

FOIA MARKER

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

Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records

Subgroup/Office of Origin: Americorps

Series/Staff Member: General Files

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 24221

FolderID:

Folder Title:

USDA [Department of Agriculture]/AmeriCorps - Clinton Library Copies - Internal Management
Memos - 1994 [3]

Stack:
S

Row:
66

Section:
1

Shelf:
6

Position:
1



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Communications

Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

*Memorandum
for
Joel*

June 19, 1994

BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY LYONS

From: Joel Berg *JB*

Subject: **YOUR NATIONAL SERVICE INTERVIEWS TOMORROW**

At 1:30 Eastern Time tomorrow (Monday, June 20), Eli Segal will hold a media briefing with Secretaries Babbitt, Cisneros, and Shalala, Attorney General Reno, Administrator Browner --- and possibly Secretary Espy --- in the White House press briefing room in order to announce the first wave of AmeriCorps national service grants.

From 3:00 - 4:00 P.M. Central Time, you will conduct interviews with Texas newspapers to explain our program generally and to specifically announce the SCS AmeriCorps program that will be run on the Texas Coast. Your schedule follows:

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Time: 3:00-3:15

Reporter with whom you will speak: Bill Dawson, (713) 220-7491, back up number (713) 220- 7171, Fax: (713) 220-6806 (Dawson generally covers environmental issues)

Editor who set-up interview: Catherine Murphy, (713) 220-7491, (713) 220-7171

CORPUS CHRISTI CALLER-TIMES

Time: 3:20-3:35

Reporter with whom you will speak: Vaughn Haggerty, (512) 886-3683, back up number (512) 884-2011, Fax: (512) 886-3732 (Haggerty generally covers environmental issues)

Editors who set-up interview: Tom Whitehurst & Debra Wilkens, (512) 886-3662, back up number (512) 884-2011

GALVESTON DAILY NEWS

Time: 3:40-3:55

Reporter with whom you will speak: Maggie Sieger, (409) 744-3611 ext. 235 or back-up ext 233, Fax (409) 740-3421

WHAT EXACTLY IS BEING ANNOUNCED BY THE WHITE HOUSE ON MONDAY

Monday'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 the Secretary of Agriculture - 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 the governors.

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 which are held in a legally independent trust fund. The remainder of the direct grants will go to non-profit organization for 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 setting-aside 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 guarantee 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, 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 protect those rights and to aid 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 of at least \$7,500, 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 educations once again affordable for most Americans.

* AmeriCorps reunites 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 next January. 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.

* 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 socially-economic 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 a year in which they provide full-time service. The educational benefit can be used to pay for college or graduate school up-front, 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 impact 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 out across rural and urban areas in every region of the country.

Both the Anti-Hunger and the Public Lands and Environment Team 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 four pilot locations -- three urban and one 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 23 pilot locations -- six urban and 17 rural -- to perform community service helping communities reduce environmental hazards and working on public lands to conserve, restore, and sustain natural habitats. These projects will be run by both SCS and the FS. 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 regional or state clusters 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 Team will be run jointly by SCS, FS, FMHA, RDA, ASCS, and REA. 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, and aiding disaster relief.

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

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.

PUBLIC LANDS AND ENVIRONMENT SITES AND PROJECT EXAMPLES:

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

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. Participants will also transplant smooth cordgrass between the natural shoreline and the wave barrier. The goal is to create more permanent vegetation and an increase in the fin fish population of the area. The program will be managed by SCS.

THIS PROJECT WILL BE BASED IN BAYTOWN, TEXAS AND PARTICIPANTS WILL BE RECRUITED FROM HOUSTON, CORPUS CHRISTI, AND GALVESTON.

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, to test water quality, and to trace nonpoint source water pollutants through 50 storm drain systems.

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 National Forest. 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 in the surrounding communities 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 Examples - 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, they will restore flood control facilities according to the already established plans in 49 counties. Participants will also work 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; and creating 420 wetlands plans to restore farmable areas back to original wetlands conditions.

(File) Joe ~~De~~ Memo
From Joe

DRAFT JUNE 15, 1994

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE PRINCIPLES FOR AMERICORPS/USDA PROJECTS

1) All participants must be directly supervised on a daily basis.

For both legal and policy reasons, all AmeriCorps participants must be managed by at least one employee whose full-time job is to manage that AmeriCorps site. Both requirements of the work projects planned and the requirements of AmeriCorps that are specified by law are too complicated and too time-consuming to be managed by employees who have national service as only a collateral duty. However, sites may want to divide management functions between functions necessary for the work projects (planning and supervising the day-to-day project work, compiling time sheets, payroll, providing training necessary to complete each project, ensuring discipline, coordinating with other related USDA programs, etc.) from the functions necessary to meet the requirements of the national service law (providing general participant orientation and training, furnishing ongoing educational programs, creating team-building activities, and conducting project and participant evaluation, etc.).

In the case of the anti-hunger sites and the public land environment sites, each crew of ten participants will have an employee working full-time as a crew leader.

In the case of the rural development program, each region will have a full-time employee focusing on the AmeriCorps functions of the program. Within each region, participants will be working together in clusters of no less than five, and agencies will provide part-time project management supervision for each participant in those clusters.

2) Traditional management structures must be reinvented in order to meet the unique new needs of AmeriCorps programs.

Staff may be required to be sited in places where individual agencies do not currently have offices. Unique types of detailing arrangements and cooperative agreements have to be created. Employees who volunteer for this duty could conceivably be temporarily moved to other parts of the country. Fortunately, the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, which confers authority to USDA and other federal agencies to run AmeriCorps programs, confers to the Department broad new powers and flexibility to run national service programs without being hamstrung by existing regulations or agency boundaries. Thus, AmeriCorps is a perfect program through which we can dramatically reinvent government.

3) Not all AmeriCorps participants will necessarily work out of USDA offices.

If there is no nearby USDA office in a locale in which work needs to be performed, or if there is no space in the local USDA office, AmeriCorps participants could work out of colleges and universities, city halls and other municipal buildings, rural development councils, non-profit groups, etc.

4) USDA agencies must maintain a comfort level that the work performed by AmeriCorps participants advances one of the main missions of that agency.

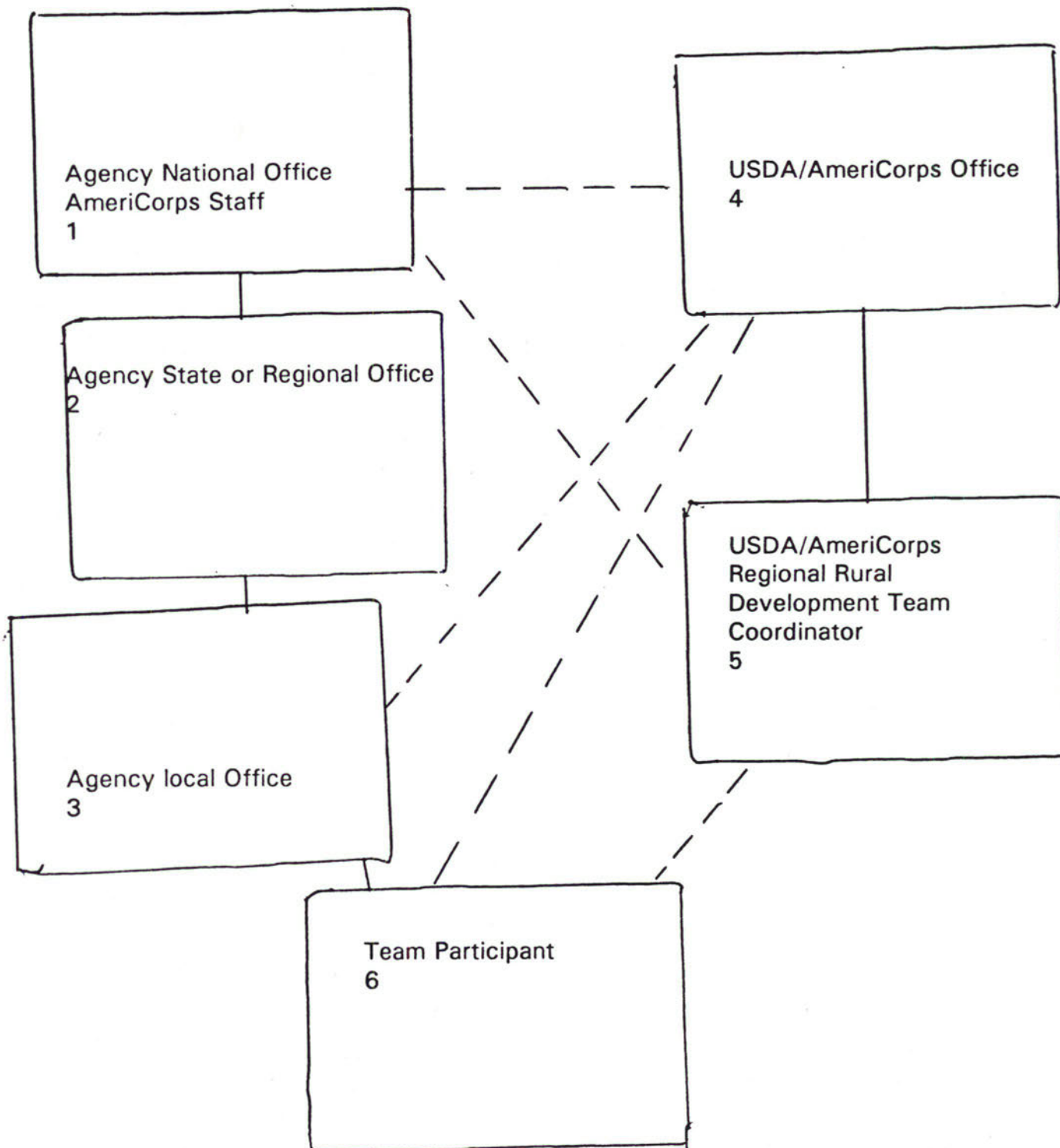
The agencies need to maintain at least some direct oversight over the work of the participants in order to ensure that agency money is being properly used in a way that meets the intent of the Congressional appropriations funding that program. More generally, agencies must sincerely believe that the participants are doing useful work that advances one or more of the main functions of that agency.

5) The USDA Office of National Service is ultimately responsible for making sure that all agency projects work together to meet the vision of the Secretary, the President, and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The regulations of the Corporation for National and Community Service make it clear that the ultimate responsibility for coordinating federal national service programs rests with each cabinet secretary. Given that Secretary Espy has delegated this responsibility to the Office of National Service within the USDA Office of Communications, this office holds final responsibility for ensuring high quality in all USDA AmeriCorps programs. This office must balance the overall needs of the Department and the AmeriCorps program with the needs of the individual agencies. This office will give as much flexibility to the agencies as possible while working with agencies to develop Department-wide AmeriCorps guidelines.

