruit a socio-economically diverse group of Americans. AmeriCorps will bring together Americans of all races, classes, genders, and physical abilities. Participants must be age 17 or older, but there is no upper age limit for participation; while we expect that some senior citizens and middle age citizens will participate in the program, it is likely that most participants will be 18-26. Participants can be high school graduates, vocational school students, college students, college graduates, or professional school graduates. Participants can also be high school drop-outs if they agree to work towards their GED while in the program.

* Participants will earn a living stipend of at least \$7,500 and will earn an educational benefit of \$4,725 in exchange for each year of service successfully performed. The stipend is provided because this Administration understands that citizens still have to pay for food, transportation, and housing for the year in which they provide full-time service. The educational benefit can be used to pay for college or graduate school in advance, or to repay student loans. It can also be used to pay for vocational school or job training programs approved by the Departments of Labor or Education.

HOW ALL USDA AMERICORPS PROJECTS WILL WORK

Starting in September 1994, USDA will run three nationwide AmeriCorps Teams: an Anti-Hunger Team; a Public Lands and Environment Team; and a Rural Development Team. USDA will also run special disaster-relief programs in the nine Midwest states most impacted by last year's record flooding.

The Teams will engage a total of 1,200 socio-economically diverse participants in human, environmental, and educational work in 42 different pilot projects located in 32 different states covering over 100 Congressional districts. The projects will be spread across rural and urban areas in every region of the country.

Both the Anti-Hunger and the Public Lands and Environment Teams will share the same corps-type model of service, engaging a mix of high school dropouts, high school graduates, college students, and college graduates to perform service in work crews -- usually ten participants each -- at pilot locations with no less than 20 participants. Both the Anti-Hunger and Public Lands and Environment Teams will have an educational component in which participants will run environmental or nutrition education programs in local schools.

In the Anti-Hunger, Nutrition, and Empowerment Team, participants will work in five pilot locations -- three urban and two rural -- to help thousands of low-income families and individuals improve their diets and move toward self-sufficiency. Each pilot location will be run by a unique partnership consisting of an existing youth service corps, a local anti-hunger group, and USDA. While most of this Team will focus on expanding the use of Federal anti-hunger programs and increasing access to nutrition information, the Team will eventually work to implement new empowerment programs such as Earned Income Tax Credits, microenterprise projects, community development banks, assets development projects, and farmers' markets. These programs will meet President Clinton's goal of reforming welfare and breaking the cycle of persistent poverty.

In the Public Lands and Environment Team, participants will work in 18 pilot locations -- seven urban and 11 rural -- to perform service helping communities reduce environmental hazards and working on public lands to conserve, restore, and sustain natural habitats. Some of these pilot locations will be run directly by USDA and some will be run in partnership with existing youth service corps. Participants will 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 in disaster recovery, and restore wetlands.

The Rural Development Team will be similar to the professional corps model of service. The Team would establish 10 regional sites of at least 20 professional and paraprofessional participants who assist rural communities in identifying needs and resources necessary for economic, human, and environmental well-being. The participants would have highly varied educations and training and would be matched up with individual communities or regions with unmet needs that can be filled by someone with that specific background. Participants will be mostly college graduates or professional school graduates and will provide service improving local economic planning, boosting sustainable agriculture, bringing the running water to areas now without it, increasing the success of Enterprise Zones and Enterprise Communities, protecting watersheds, improving rural housing, aiding disaster relief, and supporting existing youth volunteer programs.

Special disaster-relief projects will also be run in the nine Midwest states most impacted by last summer's record flooding to help ongoing long-term recovery efforts.

Each USDA Team will receive significant financial and technical support from USDA agencies, reflecting your focus on inter-agency cooperation as a keystone of "TEAM USDA." The Agricultural Research Service (ARS), the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), the Farmer's Home Administration (FmHA), the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), the Forest Service (FS), the Rural Development Administration (RDA), the Rural Electrification Administration (REA), and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) all will play significant roles in funding and managing this program.

Recruitment for USDA programs has already begun. The Public Service Announcement you taped is already running on some television stations throughout the country. Our toll-free number, 1-800-880-4183, has already received calls from such divergent areas as Maine and Utah.