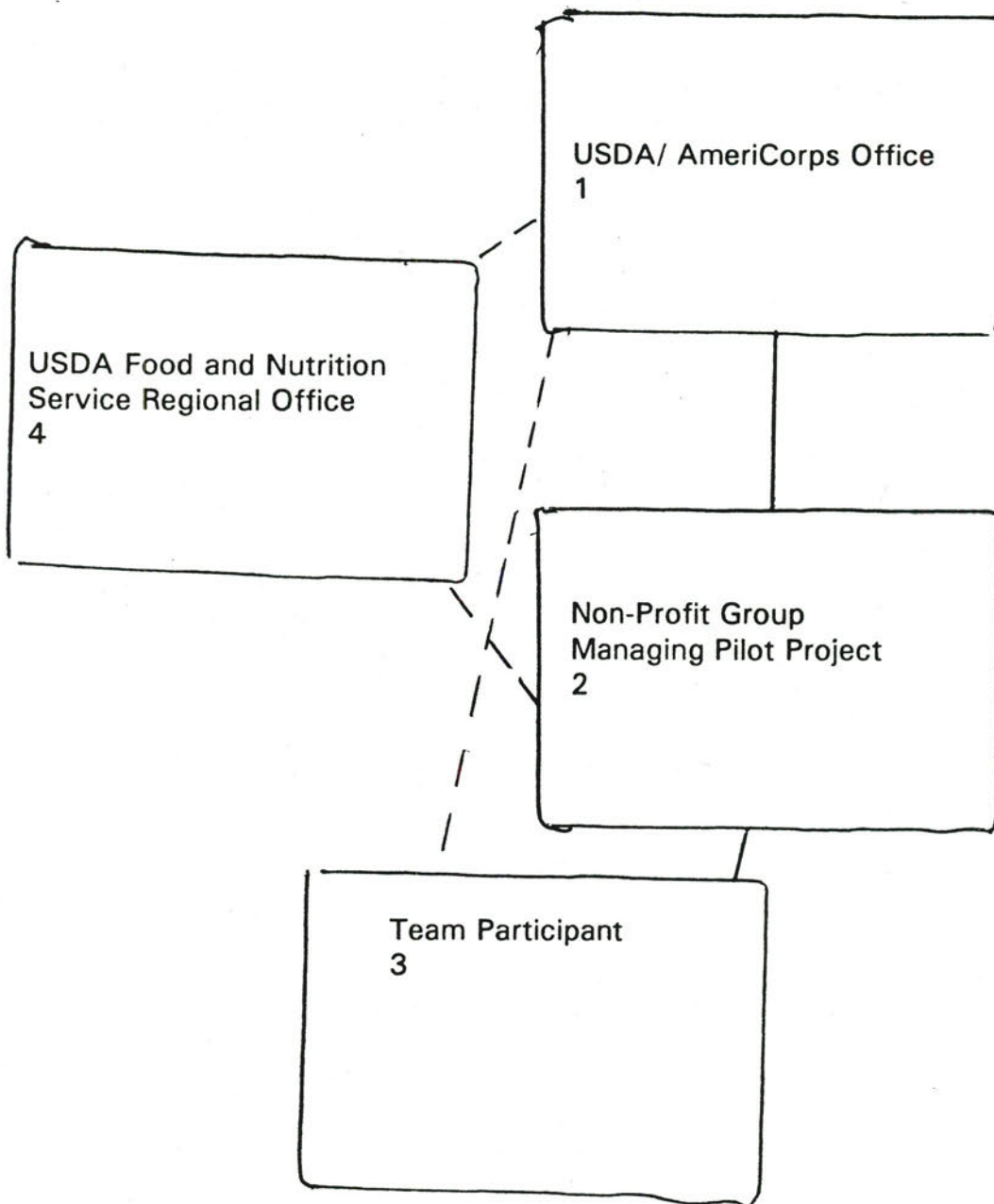
**MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE FOR USDA/AMERICORPS
RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM PARTICIPANTS
IN ALL REGIONS MANAGED BY SCS, FS, RDA, FMHA, AND ASCS
EXCEPT THE MIDWEST FLOOD STATES**

(Solid lines = direct lines of authority, dotted lines = lines of consultation)



**MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE FOR USDA/AMERICORPS
ANTI-HUNGER, NUTRITION, AND EMPOWERMENT TEAM PARTICIPANTS**

(Solid lines = direct lines of authority, dotted lines = lines of consultation)







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

Please
file

June 15, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: Grant Buntrock, Administrator, ASCS
From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service JB
Subject: Detail of Denise Bennett

I want to thank you warmly for all the help your agency has provided to date in planning our national service initiatives. Jim Lucas and James McMullen have done excellent jobs helping our Chicago summer program get off the ground and designing ways to incorporate national service into our ongoing flood relief efforts in the Midwest.

With your help, USDA has been able to plan the largest, most complex, and, I believe, highest quality program in the federal government. Starting this September, we will have 1,200 participants working on 42 different projects in 32 states in every region of the country. This program will be announced by the White House on Monday. I look forward to briefing you on our progress in the near future.

In the meantime, I would like to ask for your assistance in helping support the small infrastructure needed to run the large new initiative. As you may know, Denise Bennett of your Information Division has temporarily been assigned to my office to help with recruitment activities. In her brief stay in our office, she has demonstrated a high degree of professionalism and commitment. **It would provide a significant boost to our program if you could extend her detail, on a non-reimbursable basis, until the end of FY94.**

I thank you in advance for your continued support.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Communications

Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

*Memo
for
Joel*

June 14, 1994

TO: USDA IN-HOUSE PRESS

FROM: JOEL BERG, DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL SERVICE *JB*

SUBJECT: White House Announcement of USDA National Service Program

On Monday, June 20, at 1:30 p.m., following the Press Secretary's daily briefing in the press room, the White House will announce grants to federal agencies to run AmeriCorps national service programs. USDA will likely have one of the largest programs in the federal government, running projects to fight hunger, protect the environment, and boost rural economic development.

Please contact me in room 538-A, 720-6350, if you would like to attend or if you desire additional background information.

Please note that all information about this announcement is embargoed until Monday, June 20.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Communications

Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

June 14, 1994

TO: USDA IN-HOUSE PRESS

FROM: JOEL BERG, DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL SERVICE

SUBJECT: White House Announcement of USDA National Service Program

On Monday, June 20, at 1:30 p.m., following the Press Secretary's daily briefing in the press room, the White House will announce grants to federal agencies to run AmeriCorps national service programs. USDA will likely have one of the largest programs in the federal government, running projects to fight hunger, protect the environment, and boost rural economic development.

Please contact me in room 538-A, 720-6350, if you would like to attend or if you desire additional background information.

Please note that all information about this announcement is embargoed until Monday, June 20.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Communications

Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

File

June 10, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS AND OFFICE HEADS
FROM: JOEL BERG, DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL SERVICE
SUBJECT: USDA AMERICORPS TRAINING TASK FORCE

JB

The Corporation for National Service will be announcing it's first round of federal grants June 20th. We expect the largest grant in the federal government. I certainly appreciate all of your efforts thus far.

At our implementation planning meeting Wednesday, we identified an immediate need to establish a USDA AmeriCorps Training Task Force. The assignment is to develop the agenda and facilitate necessary tasks to accomplish a National AmeriCorps Workshop tentatively planned for July.

I am asking each of you to designate a person to serve on this Task Force from your organization. We need to begin immediately to pull this Workshop together.

The name of your representative should be phoned to Katherine Allen at 703-235-8855. The first meeting of the Task Force will be Wednesday June 15, Forest Service Chief's Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Auditors Building - from 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Your representative should bring with them a tentative figure of how many participants would attend the training from your agency or office. The training will last approximately one week and is intended for Washington Staff, Field AmeriCorps Project Directors crew leaders and other key staff.

I am available to answer any questions you may have. I can be reached at 720-4623.

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.

May

Divider Title: _____



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Communications

Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

Memor

May 20, 1994

From:

for *JB*

Joel Berg

Deputy Director, Office of Communications

To:

Under and Assistant Secretaries

Subject:

TEAM USDA National Service Program

In the past year, we have worked with many of your agencies to develop a proposal for the Department's TEAM USDA National Service Program which was submitted to the Corporation for National and Community Service in April. Our proposal included the establishment of a Rural Development Team, a Public Lands and Environmental Team, and an Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team. These teams would participate in activities in areas related to most USDA agencies, including sustainable agriculture, USDA feeding programs, rural development, National Forest maintenance and construction, rural housing, urban tree-planting, nutrition education, soil conservation, youth-at-risk, farmers markets, watershed protection, urban farming, and food safety.

The Corporation expects to tell us by the end of May which of our projects they will fund. Because of the emphasis that both the Secretary and the President place on national service, I think it would be beneficial to you if I could brief you and your agency administrators on the TEAM USDA National Service Program. A good setting for such a briefing might be at one of your senior staff meetings. I expect that the briefing would take 30 to 45 minutes. I would like to begin these briefings the first week in June and end them no later than June 10, 1994.

Please contact Mr. Ron De Munbrun, 690-3894, to schedule a briefing. I look forward to seeing you and discussing our national service initiatives.



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

Memo

May 12, 1994

To: Eli Segal
From: Joel Berg *Joel Berg*
Subject: **Need for CNCS Sanction for Our DC Summer Program**

As I mentioned last time we spoke, Secretary Espy and Mayor Kelly jointly agreed to run an AmeriCorps program in DC this summer *without* any funds from CNCS. USDA will fund the entire program except for the educational benefits, which will be paid for by the DC government. We will run the day-to-day operations of the program in cooperation with the DC Service Corps.

Attached is the plan we have created for the program, which will provide environmental and anti-hunger service. As you will read, we are designing the program to meet all the requirements of AmeriCorps. However, our Office of General Counsel has informed us that we will need the official sanction of CNCS for this program in order for USDA to obtain the legal authority to run the program under the federal agency provisions of the National and Community Service Act. I would also like to investigate whether DC can contribute the \$50,000 directly to your trust fund so that that educational vouchers can be distributed to program participants over the seven year period allowable for all AmeriCorps projects.

Both Susan Stroud and Terry Russell have informed me that this is not a legal issue for CNCS, but a policy issue. I understand that you are now considering how to formulate a policy for approving AmeriCorps projects that do not receive funds from you. Since our program is identical to the AmeriCorps model in every respect, I hope you can approve this proposal quickly. It is an easy way to claim 50 more participants for the President's program. We would need approval within two weeks in order to effectively implement this project in June.

I would also request that you investigate whether DC can contribute the \$50,000 in scholarship money directly to your trust fund so that that educational vouchers can be distributed to program participants over the seven year period allowable for all AmeriCorps projects. If we cannot use the trust fund, we may have simply issue checks to the participants upon their graduation and it would be difficult to guarantee the money would be used only for education.

Secretary Espy is personally involved and highly committed to this project; he has committed over \$150,000 in USDA funds to it, and has asked me to take every legal step necessary to get it off the ground. He would greatly appreciate any help you could provide.

PLAN FOR USDA DC SUMMER OF SERVICE PROGRAM

Summary

This Summer, USDA plans to sponsor a Summer of Service program in Washington, DC that will meet all the requirements of AmeriCorps but receive no funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service. The program will focus on meeting environmental and anti-hunger needs.

A partnership between USDA, the DC Service Corps, and the District of Columbia government will run a national service program this summer in the District of Columbia. The program would run for ten weeks starting in June and engage a socio-economic mix of 50 participants ages 16-24. Participants would work in 4 crews of ten on environmental projects and one crew of ten on hunger and nutrition projects. In order to meet the programmatic requirements of national service, participants in the program would have to earn \$147 per week stipends and would receive \$1,000 educational scholarships at the end of the summer. The DC Service Corps will recruit, train, supervise, educate, and evaluate the participants, as well as work with USDA to recruit and hire the crew leaders. The DC will be paid 22,000 under a contract with USDA to perform this work. USDA will provide technical assistance, staff to serve as crew leaders, administrative support, payroll services, and public affairs support to the project. USDA will pay the \$147 weekly stipends of the participants, as well as the salaries of any staff hired. The government of the District of Columbia will set-up a special bank account to provide \$50,000 for scholarships for the participants. The government of the District of Columbia will also provide at least 10,000 square feet of office space and will provide technical assistance and coordination through the Environmental Regulation Administration and the DC Public Schools.

Participants in the program will wear AmeriCorps logos and the program will use every means available to tie itself to the national program.