ANTI-HUNGER SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Vermont, state-wide
 District of Columbia
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin
 Mississippi Delta, Mississippi
 Los Angeles, California

Anti-Hunger Team Example #1 - District of Columbia:

Run in partnership between the DC Service Corps, DC Hunger Action, and USDA, this project will focus on performing outreach on food assistance programs, teaching about nutrition and food safety, providing transportation assistance, creating urban gardens and farmers' markets, and helping homeless people. One of the goals of the program will be to reach 5,000 students through a nutrition education program developed jointly by Team members and the faculty of the University of the District of Columbia.

Anti-Hunger Team Example #2 - Vermont, state-wide:

Run in partnership between the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity, the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, and USDA, this program will operate out of five regional hubs in every section of Vermont. The program will aim to increase food stamp utilization by 5% statewide, increase the number of Summer Food Service Program sites by 15% statewide, increase the availability of School Breakfast Program sites by 5% statewide, and increase participation in the Women, Infants, and Children's program by 5% statewide.

PUBLIC LANDS AND ENVIRONMENT SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Western Kansas
 Western Oklahoma
 Texas Coast
 Atlanta, Georgia
 Boston, Massachusetts
 East St. Louis, Illinois
 New Jersey, state-wide
 District of Columbia
 Chicago, Illinois
 Portland, Oregon
 San Bernadino National Forest, Southern California

Six Rivers National Forest, Northern California
 Olympic national Forest Washington State
 Rogue River National Forest, Southern Oregon
 Arizona, state-wide National Forests
 Bienville National Forest, Mississippi
 Green Mountain National Forest, Vermont
 White Mountain National Forest, New Hampshire

Public Lands and Environment Example # 1 - Texas Coast:

Participants will work to reduce shoreline erosion by 25% along one mile of the Texas gulf coast by establishing wave barriers intended to protect this unique and fragile ecosystem. The goal is to create more permanent vegetation and an increase in the fin fish population of the area.

Public Lands and Environment Example #2 - Boston, Massachusetts:

Participants will revitalize neighborhoods by identifying and eliminating environmental hazards and by creating and maintaining recreation areas and green spaces. Participants will clean up 25 vacant lots and renovate 10 greenspace parcels. They will also test soils at 300 vacant parcels to determine levels of lead and other public health hazards in soils, test water quality, and trace nonpoint source water pollutants through 50 storm drain systems. Additionally, they will translate materials about this project into Spanish, Vietnamese, or various Creole languages for non-English speaking citizens.

Public Lands and Environment Example # 3 - Rogue River N.F., S. Oregon:

Participants will enhance spotted owl ecosystems at 10 locations in the Forest. They will replace 10 trail bridges at 10 specific stream crossings on the Rogue River. They will also maintain 100 miles of hiking trails at high elevation sites determined to be priority maintenance locations, meeting regional hiking trail standards.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

New England (Maine, Vermont, Northwestern New York)
 Appalachia (Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia)
 South Carolina, state-wide
 Mississippi Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi)

Great Lakes (Michigan, Ohio)
Minnesota, state-wide
Texas Colonias
Four Corners (Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah)
Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington)
California, state-wide

Rural Development Example #1 - New England:

In Maine, participants will work with cranberry growers to develop more environmentally-sensitive farming operations, and will improve the quality of water on local lakes, assist four communities with the development of a railroad bed for community hiking, biking and snowmobiling trails, and engage in a wide variety of other projects. In Vermont, participants will work to protect the Winooski River Watershed and to provide skills and technical information to help 40 rural fire departments in Vermont develop comprehensive fire protection plans. In New York, participants will work to increase soil and water conservation measures throughout Erie County.

Rural Development Example #2 - Mississippi Delta:

Participants will work on a wide variety of economic development and environmental protection projects. Some examples include: installing 1,575 dry fire hydrants to increase fire protection in 45 parishes of Louisiana; moving 250 residents out of a floodplain in Arkansas; improving livestock waste treatment in 13 counties in southwest Mississippi; assisting elderly and limited resource farmers with routine animal husbandry practices; writing and producing environmental educational materials for teachers; and developing arboretums for on-site environmental education.

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Participants will work on a wide variety of economic development and environmental protection projects. Some examples include: increasing the number of citizens whose homes are hooked up to running water by facilitating community applications for USDA rural water and waste programs; increasing knowledge among socially and economically disadvantaged individuals of the availability of loans for rural housing ownership, housing repair, and water hook-up services; and working with local residents to facilitate the creation of at least one local non-profit agency which will address a critical local need.

FLOOD RELIEF SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Illinois
Iowa
Kansas
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
South Dakota
Wisconsin

Flood Relief Example # 1 - All Midwest Flood States:

Participants will inspect river systems by canoe and stream walks to prepare damage assessment plans on 25 miles of streams. They will also restore wetlands in 84 damaged areas to their original condition, benefiting 420 landowners. Additionally, the participants will restore flood control facilities according to already established plans in 49 counties.

Flood Relief Example # 2 - All Midwest Flood States:

Participants will work on a wide variety of flood relief, economic development, and environmental protection projects. Some examples include: determining and delineating 200 wetlands and incorporating this information into the flood-relief planning process; directly explaining the impact of the wetlands delineation to a minimum of 200 affected landowners; creating 420 wetlands plans to restore farmable areas back to original wetlands conditions; and planning and implementing the improvement of 420 animal waste systems in order to reduce groundwater pollution.



*Memorandum
from
Joel*

June 20, 1994

BACKGROUND FOR ALL STAFF INVOLVED IN AMERICORPS/NATIONAL SERVICE

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service

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Wisconsin

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Participants will inspect river systems by canoe and stream walks to prepare damage assessment plans on 25 miles of streams. They will also restore wetlands in 84 damaged areas to their original condition, benefiting 420 landowners. Additionally, the participants will restore flood control facilities according to already established plans in 49 counties.

Flood Relief Example # 2 - All Midwest Flood States:

Participants will work on a wide variety of flood relief, economic development, and environmental protection projects. Some examples include: determining and delineating 200 wetlands and incorporating this information into the flood-relief planning process; directly explaining the impact of the wetlands delineation to a minimum of 200 affected landowners; creating 420 wetlands plans to restore farmable areas back to original wetlands conditions; and planning and implementing the improvement of 420 animal waste systems in order to reduce groundwater pollution.



Memos

June 20, 1994

BACKGROUND FOR ALL STAFF INVOLVED IN AMERICORPS/NATIONAL SERVICE

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service *JB*

Subject: TODAY'S WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

At 1:30 Eastern Time today, Eli Segal will hold a media briefing at the White House with Secretaries Babbitt, Cisneros, and Shalala, Attorney General Reno, Administrator Browner, and Secretary Espy. Today's briefing will announce the first round of grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to Federal agencies and national non-profit organizations.

CNCS, under the direction of Special Assistant to the President and Chief Executive Officer Segal, runs the President's national service initiative, also known as AmeriCorps. CNCS is also governed by a board appointed by the President, but most of the Clinton appointees have yet to be confirmed by the Senate. A handful of Cabinet Secretaries -- including Secretary Espy -- also sit on the board as ex-officio, non-voting members.

However, the vast majority of AmeriCorps programs will not be "run" directly by CNCS -- they will be run by non-profit organizations, state and local governments, and Federal government agencies to whom CNCS makes competitive grant awards. CNCS grants are broken down into two different types: **direct grants** and **state commission grants**.

State commission grants, which will be announced in a few weeks, comprise two-thirds of the total funding for AmeriCorps programs. These grants are funnelled through commissions in each state that are appointed by each state's governor.

Direct grants, the first year of which are being announced today, comprise the other one third of the AmeriCorps funding. Of that one-third, no more than a third of that (11% of the total) may be awarded to Federal agencies. Based on the funds appropriated in FY94, that formula allowed for \$17.6 million in grants to Federal agencies, not including the additional cost of the educational benefits. The remainder of the direct grants will go to non-profit organizations that will run AmeriCorps projects that cross state lines.