Needs to Be Met

There are 26 miles of rivers and streams in the District of Columbia which support 66 different species of fish. The Anacostia and Potomac Rivers are both spawning grounds for a number of fish which travel from the Chesapeake Bay. Water quality is impacted by the impervious surfaces in this urban environment. Each year over of 5,000 permits are issued for development, with over 800 of these being for sites over 2,500 square feet. This combination of paved surfaces and exposed soils at construction sites is detrimental to regional water quality. Accelerated storm water runoff carries sediments, hydrocarbons, heavy metals, oil, grease, trash, nitrogen, phosphorous and other pollutants to the rivers and potentially to the Bay. This summer program will address the above problems.

The United States National Arboretum (USNA) -- run by USDA -- is a vital oasis of beauty, science, and environmental education in a highly urbanized and low-income area of Northeast Washington. However, USNA has a tremendous backlog of renovation and maintenance projects. There are areas throughout the USNA which have not been adequately maintained for years. The impact of the inadequate maintenance on some of these areas may not have been considered critical because some areas were relatively isolated. Other areas are more visible, such as the Azalea Hillside, and have generated considerable concern from the public. An extremely critical consequence of inadequate maintenance has been the deterioration of many of the trails throughout the USNA and the loss of stormwater runoff controls. It is estimated that in the Asian collections alone repair of the existing trail system, utilizing the federal contracting system, will cost between \$500,000 to \$1 million. Extensive trail renovation is also required in the Azalea Collection and the Dogwood Collection. A well designed, constructed, and maintained trail system is mandatory for the USNA. Without it, it is difficult for the staff to maintain the plantings and for visitors to move about through the collections. The inadequate trail system is a safety hazard to both staff and visitors and undermines the stormwater runoff controls. The curatorial and research staff at the USNA, provided additional gardening and maintenance support from AmeriCorps participants, could accomplish many more of the numerous tasks required to develop and maintain horticultural collections.

In the course of its outreach efforts and its research for the Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP), D.C. Hunger Action learned that of the nearly 350 families it interviewed, only 15 or 20 knew about the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP); only a handful had ever participated. The AmeriCorps program will focus on expanding this program.

Program Design

In the summer of 1994, USDA will run a unique AmeriCorps environmental and anti-hunger program in the District of Columbia without any funding whatsoever from the Corporation for National and Community Service. Working in five crews of ten people each, the participants will conduct water quality monitoring, upgrade and renovate public parks and playgrounds, help clean-up the Anacostia River, plant trees in urban neighborhoods, run urban farming projects at the National Arboretum, and increase use of the Summer Food Service Program. The teams will undertake projects in three different areas:

1) Urban Environmental Projects in the District of Columbia -

AmeriCorps participants will be instrumental in making a visible difference in DC. They will improve the grounds on at least eight recreation centers. Tree planting will be done as part of an urban reforestation initiative to replace trees lost due to elms, and sycamores lost to disease and other trees lost to the stress of an urban environment. Plantings will be done to beautify streets and avenues. Maintenance needed along Watts Branch and other tributaries to the Anacostia River will be conducted by the AmeriCorps crews.

2) Projects in the United States National Arboretum -

Participants will renovate areas throughout the USNA, including: the Gravel pit, Glenn Dale Azalea Hillside, and lower valley stream bed along Hickey Run and Springhouse Run, Holly-Magnolia Collection, Bird Garden Area, the woods adjacent to the Old Conifer collection, Old Actinidia/Magnolia area, Hickey Hill area, area between Gotalli Collection and Dogwood Collection, the area between the Dogwood Collection and the Anacostia River, the area encompassing the Old Lilac Collection and Hickey Creek, and legume planting area. Such renovation would be either restoration to a natural condition or removal of weeds (to include unwanted woody shrub and trees) from around accessions. It will also include repair of drainage problems in an area, if appropriate. It could also include repair of hard structures in an area, such as roof repair on a building, replacement of trellises, or planting beds. Participants will also repair, widen, relocate or maintain trails throughout the USNA. Furthermore, participants would help expand gardens worked on by DC Public school students, and would help run expanded nature tours for public school students and the general public.

3) Summer Food Service Program -

During the summer months of July and August, volunteers will concentrate their efforts on increasing participation in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) by distributing flyers in neighborhoods with SFSP sites, and staffing designated food service sites, as needed. Activities at such sites may include organizing recreational activities or preparing/distributing lunches.

Participant Profile and Recruitment Strategy

Participants will be drawn mainly from Washington, DC and will include DC residents who entered the Corporation for National and Community Service recruitment pool. Participants will be over the age of 18 and diverse in all aspects -- ethnicity, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, and economic and educational levels. There is no limit on the number of participants that could be selected from the CNCS' national pool of applicants. However, these applicants must still apply through a standard application process.

The screening process will assure a diverse and well-rounded corps of participants. Each applicant must submit a standardized application in addition to a one page essay describing what they want to accomplish with the AmeriCorps/USDA Anti-Hunger Team. Alternatively, the applicant may choose to explain verbally why they want to participate in an interview with a member of the selection committee.

Participant Benefits

Participants will earn an \$147 weekly stipend and a \$1,000 educational award upon successful completion of the program.

Individual development is enhanced by the Team's diversity of race, education, and socioeconomic background. The diversity principle -- black working with white, college graduate working with high school dropout, men working with women -- presents a prime example of cooperation to the community while enhancing the Team members' experience.

- Before beginning project work, participants will receive extensive training and education in conflict resolution, urban agriculture and forestry, team-building, work habits, and citizenship. Each Friday, corps members will participate in developing learning activities in leadership development, building self-esteem, decision making, developing interpersonal skills, and setting personal goals. Curriculum will be selected from a number of available sources identified by the National 4-H Youth Development Office of USDA, the USDA Soil Conservation Service, and the Forest Service. For both the AmeriCorps participants and the volunteers, the goals are to improve the spirit of citizenship, boost their knowledge of farming, gardening, and urban restoration issues, improve their ability to work together with peers from diverse backgrounds, and boost their knowledge of potential careers in agriculture.

- Each participant in the program will also be matched-up with a USDA employee from national headquarters who will spend at least two hours a week with each participant providing mentoring and other personal assistance.

Internal Evaluation and Monitoring

The AmeriCorps/USDA standard evaluation process measures the effectiveness of a given program in terms of whether or not it meets its specific objectives. This process is based on a time-series program design that allows the Program Director to modify the program to take advantage of lessons learned as the program progresses. A professional evaluator will be retained for program work. This person will not be on the AmeriCorps/USDA staff, so s/he maintains a degree of freedom and objectivity from the administrative and program staff. Program evaluations routinely include initial surveys of the intended audience(s), evaluations of the effectiveness of the staff as well as corps members, and production of a final report.

Institutional and Personnel Information

The DC Service Corps will recruit, train, supervise, educate, and evaluate the participants, as well as work with USDA to recruit and hire the crew leaders.

USDA will also provide technical assistance and supervision. Some of the environmental work will be supervised by Lillian Woods, District Conservationist from the Soil Conservation service. She will work with the environmental staff of the D.C. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, the Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors, D.C. Department of Recreation, Dept. of Public Works, and the University of the District of Columbia.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Communications

Washington, D.C.
20250-1300

May 12, 1994

Eli Segal, Chief Executive Officer
Corporation for National and Community Service
1100 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Eli:

I am writing to recommend funding of the direct application of the Eckerd Family Youth Alternatives, Inc., and to stipulate that, if the project is funded, USDA will provide technical assistance on wetlands restoration.

This proposal would provide critical service in restoring wetlands in the Florida Everglades, one of the nation's most unique yet threatened ecosystems.

Given the high number of agricultural producers in and around the Everglades, USDA has a great interest in programs that can find innovative ways to protect that ecosystem that will have the support of both farmers and environmentalists. Consequently, the USDA Soil Conservation Service -- which has legal responsibility over all wetlands on agricultural lands -- will provide technical assistance to this project as needed.

Frank Phelan, the Project Director, has already performed an invaluable service by bringing together representatives of USDA, the Department of Interior, and EPA to discuss ways that youth service projects can aid the Everglades. His application is a natural and sensible outcome of those discussions. If funded, his program will surely spur greater cooperation between our agencies in the future.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

Joel Berg
Director of National Service

Director of National Service



Memo

May 12, 1994

MEMORANDUM

To: Under Secretary Moos, Under Secretary Nash, Assistant Secretary Lyons

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

Subject: Staff to Run the Rural Development Team

With your strong support, USDA was able to submit to the Corporation for National and Community Service the largest, most complex, and highest quality application in the entire federal government.

As you know, ASCS, FmHA, FS, RDA, REA, and SCS have all committed to significant roles in funding and managing the Rural Development Team.

While we will not know the final funding for this program from the Corporation for National and Community Service until early June, it is likely this program will have a FY95 budget in excess of \$10 million from a combination of Corporation and USDA sources. The program will likely engage between 250-500 participants in at least two dozen states. In order to properly manage this program, which is such a high priority to the President and the Secretary, I would request that each of you detail one member of one of your agency's staff to work on this project **full-time** for the next year under my direction. FNS, SCS, and the Forest Service have already assigned full-time staff to help run our anti-hunger and environmental programs.

I would suggest three rural development positions:

Rural Development Team Program Coordinator - This person would run the day-to-operations of the program and coordinate the involvement of all relevant USDA agencies.

Rural Development Team Flood Relief Liaison - This person would coordinate with the USDA Office Intergovernmental Affairs, FEMA, state governments, and all relevant USDA agencies to ensure that Rural Development Team participants in the flood states are engaged in the most critically-needed disaster-relief work.

Rural development Team Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Liaison - This person would work full-time for the RDA coordinator or the EZ/EC initiative to ensure that the Rural Development Team and the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community program are fully integrated and boosting the efforts of the other.

Ideally, each employee assigned would have significant experience and stature in their agency, enthusiasm for the national service program, and your personal trust.

These positions will need to be filled by June at the latest. I will follow-up with you to discuss how we can proceed.

Thank you again for your support of this exciting new program.

CC:

Wally Beyer
Grant Buntrock
Mike Dunn
Wilbur Peer
Paul Johnson
Jack Thomas
Mark Gaede
Peter Necheles

May 9, 1994

Mr. Robert B. Whitfield
Chief Operating Officer
Chicago Housing Authority
22 West Madison Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Dear Mr. Whitfield,

We are very excited to be able to help run a national service program this summer that will provide significant benefits for the thousands of citizens who live in and around Ida B. Wells and Madden Park.

However, we still have a misunderstanding over the recruitment of participants that I hope we can resolve in a mutually agreeable way. Contrary to the implication of your letter of May 3, neither USDA nor the Friends of the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences -- the grant recipient for this program -- have ever agreed that 50% of the program's participants will be CHA residents.

Attached is page 4 of our original application. The application is absolutely clear in stating that at least half of the participants would come from a *combination* of CHA residents and students from the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences. Our application then states: "The project director will then be responsible for ensuring that the final mix of participants is balanced by gender and economic status and fully reflects the African-American, Caucasian, and Latino population of the Chicago metropolitan area. Every effort will be made to recruit a mix of economically and socially disadvantaged youths, college-bound youths, and disabled youths." This language was sent to CHA before we submitted our proposal. In an attached March 14, 1994 letter, Vincent Lane, Chairman of CHA, appeared to agree to the terms of our application; Lane's letter states that his staff will help recruit CHA recruits residents, but makes no reference whatsoever to any percentage of participants.

It will be impossible for us to change the terms of our original agreement at this late date. As you may know, the Corporation for National and Community Services regulations require that every program actively seek diversity. Secretary of Agriculture Espy fully supports this goal.