In this competitive process, USDA fared extremely well:

* Out of the approximately 2,500 AmeriCorps slots awarded to Federal agencies, USDA received 1,200 -- almost half. USDA will have 42 different projects operating in 32 different states.

* The USDA program will have over twice as many participants as the next largest program in the Federal government. Additionally, USDA has taken the extraordinary step of running three distinctly different national programs in three distinctly different mission areas.

* In addition to allotting funds for 1,200 educational awards, CNCS is awarding \$2.6 million in operating funds to USDA. This monetary award is also the largest awarded to a Federal agency.

* The USDA program will not only be the largest Federal agency program, but will be the largest single AmeriCorps program of any kind. The largest grant to a non-profit organization will be for 1,000 participants. In addition, the National Civilian Community Corps, the one AmeriCorps program actually run directly by CNCS, will have 1,000 participants.

* Federal agencies, including USDA, have engaged in comprehensive planning efforts for over a year. USDA's final application exceeded 300 pages.

* This grant process is proof positive that the Clinton Administration is not just talking about reinventing government, we're getting concrete results. Today's announcement culminates a highly unusual process in which Federal agencies had to actually submit a detailed and comprehensive application to another federal entity in order to be considered for a grant. In other words, USDA and other Cabinet agencies were required to go through a process similar to those we require of others. (In fact, our application to CNCS required a strategic plan similar to the types of strategic plans that USDA and HUD are requiring in Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community applications). Unlike the way government usually operates, no one agency was guaranteed funding by a set formula. As a consequence of this open competition, Federal agencies were forced to work harder and more creatively to develop quality programs in their applications. The grants to 15 different Federal agencies announced today prove that this new process of competition boosts excellence and innovation in government.

WHY AMERICORPS IS CENTRAL TO THE PRESIDENT'S AGENDA

* AmeriCorps rebuilds the sense of community that made America great. By bringing together Americans of all races, classes, genders, religions, sexual orientations, and physical abilities to work side-by-side, AmeriCorps will strengthen the cords that bind us together as a people. The "sweat equity" created by AmeriCorps can play an important role in healing the nation's wounds and bridging our divisions. AmeriCorps will fundamentally change the country because it creates a new civic compact in which any citizen can be tied to the nation by the simple virtue of making a difference in the lives of others.

* AmeriCorps promotes personal responsibility. AmeriCorps gives all Americans a new way of giving something back to the country. It reminds us that, along with rights we enjoy as citizens, we all have certain obligations to protecting those rights and aiding our own communities. Furthermore, AmeriCorps gives young people a tangible way to take charge of their own lives.

* AmeriCorps expands educational and economic opportunity. Participants in the program will receive a living stipend and will also receive an educational award worth \$4,725 for each year of service successfully performed. AmeriCorps is one of the major Administration initiatives aimed at making post-secondary education once again affordable for most Americans.

* AmeriCorps reinvents the interests of the middle class and the poor. There is NO economic needs test to participate in this program -- the only requirement to participate is a desire to serve the country. This program will greatly boost students from the previously forgotten middle class, who now are told their families "make too much money" to qualify for existing Federal aid programs. Yet the program will also help poor families for whom aid programs are insufficient.

HOW THE AMERICORPS PROGRAM WILL WORK GENERALLY

* Most AmeriCorps projects will begin this September, placing 20,000 participants in projects throughout the country. All USDA programs will begin shortly after Labor Day, with the exception of our DC and Chicago programs which will begin this summer and the New Hampshire, program which will begin January 1995. While the 20,000 number may seem modest, it is larger than the highest-ever yearly number of people in the Peace Corps. Furthermore, the number of participants will grow dramatically each year. This Administration doesn't just talk about problems, we get results.

* Service will be focused on meeting unmet human, environmental, public safety, and educational needs. The slogan of CNCS is "Getting Things Done" and AmeriCorps will continually focus on accomplishing useful and measurable work of high quality. AmeriCorps is NOT a jobs program, it is a service program.

* Individuals may apply for the program either through CNCS or through the individual projects at each location. Both CNCS and USDA will have their own toll-free 800, lines for recruitment. Recruitment will start immediately for the fall programs.