Yet **I hope we can compromise.** Our original application assumes that CHA residents would comprise about one quarter (25%) of all participants. We would be willing to compromise to an agreement that one-third (33%) of the participants would be CHA residents, one third would be students of the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences, and one third would come from other parts of the Chicago metropolitan area and from the national recruitment pool.

As you know, half of our projects planned for this summer are planned in neighborhoods on non-CHA sites. If we cannot agree to the compromise I suggested, we may be forced to move all our projects to non-CHA sites.

I have personally visited wonderful national service projects at public housing developments in both Boston and Los Angeles. Neither of the sponsoring public housing agencies in those cities insisted on a quota of participants similar to the one you are requesting, yet both projects provided critical service to the residents of those developments.

The Department of Agriculture is extremely anxious to help provide greatly needed urban greening assistance to the people of Chicago, while promoting the President's national service initiative. I will hope you will agree that it will be better for CHA to benefit from a program that helps thousands of residents -- and gives direct service opportunities to 16 young people -- is better than no project at all.

I look forward to working with you and your staff to create a successful program that will serve as a national model.

I will call your office to follow-up on this matter. If you need to reach me before then, please call 202-720-6350.

Sincerely,

Joel Berg
Director of National Service



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

Memo from

May 3, 1994

To: William Ludwig, Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service
From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service } b
Subject: Continuing the Detail of Donna Hines

I am writing to most highly praise the work of Donna Hines and to ask for your assistance in extending her detail for a year so that she can help run our Departmental anti-hunger programs.

As you know, she has worked on detail to my office helping prepare our Anti-Hunger, Nutrition, and Empowerment Team application to the Corporation for National and Community Service. Under extremely high pressure with ridiculously short deadlines, Donna performed remarkable work, pulling together excellent proposals for Vermont, the District of Columbia, Milwaukee, the Mississippi Delta, and the Los Angeles. Her dedication and professionalism were absolutely ~~were~~ critical in this effort. In one instance she worked through a holiday without complaint; in another instance, she worked one night until 3:00 a.m.

Not only is Donna helping advance a program that is a priority to President Clinton and Secretary Espy, but I believe she is also performing a service vital to FNS by ensuring that our national service projects meld with your programs from both a legal and policy standpoint. She has provided creative ideas on many issues, including integrating our programs with the Summer Feeding Program. Moreover, she is helping advance some of your agency's major policy initiatives such as expanding WIC usage.

It would provide a significant boost to the long-term success of our program if you could extend her detail for year at the GS-13 level. She would play a central role moving our proposals from the planning to the implementation stage.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 202-720-6350. I thank you again for your support of this exciting initiative.

cc: Bill Wasserman

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.

April

Divider Title: _____



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

April 29, 1994

To: CNCS Direct Application Federal Agency Review Panel
From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service, USDA JB
Subject: **Application Page Limits**

Attached is the 1994 direct application of the United States Department of Agriculture for AmeriCorps programs. This document contains separate applications for three different and distinct multi-state programs to be run on a nationwide scale --- an Anti-Hunger Team, a Public Lands and Environment Team, and a Rural Development Team. Consequently, in addition to an overall program narrative describing the common elements of all the USDA programs, this document contains a separate program narrative for each of the three programs. Following the 25 page limit for each of the three individual program narratives, our narratives, taken as a whole, are shorter than the combined 75 page limit.

This document also contains 35 individual site applications. Each of these applications meet the application guidelines by containing site narratives of ten pages or less.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 720-6350.

Memos from

To: Secretary Espy

From: Joel Berg

Date: April 28, 1993

Re: **UPDATED TALKING POINTS ON NATIONAL SERVICE**

What President Clinton Will Announce Friday

This Friday in New Orleans, President Clinton will announce details of the National Service Trust Act of 1993, which he will send to Congress next week. The Act will promote many forms of service -- from our youngest elementary school students to our oldest citizens -- including opportunities ranging from part-time volunteering to full-time service jobs.

The centerpiece of the initiative is a new program to offer educational awards, to Americans who make a substantial commitment to service -- a kind of domestic Peace Corps. The full-time servers will receive a small living allowance and then receive \$6,500 worth of college benefits for each year of service they perform. The participants will work in activities that directly benefit their own communities and address unmet educational, environmental, human, or public safety needs.

The plan will also phase-in student direct loans, thereby cutting Sallied Mae and private banks out of the student aid system.

How the Plan Proves That Bill Clinton is a New Kind of Democrat

The plan is modeled after the plan first proposed by the DLC in 1988 and introduced as legislation by moderate Democrats Sam Nunn and Dave McCurdy. The plan is based on three key DLC principles: community, opportunity, and responsibility. By bringing together Americans from all socio-economic backgrounds to perform service together, the plan promotes community. By allowing young people who perform difficult service to earn generous college scholarships or training benefits, the plan promotes opportunity. By asking Americans to give something concrete back to their country in return for government benefits, the plan promotes responsibility.

The Clinton national service plan expands on the concept of reciprocal responsibility of the original G.I. bill -- one of the most successful government programs in U.S. history.

The plan is as different from the traditional liberal "get everything for free" approach as it is from the traditional conservative "let the free market do everything" approach.

The Clinton plan will not create a large federal bureaucracy. Instead, it will make government a catalyst to spur activities by non-profit agencies, states, corporations, and localities. The plan will not be paid for just by American taxpayer; it requires significant matching funds from other sources.

Lastly, the plan shows that President Clinton will take on special interests in order to fight for the forgotten middle class. Last year, while millions of American parents struggled mightily just to be able to send their kids to state universities, the President of Sallie Mae -- the quasi-public corporation that grants student loans-- raked in \$1.7 million in personal income. Bill Clinton is taking on the bankers to make sure that student aid dollars go to families that need them.

Why the Clinton National Service Plan is Good for America

National service will make college more affordable for middle class and poor families. By performing two years of service, any American would be able to afford to attend just about any public university in the nation.

National service will boost America's economic competitiveness by providing young people will critical work skills and allowing more young people to obtain post-secondary educations.

National service will bring together Americans of all races, religions, and incomes to work together for a common purpose, thereby helping heal many of the wounds that now divide America.

National service will provide America's young people with an exciting, productive alternative to using drugs or joining gangs.

National service will help America start filling its huge backlog of unmet social needs.

National service will promote innovative news ways of attacking poverty in both cities and rural areas.

National service will spark a new ethic of citizenship in which all Americans understand that they should perform valuable service for our country.

National service will provide a living, breathing example about how we can reinvent government through public-private partnerships.

How the USDA Will be Part of the Program

USDA will be a critical part of the program in many ways:

USDA will expand its opportunities for its employees to volunteer in their communities in partnerships similar to the one we have formed with the Van Ness School.

USDA's Extension Service, as well as other USDA agencies, will help rural non-profit agencies and governments learn about and apply for grants from the new Corporation for National Service. USDA agencies will also provide technical assistance to national service projects throughout the country.

USDA will explore creating a new Civilian Conservation Corps, based on the idealism of the 1930's but aimed at solving the problems of the 1990's. Possibly run with the help of the Forest Service and the Soil Conservation Service, this corps could be aimed at protecting or drinking water supplies, teaching environmentally sound practices to farmers, and conserving our national forests.

USDA will also explore creating a national Nutrition and Anti-Hunger Corps. This corps could be run jointly by the Food and Nutrition Service, the Extension Service, and the Human Nutrition Service. Corps members could work in urban and rural areas to help families and individuals apply for food stamps and WIC, overhaul their diets, and prevent food poisoning; corps members could also help teach families about some of the new anti-poverty measures advocated by President Clinton such as microenterprise loans, the expanded Earned Income Tax Credit, and community development banks.



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

April 25, 1994

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY LYONS

From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service

Subject: Funding for National Service

JB

I have learned that the Department of Interior is planning to submit an application to the Corporation for National and Community Service requesting 1,310 AmeriCorps positions, to be paid for largely by funds from that Department totaling between \$20 to \$25 million.

As you know, the Soil Conservation Service has earmarked \$10 million to support 548 AmeriCorps positions in FY95. Currently, the Forest Service is earmarking \$6.6 million to support approximately 274 positions in FY95. If the Forest Service does not increase its level of support, USDA will support considerably fewer AmeriCorps positions than DOI.

The Human Resources Programs division of the Forest Service has done an absolutely outstanding job creating detailed proposals to support 542 positions in eight different forests. However, I have had extensive conversations with the leadership of the Corporation for National Service -- including CEO Eli Segal -- and must report that it is highly unlikely that the Corporation will grant USDA more than \$1,000 per public lands slot, total \$542,000. I have informed the Forest Service that any possible scenario requiring significant matching funds from the Corporation is highly unrealistic. Thus, the National Forest System would have to provide \$8 million to fully fund the excellent programs they have proposed.

Additionally, you should be aware that State and Private Forestry has now earmarked \$400,000 less for AmeriCorps than the previous earmark by Chief and Staff. This proposed reduction would severely reduce our ability to conduct urban forestry projects we have planned in cities that you have targeted as priorities.

DETERMINED TO BE AN
ADMINISTRATIVE MARKING
INITIALS: PLC R DATE: 05/02/23

CONFIDENTIAL

April 22, 1994

To: Assistant Secretary Jim Lyons
From: Joel Berg *JB*
Subject: National Service Funds from the Forest Service

In a strange turn of events, the Forest Service has given me a draft decision memo that they have planned to send me -- through you -- over funding for national service. (Attached). Obviously, the decision should be made by you, not by me.

The memo is also skewed, based on false assumptions, to give you three policy choices -- none of which are fully realistic or accurate.

The first choice in their memo is to approve a \$2.6 million budget from State and Private Forestry funds. The memo claims "any additional funding requirements would negatively impact program activities currently underway." However, this claim contradicts Chief Thomas' previous order for State and Private Forestry to spend \$3.0 million with no negative impact on existing programs. This proposed \$400,000 reduction would severely reduce our ability to conduct planned urban forestry projects. Thus, you must decide whether to ask the Forest Service to stand by their initial, \$3.0 million State and Private Forestry proposal.

The memo then describes a \$3.0 million option and a \$7.0 million option for funding from the National Forest System. The \$3.0 million option is fully \$1.0 million less than Thomas' original commitment of \$4.0 million from the National Forest System. Furthermore, the \$3.0 million option assumes that the Corporation for National and Community Service will grant USDA an award of \$3.0 million for the Public Lands Corps, yet I have repeatedly told the Forest Service that they cannot realistically expect to obtain more than \$500,000 from the Corporation.

The \$7.0 million option assumes that \$3.0 million will come from "the corporation or another source." Again, this is totally unrealistic. You must decide whether the Forest Service itself can meet this \$4.0 million figure from the National Forest System.

If the Forest Service provides \$3 million from State and Private Forestry and \$7.0 million from the National Forest System, it will equal the \$10.0 million commitment of the Soil Conservation Service.

One segment of the attached memo which is absolutely correct is that Forest Service employees have already planned excellent projects which would cost \$10.0 million. However, if the Forest Service does not provide this full funding, projects -- including urban forestry projects and public lands corps projects in states like Vermont and California -- would have to be cut.

If the Forest Service provides only their suggested \$5.6 million in funds, then I estimate -- even with Corporation funds -- we will be able to support only about 275 public lands corps participants at five sites in FY 95. In that case, our public lands program would be smaller than that of DOI. However, a \$10.0 million budget would support 575 participants at eight sites.

Because of economies of scale, the more we spend, the more slots we gain per dollar.

I understand that budgets are tight and that the Forest Service is facing potential RIFS. I fully understand that if the money is not there, then it is simply not there. Still, I am providing you this information confidentially so you will make your decision based on an informed understanding of the realities we face.