* AmeriCorps will recruit a socio-economically diverse group of Americans. AmeriCorps will bring together Americans of all races, classes, genders, and physical abilities. Participants must be age 17 or older, but there is no upper age limit for participation; while we expect that some senior citizens and middle age citizens will participate in the program, it is likely that most participants will be 18-26. Participants can be high school graduates, vocational school students, college students, college graduates, or professional school graduates. Participants can also be high school dropouts if they agree to work towards their GED while in the program.

* Participants will earn a living stipend of at least \$7,500 and will earn an educational benefit of \$4,725 in exchange for each year of service successfully performed. The stipend is provided because this Administration understands that citizens still have to pay for food, transportation, and housing for the year in which they provide full-time service. The educational benefit can be used to pay for college or graduate school in advance, or to repay student loans. It can also be used to pay for vocational school or job training programs approved by the Departments of Labor or Education.

HOW ALL USDA AMERICORPS PROJECTS WILL WORK

Starting in September 1994, USDA will run three nationwide AmeriCorps Teams: an Anti-Hunger Team; a Public Lands and Environment Team; and a Rural Development Team. USDA will also run special disaster-relief programs in the nine Midwest states most impacted by last year's record flooding.

The Teams will engage a total of 1,200 socio-economically diverse participants in human, environmental, and educational work in 42 different pilot projects located in 32 different states covering over 100 Congressional districts. The projects will be spread across rural and urban areas in every region of the country.

Both the Anti-Hunger and the Public Lands and Environment Teams will share the same corps-type model of service, engaging a mix of high school dropouts, high school graduates, college students, and college graduates to perform service in work crews -- usually ten participants each -- at pilot locations with no less than 20 participants. Both the Anti-Hunger and Public Lands and Environment Teams will have an educational component in which participants will run environmental or nutrition education programs in local schools.

In the Anti-Hunger, Nutrition, and Empowerment Team, participants will work in five pilot locations -- three urban and two rural -- to help thousands of low-income families and individuals improve their diets and move toward self-sufficiency. Each pilot location will be run by a unique partnership consisting of an existing youth service corps, a local anti-hunger group, and USDA. While most of this Team will focus on expanding the use of Federal anti-hunger programs and increasing access to nutrition information, the Team will eventually work to implement new empowerment programs such as Earned Income Tax Credits, microenterprise projects, community development banks, assets development projects, and farmers' markets. These programs will meet President Clinton's goal of reforming welfare and breaking the cycle of persistent poverty.

In the Public Lands and Environment Team, participants will work in 18 pilot locations -- seven urban and 11 rural -- to perform service helping communities reduce environmental hazards and working on public lands to conserve, restore, and sustain natural habitats. Some of these pilot locations will be run directly by USDA and some will be run in partnership with existing youth service corps. Participants will 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 in disaster recovery, and restore wetlands.

The Rural Development Team will be similar to the professional corps model of service. The Team would establish 10 regional sites of at least 20 professional and paraprofessional participants who assist rural communities in identifying needs and resources necessary for economic, human, and environmental well-being. The participants would have highly varied educations and training and would be matched up with individual communities or regions with unmet needs that can be filled by someone with that specific background. Participants will be mostly college graduates or professional school graduates and will provide service improving local economic planning, boosting sustainable agriculture, bringing the running water to areas now without it, increasing the success of Enterprise Zones and Enterprise Communities, protecting watersheds, improving rural housing, aiding disaster relief, and supporting existing youth volunteer programs.

Special disaster-relief projects will also be run in the nine Midwest states most impacted by last summer's record flooding to help ongoing long-term recovery efforts.

Each USDA Team will receive significant financial and technical support from USDA agencies, reflecting Secretary Espy's focus on inter-agency cooperation as a keystone of "TEAM USDA." The Agricultural Research Service (ARS), the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), the Farmer's Home Administration (FmHA), the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), the Forest Service (FS), the Rural Development Administration (RDA), the Rural Electrification Administration (REA), and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) all will play significant roles in funding and managing this program.

Recruitment for USDA programs has already begun. The Public Service Announcement that Secretary Espy taped is already running on some television stations throughout the country. Our toll-free number, 1-800-880-4183, has already received calls from such divergent areas as Maine and Utah.

ANTI-HUNGER SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Vermont, state-wide
 District of Columbia
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin
 Mississippi Delta, Mississippi
 Los Angeles, California

Anti-Hunger Team Example #1 - District of Columbia:

Run in partnership between the DC Service Corps, DC Hunger Action, and USDA, this project will focus on performing outreach on food assistance programs, teaching about nutrition and food safety, providing transportation assistance, creating urban gardens and farmers' markets, and helping homeless people. One of the goals of the program will be to reach 5,000 students through a nutrition education program developed jointly by Team members and the faculty of the University of the District of Columbia.

Anti-Hunger Team Example #2 - Vermont, state-wide:

Run in partnership between the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity, the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, and USDA, this program will operate out of five regional hubs in every section of Vermont. The program will aim to increase food stamp utilization by 5% statewide, increase the number of Summer Food Service Program sites by 15% statewide, increase the availability of School Breakfast Program sites by 5% statewide, and increase participation in the Women, Infants, and Children's program by 5% statewide.

PUBLIC LANDS AND ENVIRONMENT SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Western Kansas
 Western Oklahoma
 Texas Coast
 Atlanta, Georgia
 Boston, Massachusetts
 East St. Louis, Illinois
 New Jersey, state-wide
 District of Columbia
 Chicago, Illinois
 Portland, Oregon
 San Bernadino National Forest, Southern California
 Six Rivers National Forest, Northern California
 Olympic National Forest Washington State
 Rogue River National Forest, Southern Oregon
 Arizona, state-wide National Forests
 Bienville National Forest, Mississippi
 Green Mountain National Forest, Vermont
 White Mountain National Forest, New Hampshire

Public Lands and Environment Example # 1 - Texas Coast:

Participants will work to reduce shoreline erosion by 25% along one mile of the Texas gulf coast by establishing wave barriers intended to protect this unique and fragile ecosystem. The goal is to create more permanent vegetation and an increase in the fin fish population of the area.

Public Lands and Environment Example #2 - Boston, Massachusetts:

Participants will revitalize neighborhoods by identifying and eliminating environmental hazards and by creating and maintaining recreation areas and green spaces. Participants will clean up 25 vacant lots and renovate 10 greenspace parcels. They will also test soils at 300 vacant parcels to determine levels of lead and other public health hazards in soils, test water quality, and trace nonpoint source water pollutants through 50 storm drain systems. Additionally, they will translate materials about this project into Spanish, Vietnamese, or various Creole languages for non-English speaking citizens.

Public Lands and Environment Example # 3 - Rogue River N.F., S. Oregon:

Participants will enhance spotted owl ecosystems at 10 locations in the Forest. They will replace 10 trail bridges at 10 specific stream crossings on the Rogue River. They will also maintain 100 miles of hiking trails at high elevation sites determined to be priority maintenance locations, meeting regional hiking trail standards.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

New England (Maine, Vermont, Northwestern New York)

Appalachia (Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia)

South Carolina, state-wide

Mississippi Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi)

Great Lakes (Michigan, Ohio)

Minnesota, state-wide

Texas Colonias

Four Corners (Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah)

Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington)

California, state-wide

Rural Development Example #1 - New England:

In Maine, participants will work with cranberry growers to develop more environmentally-sensitive farming operations, and will improve the quality of water on local lakes, assist four communities with the development of a railroad bed for community hiking, biking and snowmobiling trails, and engage in a wide variety of other projects. In Vermont, they will work to protect the Winooski River Watershed and to provide skills and technical information to help 40 rural fire departments in Vermont develop comprehensive fire protection plans. In New York, participants will work to increase soil and water conservation measures throughout Erie County.

Rural Development Example #2 - Mississippi Delta:

Participants will work on a wide variety of economic development and environmental protection projects. Some examples include: installing 1,575 dry fire hydrants to increase fire protection in 45 parishes of Louisiana; moving 250 residents out of a floodplain in Arkansas; improving livestock waste treatment in 13 counties in southwest Mississippi; assisting elderly and limited resource farmers with routine animal husbandry practices; writing and producing environmental educational materials for teachers; and developing arboretums for on-site environmental education.