I would ask you to please make these decisions immediately so we can meet our April 29 application deadline.

Please call me at 720-6350 if you have any further questions.

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, D.C. 20090-6090

Date: April 22, 1994

DECISION MEMORANDUM FOR JOEL BERG, Director, National Service

THROUGH: James R. Lyons
Assistant Secretary, NRE

FROM: Jack Ward Thomas
Chief

SUBJECT: Forest Service participation in the USDA National
Service application due to Corporation by April 29.

ISSUE:

In February, Chief and Staff earmarked up to \$3 million of State and Private Forestry FY 1995 program funds and \$4 million of National Forest System program funds to support Secretary Espy's and the President's National Service initiative.

BACKGROUND:

State & Private Forestry

Application and budget information for 74 Rural Development positions in key geographic locations is being submitted. This represents \$2.6 million of the up to \$3 million of FY 1995 State and Private Forestry program funds earmarked by Chief and Staff. Any additional funding requirements would negatively impact program activities presently underway. Funding required from the Corporation would be \$740,000. A Summary List of State and Private projects and funding is attached.

National Forest Systems

Application and budget information is being submitted for seven Environmental and Public Lands Corps projects on the National Forests. We are submitting seven to insure the greatest flexibility in the decision process and broad coverage within the USDA proposal.

The \$4 million earmarked from FY 1995 National Forest System program funds will not cover all projects. Thus, we are presenting two funding options. Four of the seven are residential sites with excellent growth potential and are located in the Pacific Northwest corridor where some of the greatest economic need is visible in communities. Several projects are joint with the U.S. Department of Interior. Others include funding commitments from the Soil Conservation Service. We would be pleased to furnish a full report on any or all of the projects.

Option 1 would require funding of approximately \$6 million. This would be approximately 50 percent from the Corporation for National Service and 50 percent from Forest Service funds. A total of 250 participants would be involved in four residential camps and three day program projects.

If funding is constrained at the \$4 million level, both projects and participants would need to be dropped.

Option 2 would require funding of approximately \$7 million. The Forest Service would fund \$4 million and the remaining funds would need to come from the Corporation or another source. There would be approximately 522 participants. Per Departmental request we are submitting this request level of \$3 million additional which we are unable to fund at this time due to the need to earmark money for the President's Initiative in the Pacific Northwest and the present downsizing cost.

RECOMMENDATION:

If the funding issue can be resolved, we recommend that Option 2 be approved. This would allow for a well-rounded program for the Secretary with almost 500 participants. This Option is consistent with discussions with Joel Berg.

DECISION BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY

State & Private Forestry at \$2.6 million

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

National Forest Systems: 50/50 cost share with Corporation - Option 1

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

Discuss with me _____

National Forest Systems at \$4 million; \$3 million from other sources - Option 2

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

Discuss with me _____

Reviewed by: _____

4/15/94

Summary Listing - NPS

Environmental and Public Lands Corps Projects

Northeast

New Hampshire Americorps (32 participants) (White Mountain NF partnering with Student Conservation Association, National Forest Foundation, Maine National Guard and Boston City Year)

Southern

Mississippi NF Americorps (40 participants) (Partnering with Greater Jackson Conservation Corps)

Southwest

Arizona Americorps - (90 participants) (Partnering with USDI, (BLM and NPS), National Guard, Arizona State University, Arizona Dept. of Youth Treatment & Rehabilitation, Arizona Conservation Corps and JTPA)

California

Southern California Americorps (200 participants) (San Bernardino NF partnering with DOD, USDI, SCS, California Association

Northern California Americorps (20 participants) (Six Rivers NF partnering with California Conservation Corps, College of the Redwood and Humboldt State University)

Pacific Northwest

Oregon Americorps - (70 participants) (Rogue River NF partnering with Northwest Youth Corps)

Washington Americorps - (50 participants) (Olympic NF partnering with Northwest Youth Corps, National Forest Foundation, USDI (NPS) and Dept. of Defense)

4/22/94

Summary List - S&P7

Rural Development Positions

Forest Management and Utilization

Northeastern Area: Minnesota, New Jersey, Northern New England, and West Virginia (18 Participants)

(1) Appalachia W. Va Americorps - A cooperative effort between the West Virginia Division of Forestry, W. Va. Appalachian Hardwood Center and the Minnesota Division of Forestry, along with the University of Minnesota will have Corps students working on sustainable natural resource base economic development.

Region 8: Southern Appalachia- (20 participants) Economic Development opportunities for this area of Tn, Ga, Nc, Ky, and Va. through partnerships with federal, state, and private efforts.

Mississippi Delta- (15 participants) Provide the region with financial and technical assistance to develop economic opportunities through the 20 county area.

South Carolina- (5 participants) Develop and identify communities leaders in disenfranchised areas to provide leadership in sustainable economic development.

Alaska: (5 participants) Provide Rural Community Assistance to forest and farm owners to develop economic opportunities.

4 Corners: (12 participants) Develop a strategy for economic empowerment with the indian tribes of the region.

Environmental and Public Lands Corps Funding Alternatives

Option 1

<u>Project</u>	<u>No. of Participants</u>	<u>Cost to Corporation</u>	<u>Cost to F.S.</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>	<u>% Cost Corp/FS</u>
New Hampshire White Mtn. NF AmeriCorps	32	\$255,638	\$348,337	\$603,975	42/58
Mississippi NF AmeriCorps	20	\$404,168	\$141,890	\$546,058	74/26
Arizona AmeriCorps	45	\$583,798	\$572,556	\$1,156,354	50/50
Southern California San Bernardino NF AmeriCorps	66	\$675,350	\$818,529	\$1,493,879	45/55
Northern California Six Rivers AmeriCorps	20	\$234,193	\$145,565	\$379,758	62/38
Oregon AmeriCorps Rogue River AmeriCorps	35	\$406,095	\$472,381	\$878,476	46/54
Washington Americorps Olympic Americorps	32	\$479,256	\$546,256	\$1,025,512	47/53
Totals	250	\$3,038,498	\$3,045,514	\$6,084,012	50/50

NOTE: This 50/50 split represents the present detailed budgets as submitted. This could be adjusted to reflect a \$4 million FS contribution.

Option 2

Environmental and Public Lands Corps Funding

\$7 Million

Draft
1,000,000

	No. of <u>Participants</u>	Cost to <u>F.S.</u>	Cost to <u>Corp.</u>
New Hampshire White Mtn. NF Americorps	32	\$571,975	\$ 32,000
Mississippi NF Americorps	40	571,258	40,000
Arizona Americorps	90 [*]	1,349,354	90,000
Southern California San Bernardino NF Americorps	200	2,976,400	200,000
Northern California Six Rivers NF Americorps	20	259,830	20,000
Oregon Rogue River Americorps	70	620,476	70,000
Washington Olympic NF Americorps	50	743,476	50,000
Total Participants	457 502		

*USDI will contribute at least \$370,000



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

*Briefing
Attorney*

April 19, 1994

BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director, Office of Public Affairs *JB*
Subject: Your Phone Call With Mayor Kelly About a Summer Program

I am pleased to report to you that the Department will be able to fulfill your pledge to Mayor Kelly that we will support youth programs this summer in the District of Columbia. However, three issues detailed below still need to be clarified.

Issue 1: Is the program a national service pilot project or a traditional summer jobs program?

My inclination is for the Department to create a unique public-private partnership to ensure that the DC summer project would meet the general vision of President Clinton's national service initiative. However, an alternative proposal by Larry Wachs of OBPA is for the Department to agree to directly hire a set number of DC youth who would be regular summer employees of various agencies of the Department.

In your conversation with the Mayor, you should jointly decide which approach you would like to take.

The national service approach would promote the President's program, provide the participants with not only a salary but a college scholarship, and would obtain better press coverage for both the Department and the City. However, this option would be much more difficult for USDA to manage and would require a financial commitment of \$50,000 from the District government or a private entity.

The national service approach would consist of a small pilot project run as a partnership between USDA, the DC Service Corps -- an existing non-profit youth service corps -- and the DC Administration for Environmental Protection. The program would run for eight to ten weeks and engage a socio-economic mix of 30-50 participants ages 16-24. Participants would work in crews of ten on environmental and anti-hunger projects. The lead agency for the program will be SCS, which will sponsor the work of one or two crews. In order to meet the programmatic requirements of national service, participants in the program would have to earn \$147 per week and would receive \$1,000 educational scholarships at the end of the summer. There would also be transportation, supervisory, administrative, materials, and insurance costs, bringing the total costs for the program to about \$240,000.

The summer jobs approach would be significantly easier and cheaper for both entities to manage and fund, but it would not advance the cause of national service and would, in my judgement, obtain far less publicity than would a true national service program. In this approach, the Soil Conservation Service and the Forest Service, and potentially a few other agencies, would simply hire DC youth to conduct tasks already planned by those agencies.

Issue 2: How many participants or employees will USDA be able to fund?

I will hopefully know by tomorrow morning exactly how many participants USDA can support and will provide you with that information before your conversation with Mayor Kelly. **My goal is to engage fifty participants, but, as of this afternoon, I have only received definite commitments from SCS and FNS to support about 25 - 30 participants.** Twenty participants would work for SCS conducting water quality monitoring, upgrading and renovating public parks and playgrounds, and helping clean-up the Anacostia River. Five to ten participants, partially managed by FNS, would work to help run and expand the DC summer feeding program.

This morning I convened a meeting with representatives of OBPA and OGC and budget officers from FS, SCS, ES, ARS, APHIS, and FSIS, all of whom were asked to determine by tomorrow what funding, if any, their agency could provide to this initiative.

Issue 3: What resources can the District of Columbia add to this initiative?

Unfortunately, the Corporation for National and Community Service can provide no funds for this initiative. I checked with their Acting General Counsel today and he confirmed that they have no way to bend their legal deadline and that their summer funds have already been committed to projects -- including our project in Chicago.

Furthermore, the USDA Office of General Counsel has ruled that none of our Departmental funds can be used to pay for the educational scholarships. **Therefore, the DC government will either have to provide the \$50,000 for the scholarships from the DC budget or raise the money from private or non-profit sources.** If they cannot find such funding, I strongly recommend that, since the participants will receive no scholarships, we do not attempt to even call our program national service; instead, we would simply opt for the employment program and ask appropriate agencies to hire DC youth for the summer. I would strongly urge you to obtain a firm commitment from Mayor Kelly on the scholarship arrangement and obtain the name of someone on her staff with whom I can follow up.

I would also suggest you ask the Mayor to provide between 10,000 - 15,000 square feet of office space, possibly in a closed school. The DC Service Corps desperately needs such space from which to operate properly.

I would further suggest that you ask for the Mayor's commitment that the Environmental Protection Administration of the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs provide daily technical advice to our initiative. Our program can only succeed if it is closely integrated into ongoing local environmental programs.

Lastly, I would suggest that you request virtually complete independence from the District government for USDA and the DC Service Corps to jointly run the day-to-day activities of this program. I already have an excellent relationship with the corps, and the corps agrees with me that reliance on the bureaucracy of DC government would bog down the program.

In short, I would recommend that you make the following deal with the Mayor: USDA funds most of the program, USDA runs the program with the DC Service Corps, she finds the \$50,000 in scholarship money, and you both jointly share the credit.

I will be glad to answer any additional questions you may have. After your discussion with the Mayor, please let me know how you would like to proceed.



April 18, 1994

DECISION MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY/DEPUTY SECRETARY

THROUGH: Ali Webb *AW*
Director, Office of Public Affairs

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

SUBJECT: Establishment of the TEAM USDA National Service Program

ISSUE:

Now that the TEAM USDA 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, while avoiding any actions that would preempt the Secretary's planned reorganization. Such delegation is necessary now to avoid serious delays in USDA national services programs.