Rural Development Example #3 - Texas Colonias:

Participants will work on a wide variety of economic development and environmental protection projects. Some examples include: increasing the number of citizens whose homes are hooked up to running water by facilitating community applications for USDA rural water and waste programs; increasing knowledge among socially and economically disadvantaged individuals of the availability of loans for rural housing ownership, housing repair, and water hook-up services; and working with local residents to facilitate the creation of at least one local non-profit agency which will address a critical local need.

FLOOD RELIEF SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Illinois
Iowa
Kansas
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
South Dakota
Wisconsin

Flood Relief Example # 1 - All Midwest Flood States:

Participants will inspect river systems by canoe and stream walks to prepare damage assessment plans on 25 miles of streams. They will also restore wetlands in 84 damaged areas to their original condition, benefiting 420 landowners. Additionally, the participants will restore flood control facilities according to already established plans in 49 counties.

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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Communications

Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

*Memo
To
Joel*

June 20, 1994

MEMORANDUM

To: Eloise Thomas
From: Joel Berg *JB*
Subject: Possible National Service Event in Chicago

In response to your discussion with Ali Webb last week, I am proposing that, on Tuesday, June 28th, the Secretary participate in a media event in Chicago to publicize the national service program we are running jointly with the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences.

My proposal is for the Secretary to visit the Ida B. Wells public housing development where the project work is about to begin. The site is within a 15 minute drive from downtown Chicago. He could do this any time between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on the 28th. The event would take about an hour.

At the site, he would meet with all 50 of the participants, who have already started their training. The participants are a socio-economic mix of young people from the Chicago area. He would also tour the housing development and visit run-down areas at in which our gardens and trees will be planted. (I have recently been to the site and can attest to the fact that it will provide powerful visuals.)

Of course, we would invite the all the Chicago media to join the Secretary for all or part of his visit.

Please let me know if you Secretary would like to do this event of if he needs more detailed information before making a decsion.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

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Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

Memo
from
Joel

June 20, 1994

BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service *JB*

Subject: TODAY'S WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

At 1:30 today, following Dee Dee Meyer's daily briefing in the White House press conference room, Eli Segal will hold a media briefing with Secretaries Babbitt, Cisneros, and Shalala, Attorney General Reno, Administrator Browner, and yourself.

Eli will speak first and then introduce the other speakers. I have not yet been able to find out what the speaking order will be and how long they would like you to speak. However, given the large number of speakers, I estimate they will want you to speak for about two minutes. (Attached is a draft, two-minute, statement for you.) If you choose to speak without a prepared text, this memo outlines suggested talking points.

The event will likely be covered by the regular White House press corps and some trade press from the Departments involved. We will also have USDA television and radio crews covering the event in order to distribute video and audio clips from the event through our usual means.

THE SPECIFICS OF TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT

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Recruitment for USDA programs has already begun. The Public Service Announcement you taped is already running on some television stations throughout the country. Our toll-free number, 1-800-880-4183, has already received calls from such divergent areas as Maine and Utah.

ANTI-HUNGER SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

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 District of Columbia
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin
 Mississippi Delta, Mississippi
 Los Angeles, California

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Run in partnership between the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity, the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, and USDA, this program will operate out of five regional hubs in every section of Vermont. The program will aim to increase food stamp utilization by 5% statewide, increase the number of Summer Food Service Program sites by 15% statewide, increase the availability of School Breakfast Program sites by 5% statewide, and increase participation in the Women, Infants, and Children's program by 5% statewide.