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, the Office of Public Affairs, led in this project by Joel Berg, has worked with the Department's agencies and other Federal Departments to develop four major TEAM USDA national service programs this year. The first is the Summer of Safety project which we will run in partnership with the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences. The remaining three are the TEAM USDA yearlong rural development, anti-hunger, and environment programs, which will begin in September of this year. These programs will involve a consortium of partnerships between agencies such as ARS, AMS, ASCS, FmHA, FNS, FS, RDA, and SCS working at the grassroots level with over 25 State, local governments, non-profit, business, anti-hunger, nutrition, and environmental groups. We expect to receive some operating funds as well as college scholarships for each program from the Corporation for National and Community Service.

While accomplishing all of this work with existing resources has been a "challenge", most of the USDA agencies have been supportive of the program. The manner in which members from different agencies have worked together to define what will probably be the largest national service program run by a Federal department 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.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

To date, Mr. Berg and the members of the TEAM USDA national service program have been able to function within an informal structure guided by the Secretary's 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 the Corporation for National and Community Service 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 to manage in alone. It requires someone with the authority to establish priorities, create partnerships between agencies, and who has a clear picture of the President and the Secretary'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 entities 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.

OPTIONS:

1. **Use a Secretary's Memorandum** to delegate the authority to manage the USDA national service program to the Director of the Office of Public Affairs who will further delegate the authority to Mr. Joel Berg.

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: There does not appear to be any negative impact of this option.

2. **Amend OPA's Delegations of Authority** to reflect the management of the USDA national service 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.

3. **Don't delegate authority** to anyone to centrally oversee, manage and coordinate the USDA national service program.

PRO: Because the past year's experience in national service has fully demonstrated the value of central management of the program, the only advantage to this option 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, resulting in an undesirable outcome for the Administration, the Department and the Secretary. To date, USDA's national service efforts have been successful primarily because everyone has believed that the Mr. Berg was speaking for the Secretary in managing the process to date.

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend you implement option one. 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 Public Affairs who will in turn delegate this authority to Mr. Joel Berg.

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 Public Affairs 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 Director of the Office of Public Affairs 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.



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

Memorandum
From
Joel C

MEMORANDUM

TO: TERRY MEDLEY, FSIS ADMINISTRATOR
WILLIAM HUDNALL, ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR
JOSEPH POWERS, ASSISTANT DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: JOEL BERG, OFFICE OF NATIONAL SERVICE

JR

DATE: APRIL 13, 1994

RE: NATIONAL SERVICE BUDGET

I am writing to follow-up on our recent discussion about how the Food Safety and Inspection Service might participate in the Secretary's national service program. We are now at the point where we must immediately move our national service proposals through OBPA and OGC to obtain final approval.

By April 15, 1994, we will need specific guidance on how much money can be earmarked by your agency for FY95 national service projects. We will also need you to specifically identify what types of other projects now planned by your agency might not be funded if such national service projects were funded. Could you also review the following list of projects and identify the specific appropriation(s) that could be used to fund the Department's portion of the proposal?

ANTI-HUNGER, EMPOWERMENT, AND NUTRITION TEAM

USDA is partnering with existing youth service corps and existing anti-hunger groups at the following pilot sites: D.C., Mississippi Delta, Milwaukee, Vermont, and Los Angeles. These local partners will submit proposals to USDA to become part of the Department's grant request to the Corporation for National Service.

At each pilot location, approximately five teams of 10 participants 1) will provide outreach and access services; 2) will build the anti-hunger and anti-poverty infrastructure; and 3) will run innovative empowerment programs.

THE ROLE OF FSIS

With regard to the first goal of outreach, team members could go door-to-door in targeted neighborhoods or work in welfare offices and WIC clinics to dispense information about USDA feeding programs, nutrition, and food safety. AmeriCorps participants could

(2)

assist in the delivery of food safety information in schools, using a curriculum developed by FSIS consumer education professionals. In conjunction with a volunteer from the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, team members could visit senior citizen clubs, senior citizen housing complexes, and targeted neighborhoods to provide counseling on the unique nutritional needs of senior citizens and about safe food handling and the prevention of foodborne illnesses. USDA's food safety postcards could be made into posters and distributed by team members to various institutions such as health clinics, welfare offices, recreation centers, etc.

As for the second goal of bolstering the anti-hunger and nutrition infrastructure, team members could work with the burgeoning new network of perishable food programs to help them conduct community outreach and ensure food safety. Food safety information could be disseminated at farmers markets which team members could help create in cooperation with community members.

File

April 12, 1995

To: Eli Segal
From: Joel Berg
Subject: Updating the Executive Order on Employee Volunteerism

I understand that you are considering ways for the President to update President Bush's executive order on employee volunteerism. Such an update could significantly boost our AmeriCorps efforts by easing the ability of federal employees to help.

Some ideas:

- 1) **Designate a national day of employee volunteerism.** This should be on a weekend -- otherwise, if federal employees get leave time to volunteer during a workday, this will only dilute the message of sacrifice and fuel citizen resentment against us "overpaid bureaucrats."
- 2) **Coordinate federal employees participating in Nickelodeon's day of service as part of their new "Big Help" campaign.** As you know, the Nickelodeon cable network will sponsor one day in October or November during which children will volunteer in their communities. USDA, through Extension Service and other offices, is planning to help coordinate some activities on that day nationwide. The executive order should allow federal employees and federal offices to be used to coordinate these activities and serve as meeting centers.
- 3) **Ask federal agencies to have their field offices "adopt" AmeriCorps projects.** In the same way that federal offices in Washington now participate in Adopt-A-School programs in which employees tutor and mentor DC public school students, federal employees across the country could adopt AmeriCorps pilot projects and mentor the local participants.
- 4) **Require each Cabinet Secretary to designate one full-time employee as a volunteerism coordinator.** USDA does not currently have such a position, yet at least one such full-time position is really needed for Departments to have effective programs.
- 5) **Exempt certain volunteer programs from the Combined Federal Campaign's monopoly on employee fundraising.** Currently, Office of Personnel Management regulations stipulate that no program can raise funds from federal employees outside the Combined Federal Campaign. The President could ask OPM to exempt AmeriCorps, Adopt-a-School, and other special programs from this stipulation so that federal employees can contribute money to programs their agencies are running.



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

*Memo
Action*

April 8, 1994

To: Bill Shore, S.O.S.
From: Joel Berg, Director of National Service, USDA
Subject: USDA Anti-Hunger National Service Team

25 pages, including this cover

Judson Dolphin of FRAC suggested that I inform you of USDA's plans to run a national service program focused on Anti-Hunger, Nutrition, and Empowerment issues.

Attached is detailed information about the AmeriCorps pilot projects that will start this fall in the District of Columbia, Vermont, Milwaukee, the Mississippi Delta, and Los Angeles.

I will contact you in the next few days to explore any ways we might be able to partner with your organization.

Joel Berg

P.S. - We met briefly in 1984 when I was part of the "kiddie corps" helping Bruce Katz run New York for Hart pre-New Hampshire. We also met last year during inaugural week when I represented the Presidential Transition Team at the Public Allies volunteer event you attended with Senator Kerrey.



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

D9553
Memos
from
Joel

April 6, 1994

DECISION MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY/DEPUTY SECRETARY

THROUGH: James Michael Kelly *JKelly*
Associate General Counsel

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

SUBJECT: Justification of Non-Competition of Current National Service Projects

ISSUE:

The Corporation for National and Community Service has given tentative approval to our grant request for money to operate our Summer of Safety project with the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences. Their grant will make it possible to run the program this summer. It will provide jobs to participants, many of whom will be recent graduates of the high school, service to the community, and up to 50 education awards worth \$1,000 each for participants who successfully serve the entire summer. In order to accept the Corporation's funds for the Chicago project as well as the major yearlong programs we have planned in the areas of rural development, anti-hunger, and the environment, the Department must award the necessary discretionary cooperative agreements non-competitively for this year's round of applications.

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. The basic mechanism for the Department to enter into "partnerships" with non-profit groups and State and local organizations for the purpose of implementing national service programs is a discretionary cooperative agreement. Under normal circumstances, such agreements should be awarded on a competitive basis. However, the time between publication of the Corporation for National and Community Service's final rules on March 11, 1994 and the application deadlines of March 14 for Summer of Safety programs and April 29, 1994 for AmeriCorps FY 95 yearlong projects, make it impractical to engage in a competitive process.

Departmental regulations allow for the award of agreements non-competitively where such awards are in the best interest of the Government and/or where such competition is impractical. The National and Community Service Trust Act makes it clear that Federal departments are expected to manage national service programs and that such participation is necessary for the Corporation to meet its objectives. The lack of sufficient time to compete awards was a factor

imposed on us externally by the Corporation and not the result of any delay within the Department. Combined, these two factors would seem to form a necessary justification for making non-competitive awards in this first year of the program.

In addition to the above issues, I believe that the other factors listed below further justify a decision to make our initial awards non-competitively:

1. The Department is using the implementation of pilot projects for FY 94 Summer of Safety and FY 95 AmeriCorps programs as the mechanism to develop the necessary regulations, procedures, and processes for ensuring maximum competition in future awards.
2. While it is impractical for the Department to initially make awards competitively, the award process is not devoid of competition. The Corporation's approval of applications is based on their own formal competitive process which conforms to all applicable Federal laws and regulations. For the Department's applications for FY 94 Summer of Safety and FY 95 AmeriCorps programs to be approved, they must first be reviewed and graded by a panel of independent experts and then selected on the basis of objective and subjective rankings.
3. The projects that will be sent to you for your final approval are the result of meetings, briefings, calls and mailings to hundreds of farming, anti-hunger, rural development, environmental, and other constituency groups over the last 11 months. We have endeavored to give the broadest possible exposure to TEAM USDA's national service program.

OPTIONS:

1. **Participate** in the national service program for the summer of 1994 and the yearlong programs beginning in September of 1994 and running through June of 1995 by relying on the attached justification for non-competition as well as the competition conducted by the Corporation. In addition, use the experience gained in running programs to establish the necessary competitive procedures for all awards in following years beginning with the Summer of Service programs in June of 1995.

PRO: The Summer of Safety program we are proposing to run in partnership with the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences will be able to proceed. This program alone will result in the Corporation awarding up to 50, \$1,000 education awards to participants. The yearlong programs we are proposing will result in the award of up to 1,500, \$4,725 education awards from the Corporation's funds. Both the summer and yearlong programs will also result in significant benefit to the public in the areas of rural development, anti-hunger, and the environment.

CON: An organization or member of Congress may protest based on the lack of competition in our selection process. However, it must be pointed out that our regulations do provide for exemptions to competition and OGC has concurred with the attached justification laying out the rationale for non-competition in this instance.

2. **Do not participate** in the national service program for the summer of 1994 and the yearlong programs beginning in September of 1994 and running through June of 1995 until the necessary competitive procedures can be established.

PRO: No discretionary cooperative agreements would be granted without competition.

CON: The Summer of Safety project involving the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences would have to be canceled. We would not be able to run the major yearlong programs we have planned in the areas of rural development, anti-hunger, and the environment you have previously announced. The Department could not participate in any projects until the next Summer of Service period which would be June of 1995.

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend implementing option one. I request that you endorse the attached justification for non-competition of current national service projects, which will allow us to proceed with any projects the Corporation for National and Community Service approves this year.

As manager of the Department's national service program I want to assure you that I recognize the need for and value of competitive awards. Given the circumstances, every effort is being made to minimize the negative impact of non-competition and to use the existing circumstances to ensure that a sound, long-term process is set in place to foster competition in all future awards. In the interim, the projects that are forwarded to you for final selection as part of the USDA AmeriCorps application were not formulated in a vacuum. They are the result of almost a year's worth of conversations and presentations to the widest variety of constituent groups, non-profit groups, members of the public, and State and local organizations.