PUBLIC LANDS AND ENVIRONMENT SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Western Kansas
 Western Oklahoma
 Texas Coast
 Atlanta, Georgia
 Boston, Massachusetts
 East St. Louis, Illinois
 New Jersey, state-wide
 District of Columbia
 Chicago, Illinois
 Portland, Oregon
 San Bernadino National Forest, Southern California

Six Rivers National Forest, Northern California
 Olympic national Forest Washington State
 Rogue River National Forest, Southern Oregon
 Arizona, state-wide National Forests
 Bienville National Forest, Mississippi
 Green Mountain National Forest, Vermont
 White Mountain National Forest, New Hampshire

Public Lands and Environment Example # 1 - Texas Coast:

Participants will work to reduce shoreline erosion by 25% along one mile of the Texas gulf coast by establishing wave barriers intended to protect this unique and fragile ecosystem. The goal is to create more permanent vegetation and an increase in the fin fish population of the area.

Public Lands and Environment Example #2 - Boston, Massachusetts:

Participants will revitalize neighborhoods by identifying and eliminating environmental hazards and by creating and maintaining recreation areas and green spaces. Participants will clean up 25 vacant lots and renovate 10 greenspace parcels. They will also test soils at 300 vacant parcels to determine levels of lead and other public health hazards in soils, test water quality, and trace nonpoint source water pollutants through 50 storm drain systems. Additionally, they will translate materials about this project into Spanish, Vietnamese, or various Creole languages for non-English speaking citizens.

Public Lands and Environment Example # 3 - Rogue River N.F., S. Oregon:

Participants will enhance spotted owl ecosystems at 10 locations in the Forest. They will replace 10 trail bridges at 10 specific stream crossings on the Rogue River. They will also maintain 100 miles of hiking trails at high elevation sites determined to be priority maintenance locations, meeting regional hiking trail standards.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

New England (Maine, Vermont, Northwestern New York)
 Appalachia (Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia)
 South Carolina, state-wide
 Mississippi Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi)

Great Lakes (Michigan, Ohio)
Minnesota, state-wide
Texas Colonias
Four Corners (Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah)
Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington)
California, state-wide

Rural Development Example #1 - New England:

In Maine, participants will work with cranberry growers to develop more environmentally-sensitive farming operations, and will improve the quality of water on local lakes, assist four communities with the development of a railroad bed for community hiking, biking and snowmobiling trails, and engage in a wide variety of other projects. In Vermont, participants will work to protect the Winooski River Watershed and to provide skills and technical information to help 40 rural fire departments in Vermont develop comprehensive fire protection plans. In New York, participants will work to increase soil and water conservation measures throughout Erie County.

Rural Development Example #2 - Mississippi Delta:

Participants will work on a wide variety of economic development and environmental protection projects. Some examples include: installing 1,575 dry fire hydrants to increase fire protection in 45 parishes of Louisiana; moving 250 residents out of a floodplain in Arkansas; improving livestock waste treatment in 13 counties in southwest Mississippi; assisting elderly and limited resource farmers with routine animal husbandry practices; writing and producing environmental educational materials for teachers; and developing arboretums for on-site environmental education.

Rural Development Example #3 - Texas Colonias:

Participants will work on a wide variety of economic development and environmental protection projects. Some examples include: increasing the number of citizens whose homes are hooked up to running water by facilitating community applications for USDA rural water and waste programs; increasing knowledge among socially and economically disadvantaged individuals of the availability of loans for rural housing ownership, housing repair, and water hook-up services; and working with local residents to facilitate the creation of at least one local non-profit agency which will address a critical local need.

FLOOD RELIEF SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Illinois
Iowa
Kansas
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
South Dakota
Wisconsin

Flood Relief Example # 1 - All Midwest Flood States:

Participants will inspect river systems by canoe and stream walks to prepare damage assessment plans on 25 miles of streams. They will also restore wetlands in 84 damaged areas to their original condition, benefiting 420 landowners. Additionally, the participants will restore flood control facilities according to already established plans in 49 counties.

Flood Relief Example # 2 - All Midwest Flood States:

Participants will work on a wide variety of flood relief, economic development, and environmental protection projects. Some examples include: determining and delineating 200 wetlands and incorporating this information into the flood-relief planning process; directly explaining the impact of the wetlands delineation to a minimum of 200 affected landowners; creating 420 wetlands plans to restore farmable areas back to original wetlands conditions; and planning and implementing the improvement of 420 animal waste systems in order to reduce groundwater pollution.