As a final note, I would add that the approach recommended here, that is to award non-competitively now while developing proper procedures for competition in all future awards, is an approach that is being adopted by other Federal departments, most notably Health and Human Services.

Agree _____ ✓

Date 4/24/94

Disagree _____

Discuss _____

Reviewed by _____

JUSTIFICATION FOR NON-COMPETITIVE SELECTION OF SITES
AND PARTNERS FOR USDA FY 94 "SUMMER OF SAFETY"
AND
FY 95 AMERICORPS YEARLONG PROJECTS

Pursuant to the regulations contained in 7 CFR 3015.158 (d), the Deputy Director for Public Liaison who serves as the Department of Agriculture's National Service Program manager hereby determines that it is in the best interest of the government and necessary to the accomplishment of the goals of the program to award co-operative agreements for FY 94 Summer of Safety and FY 95 AmeriCorps programs non-competitively. As these agreements are being executed, a concurrent effort will be undertaken to develop the rules, policies, and procedures necessary to ensure that all subsequent awards are made competitively. This determination was made after careful consideration of several factors including:

1. USDA participation in national services programs is needed for the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Government to meet the goals for the nation's national service program;
2. The limited time available to apply to the Corporation for funds makes competition impractical;
3. The national service program is new and pilot projects are needed to maximize the Department's ability to define the proper procedures and rules for implementing the program in the future;
4. Because Federal agency involvement in national services programs is designed to build on existing structures, the Department opted to focus on projects that most closely resembled current service structures in order to provide a foundation for expanding structures and services in the future; and
5. The process of awarding funds for projects is not completely devoid of competition because the Department's application to AmeriCorps is approved by the Corporation on a competitive basis.

The following discussion presents a detailed explanation of each factor considered in making the determination to award cooperative agreements non-competitively.

I. ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROGRAM GOALS

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, P.L. 103-82, clearly states that one of its main objectives is to, "build on the existing organizational service infrastructure of Federal, State, and local programs and agencies to expand full-time and part-time service opportunities for all citizens..."¹ The important role of Federal agency participation in national service programs is reinforced in the Act's provision to allow the Corporation for National and Community Service to, "...enter into a contract or cooperative agreement with another Federal agency to support a national service program carried out by the agency."² It is clearly the intent of the program to use participation by Federal agencies to accomplish its goals. There are even specific funds set aside solely for the purpose of awarding money to Federal agencies who apply to run programs individually or in partnership with other Federal agencies, non-profit organizations, institutions of higher learning, etc. A failure by Federal departments to participate would adversely affect the Corporation for National and Community Service's (AKA AmeriCorps) ability to achieve its goals.

II. TIME CONSTRAINTS

In order to participate, Federal agencies (Federal departments and independent agencies) must submit applications for funds to the Corporation for National and Community Service by the deadlines established by the Corporation's rules. Because the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 was not signed into law until September 21, 1993, there has been little time for the Corporation for National and Community Service (AKA AmeriCorps) to establish the necessary rules to guide Federal departments in their implementation of the program. Prior to enactment of the law, the Department undertook several initiatives to prepare for its implementation. A work group was established in March of 1993 to begin defining how to implement national service within USDA and to structure the "models" that form the guides for such service. Unfortunately, the late signing of the bill left insufficient time for USDA to complete all the steps necessary to engage in full competition for its projects.

AmeriCorps did not publish its notice of availability of funds for Summer of Safety programs until February 3, 1994. The time between this notice and the application deadline of March 14, 1994 was insufficient to allow for a publication by USDA of a request for proposals, review the applications, and submit an application to AmeriCorps. This left two options: one, do not submit a Summer of Safety application; two, identify projects that had previously been discussed within the Department and see if they were candidates for submission to AmeriCorps. In view of the time constraints, it was determined to be in the best interest of the Government and necessary to carry out the objectives of the USDA National Service program to choose the later option. The precise mechanism for choosing projects is described in Paragraph IV.

¹P.L. 103-82, Sec. 2(a)(7)

²P.L. 103-82, Sec. 121(b)(1)

The severe time constraints placed on applicants in the initial year of the program can be seen in table 1. These time constraints are imposed on the Department externally and are not caused by delay within the Department.

Table 1. Time Line for Significant Events in Preparation of CNCS Application for FY 94 Summer of Safety Application Due 3/14/94 and Yearlong FY 95 AmeriCorps Programs due 3/29/94.

EVENT	DATE OCCURRED	DATE SUMMER OF SERVICE APPLICATION DUE	DATE YEAR-LONG AMERICORPS APPLICATION DUE	TIME AVAILABLE FOR USDA TO ESTABLISH AND CONDUCT COMPETITION ¹	REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME NEEDED TO CONDUCT COMPETITION ²
National and Community Services Trust Act of 1993 signed by President Clinton	9/21/93				
Draft Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) regulations published	1/7/94				
Notice of availability of Funds for Summer of Safety programs published	2/3/94				
Comment period on draft regulations ends	2/7/94				
CNCS Regulations approved by OMB	3/11/94	3/14/94		3 DAYS	150 DAYS
CNCS final regulations published	3/18/94		3/29/94	42 DAYS	150 DAYS

¹ Time from the approval of rules to the time an application was due to be delivered to the CNCS.

² Time required to publish a request for proposals, have proposals evaluated by independent review panel, and make award of cooperative agreement, including the time to develop the necessary rules, publishing them, get comments and publish them in final form. The entire process could take 120 to 180 days. 150 days is used here as an average.

III. DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNAL RULES

Because Federal Department involvement in national service programs is new, it is necessary to establish the most effective process for ensuring that all future awards are made with the maximum degree of competition. The Office of Communications is establishing a schedule for the development of the necessary rules and regulations that will allow for full competition of awards beginning with the Corporation for National and Community Service's Summer of Service program in FY 95. The experiences gained in the initial awards will serve as a valuable "testing" ground to final rules and procedures that emphasize the integrity of the Department's program and the maximum benefit to the public.

IV. INTEGRATION OF NATIONAL SERVICE INTO USDA STRUCTURE

In addition to establishing departmental rules and procedures, it is necessary to evaluate how national service programs can be integrated into the Department's organizational structure. It is an obvious goal of the national service program to allow existing Federal organizations to merge, where practicable, their existing program delivery with national service projects. This is a formidable task in a department with 43 agencies and 115,000 plus employees.

Part of the process for developing rules and procedures involves an assessment of how the Department's existing resources can be focused to provide support to national service projects. This assessment involves three steps: 1) identify key agencies; 2) establish national service teams; and, 3) identify pilot projects for FY 94 applications.

1. Identify Key Agencies.

- a. In March of 1993, a national service work group was established in USDA. The group consisted of representatives from all agencies and offices. This group developed a proposed model for delivery of national service programs within USDA. The model consists of three "Teams":

- (1) An Environmental Team
- (2) An Anti-Hunger and Empowerment Team
- (3) A Rural Development Team

- b. In conjunction with the work group, the Office of Communication identified the key agencies that would need to be involved in pilot efforts. Initially, a total of four key agencies or groups of agencies were determined to already have program delivery mechanisms that mirror or closely resemble those necessary for national service projects. The Extension Service (ES), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), and the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) were determined to be the key groups associated with the Anti-Hunger team. The Forest Service (FS), the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) and ES were determined to be the key group associated with the Environmental Team. The Rural Development Administration (RDA), Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), and Rural Electrification Administration (REA), SCS and FS were determined to be the key groups associated with the Rural Development Team.

Several of these agencies have large existing programs or delivery mechanisms that lend themselves to most effectively defining how national service should be implemented within USDA. The Extension Service supports the world's largest volunteer group, the 4-H Clubs. The Forest Service through its human resources division runs Youth Conservation Corps and National Forest Foundation camps that are similar to the type of project expected to be run under national service. The new Rural Development Team groups those agencies which form the focus of services in rural development which is one of the Corporation's priority areas. Finally, the Soil Conservation Service deals daily with the public in an interactive mode quite similar to that proposed for national service.

2. Establish National Service Teams.

Once the key agencies were identified, teams were established to develop the necessary procedures and propose pilot projects for submission in FY 94 applications. The teams were an expansion of the agencies' representatives on the national service work group. Their purpose is to move from a "work group" structure toward integration of national service within the agencies' established organizational structure.

3. Identify Pilot Projects.

- a. As part of the efforts to establish models for national service within the Department, USDA representatives attended a wide variety of forums, meetings, conventions, and briefings where the public was informed of the proposed national service program and the role that Federal departments might play if the law was enacted. In addition to the meetings, interviews were given to magazines and newsletters that would most likely be read by groups interested in engaging in partnerships with the Department.

While these efforts were not official requests for proposals, they served to alert the public of the national service program. As a result of these efforts a few organizations submitted unsolicited proposals to the Department. Three criteria were used to identify candidate pilot projects. Note that these projects are called "candidate" because their identification by USDA does not guarantee that they will be approved by AmeriCorps. The criteria are:

- (1) Does the project conform to the criteria established by the Corporation for National and Community Service;
 - (2) Does the project maximize the Department's ability to use its resources in unique ways with an emphasis on the greatest number of partnerships between other Federal agencies, public, and non-profit organizations;
 - (3) Does the project maximize the Department's ability to establish sound Department-wide rules, policies, and, procedures for the implementation of national service within its agencies.
- b. Table 2. shows the projects selected for the FY 94 Summer of Safety application submitted by the Department and the reasons for their selection.

Table 2. FY 94 Summer of Safety Pilot Projects

PROJECT	CRITERIA	RATIONALE FOR SELECTION
Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences	1. Conform to AmeriCorps criteria.	Participants will be doing work in three areas identified as appropriate for Summer of Safety: Youth as a Resource Restoring Safety to Public Spaces Youth Safety Initiatives
	2. Maximize Department's ability to use its resources and partner with other agencies.	Run in conjunction with the Justice Department, this project involves the participation of the Extension Service, Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, The Chicago Public School District, and The Chicago Housing Authority. This mix of partners was not found in any other potential pilot project.
	3. Maximize Department's ability to establish sound policies and procedures for future awards.	The large number of partners, the relationship between USDA and the Justice Department and several local agencies lends it self to identifying issues and solutions in a wide variety of situations
Arizona Department of Youth Treatment and Rehabilitation	1. Conform to AmeriCorps criteria.	Participants will be doing work in three areas identified as appropriate for Summer of Safety: Youth as a Resource Restoring Safety to Public Spaces Youth Safety Initiatives

PROJECT	CRITERIA	RATIONALE FOR SELECTION
Arizona Department of Youth Treatment and Rehabilitation	2. Maximize Department's ability to use its resources and partner with other agencies.	Participants in this project include the State of Arizona Department of Youth Treatment and Rehabilitation, Arizona State University, the Forest Service and the Maricopa County Court System. It provides an expansion of the existing Youth Conservation Corps concept with the providing of service in an urban setting.
	3. Maximize Department's ability to establish sound policies and procedures for future awards.	The largest existing program in USDA that mirrors the national service concept is the Youth Conservation Corps. This project provides the opportunity to explore ways to expand that concept and integrate it with national service. It also provides an opportunity to work with elements of the local justice system to determine ways to best structure national service programs targeted at crime related issues.

V. EXISTING COMPETITION

There is already an element of competition in the award process. Projects developed by the Department are submitted to the Corporation for National and Community Service. All applications are reviewed by panels of independent experts, graded, and then evaluated by the Corporation's management before they are rejected or approved.

April 5, 1994

To: Public Lands and Environment Team Working Group
From: Joel Berg
Subject: Information Needed for the Department's Application

Listed below is some information we need to research and write immediately for the USDA Departmental AmeriCorps application. These suggestions are based on the law, CNCS regulations, and my interpretation of Secretary Espy's vision for national service. This checklist should be used only for Public Lands and Environmental youth teams; the Rural Development Team should be based on the new strategic plan for Rural Development Team.

This list below is by no means exhaustive, and the ultimate guideline should remain Ron Demunbrun's application template:

A) National Information Needed

- * Description of key environmental and public lands problems nationally, and explanation of how our pilot projects, collectively, will begin to help solve those problems.
- * Description of the key environmental problems in the areas in which we are focusing, the needs we will meet, the appropriateness of our national service projects to meet those needs.
- * Description of any national recruitment and/or training efforts to tie together all our programs.
- * Describe how all programs will be tied together by communications system.

B) Information Needed For Each Pilot Site

- * Completed title page, including # of participants, # of participants needing child care, # of their children needing child care, # of participants to be recruited nationally, primary and secondary Congressional Districts served by the project, budget requested for three years, total budgets for three years, starting and ending dates, and number of program terms. (See attached p. 33)

- * Summary page addressing the major environmental needs of the area and how project will begin solving them. Should also outline basic management structure of program and explain the type of work participants will engage in on a day-to-day basis.

- * Missions and objectives form (see attached p. 37).

- * Extensive program narrative including: environmental problems of the pilot area, the problems that will be solved by this program, and the appropriateness of this program to solve those problems; program design, program concept, program elements; participant profile and recruitment strategy; internal evaluation and monitoring; and institutional and personnel information. In short, this section needs to explain in clear English -- to be read by laypeople with no background in agriculture, forestry or USDA -- what work the participants will actually be performing on a day-to-day basis to solve local environmental programs, and how that work will be coordinated, supervised, and administered. This section should actually allow the reader to close their eyes and obtain a clear mental picture of essential details of the program would operate.

- * Budget form (see attached pages 35-36) and budget narrative.

- * Assurances and Certifications (see attached p. 39)

C) Information Needed for Each Forest Service Site

- * Determine whether there should be an SCS role at each site. If the project is near any communities, can 20% of the work be done in the communities if SCS pays 20% of the budget? If so, can an SCS employee on detail run that part of the program?

- * Specify any partnerships with Interior, EPA, Commerce, etc.

D) Information Needed for Each Soil Conservation Service Site

- * **Specify how participants will be managed on a day-to-basis.** Who will run the program; who will select, negotiate, and plan the projects; who will be crew leaders for each crew of ten participants?
- * **Determine roles for ASCS, Forest Service State and Private Forestry, AMS, and the Extension Service.**
- * **Specify any partnerships with EPA, Energy, HUD, etc.**

1. **APPLICATION TITLE:** _____
☐ Single-Site ☐ Multi-Site

2. **LEGAL APPLICANT:** _____
 Contact Person's Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Telephone/Fax: _____

Applicant's Congressional District: _____

3. **INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION** ☐ Federal Agency ☐ National Non-Profit Organization ☐ Professional Corps Prog. ☐ Multi-State Program
 Employer's ID Number: _____

4. **PROJECT DIRECTOR:** _____
 Organization's Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Telephone/Fax: _____

5. **GRANT TYPE:** ☐ Planning *or* ☐ Operating *or* ☐ Educational Awards Only

6. **ISSUE AREA AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES:** ☐ Educational ☐ Environment
☐ School Readiness ☐ Neighborhood Environment
☐ School Success ☐ Natural Environment
☐ Human Needs ☐ Public Safety
☐ Independent Living ☐ Violence Prevention
☐ Community Revitalization ☐ Crime Control

7. **AREA(S) TO BE SERVED:** _____
☐ Urban ☐ Rural ☐ Other
 Congressional District of primary area served: _____
 Congressional Districts of secondary areas served: _____

8. **PARTICIPANTS:** # of Full-time Participants _____ # of Full-time Participants Needing Educational Awards _____
 # of Part-time Participants _____ # of Part-time Participants Needing Educational Awards _____
 # of Participants Needing Child Care _____ # of Expected National Recruitment Participants _____
 # of their Children needing Child Care _____
 # of Unfunded Participants _____

9. **BUDGET:** Corporation Funds Requested YR1 _____ YR2 _____ YR3 _____
 Total Budget Amount YR1 _____ YR2 _____ YR3 _____

10. **PROGRAM OPERATES** in an area of need as identified by the Corporation? ☐ Yes *or* ☐ No
 Which One? _____

11. **PROJECT DURATION:** Start Date _____ End Date _____ Number of Program Terms _____

12. **CERTIFICATION:** The applicant certifies to the best of his/her knowledge and belief that the data in this application are true and correct and that the filing of the application has been duly authorized by the governing body of the applicant and that the applicant will comply with the assurances required of applicants if the assistance is approved.

Date: _____ Name: _____ Title: _____
 Telephone: _____ Signature: _____

Applicant Name: _____
Program Name: _____

1. WHAT IS YOUR PROGRAM'S MISSION STATEMENT ?

Each application must include statements of primary objectives in three areas: Community Service, Community Building, and Participant Development. Please use a separate copy of this form to describe your objectives in each area (i.e., Community Service, Community Building, Participant Development). In the case of community service, also use a separate form for each priority area, if you are working on more than one (i.e. education, environment, etc.)

- 2. THIS PAGE APPLIES TO**
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ☐ Community Service | ☐ Participant Development | ☐ Community Building |
| ☐ Education | | |
| ☐ Public Safety | | |
| ☐ Human Needs | | |
| ☐ Environment | | |

3. WHAT ARE YOUR ANNUAL OBJECTIVES IN THE AREA CHECKED ABOVE ?

List your three primary objectives.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Applicant Name: _____
 Program Name: _____

☐ Aggregate ☐ Program (if applicable)

	Corporation Share (CNCS) Funds Requested from the Corporation	Grantee Share Other Federal/State/ Local/Private Funds	Total Total Program Funding
A. PARTICIPANT SUPPORT COSTS			
Training and Education	_____	_____	_____
Uniforms	_____	_____	_____
(please specify in Budget Narrative) Other	_____	_____	_____
Subtotal	_____	_____	_____
B. STAFF			
Salaries	_____	_____	_____
Benefits	_____	_____	_____
Training	_____	_____	_____
(please specify in Budget Narrative) Other	_____	_____	_____
Subtotal	_____	_____	_____
C. OPERATIONAL			
Travel	_____	_____	_____
Transportation	_____	_____	_____
Supplies	_____	_____	_____
Equipment	_____	_____	_____
(please specify in Budget Narrative) Other	_____	_____	_____
Subtotal	_____	_____	_____
D. INTERNAL EVALUATION MONITORING	_____	_____	_____
E. ADMINISTRATION	_____	_____	_____
	(may not exceed 5% of Corporation funds, A-F)		
(in dollar amounts) Total A-E		+	=
Percentages	_____ %	+	_____ % = 100%
(Corporation maximum 75% + Grantee minimum 25% = 100%)			

BUDGET FORM AMERICORPS NATIONAL DIRECT APPLICATION

F. OTHER PARTICIPANT SUPPORT COSTS

	Number of Participants	Corporation Share (maximum 85%)	Grantee Share (minimum 15%)	Total 100%
Living Allowance				
FICA and Workers' Compensation				
Health Care*				
Alternative Health Care** <i>(\$1,200 per eligible participant)</i>				

Total (F)

 + =

Total (A-F)

Estimated Number of Children	Estimated Number of Eligible Participants	Corporation Share (maximum 100%)	Grantee Share	Total
---------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------	------------------	-------

G. CHILD CARE

----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

TOTAL (A-G)

H. EDUCATION AWARDS

	Number of Participants	Amount per Participant	Total
Full-Time Participants		\$4725	
Part-Time Participants		\$2363	

Total (H)

 x =

* If grantee is utilizing current policy meeting minimum benefits for eligible participants.

** If grantee is utilizing alternative health care policy to be made available.

**CERTIFICATION
SIGNATURE**

Note: This form must be signed and included in the application.

Before You Start. Before completing certification,
please read Certification Instructions, page 30.

SIGNATURE. By signing this Certification page, the applicant certifies that it will agree to
perform all actions and support all intentions stated in the Certification sections
in part III of this application. The three Certifications are:

- ☐ Certification: Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters.
- ☐ Certification: Drug-Free Workplace
- ☐ Certification: Lobbying Activities

Organization Name: _____

Project Name: _____

**Name and Title
of Authorized Representative:** _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

**ASSURANCES
SIGNATURE**

Note: This form must be signed and included in the application.

By signing this assurances page, the applicant certifies that it will agree to
perform all actions and support all intentions stated in the Assurances on page 28.

Organization Name: _____

Project Name: _____

**Name and Title
of Authorized Representative:** _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

75, Pauls^{scs}

what have in place

Any
Co
Washin
Alaska



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

April 1, 1994

BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director, Office of Public Affairs *JB*
Subject: National Service Projects Being Planned in Vermont

Although we cannot yet publicly announce any of our national service programs because funding issues are in the process of being resolved, you should be aware of the programs we are planning in Vermont.

Anti-Hunger Team

Assuming we obtain sufficient funding, this Fall we will start a 20-30 person anti-hunger national service team in conjunction with the Vermont Youth Service Corps and local anti-hunger groups. The team would focus on providing services that relate to the unique problems of the low-income and rural areas of the state such as driving people to sign-up for our feeding programs and providing outreach to undernourished senior citizens. Since we have already had conversations with the Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger and with Senator Leahy's Agriculture Committee staff about the potential for such a program, you may be asked about it by the Senator or the group. I strongly recommend that, while you express your personal support for this project, you also stress that the final funding decision will at least partially be made by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Rural Development Team

We are now studying how to place Rural Development Team members in a region including the northern parts of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine to provide technical assistance with rural water systems, help protect the regional watersheds, and provide rural economic planning assistance.

Public Lands and Environment Team

Senator Leahy recently wrote to the Forest Service asking about their plans to continue or expand youth service programs in Vermont. However, even before USDA received the Senator's letter, I had been working with the Forest Service to plan a national service project in the Green Mountain National Forest in Vermont.



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

Correspondence

April 4, 1994

Mr. Eli Segal, Chief Executive Officer
Corporation for National and Community service
1100 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525

Dear Eli:

I can not thank you enough for the aid you provided in both of your recent visits to the Department.

Your attendance at the senior staff meeting generated a great deal of enthusiasm among all those who attended and helped me obtain significant new resources for our Departmental AmeriCorps initiatives.

The only way I can adequately express my gratitude is by helping provide you and the President with the finest AmeriCorps program in the federal government.

Sincerely,

Joel Berg

P.S. - I heard you did a great job speaking instead of ESPY at the H.V.D. Conference. Your section on wheat subsidies was particularly well received.



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

Memo

April 4, 1994

To: Wally Beyer, Administrator, REA
From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director, Office of Public Affairs *JB*
Subject: **National Service Rural Development Team**

Attached is our updated project design and strategic plan for the USDA Rural Development Team, part of the **USDA** national service initiative.

The draft reflects Adam's suggestion that the program, in part, focus on helping rural communities plan for inclusion in the Information Superhighway.

I would like to meet with you immediately to discuss how your agency may advance Secretary Espy's goals for national service. Since the **USDA** application is due by April 15, I will follow-up with your office to determine the earliest possible time we can meet. If you wish to reach me before then, my new phone number is 720-6350.

CC: Adam Golodner



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

Memo

April 4, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR ANTHONY WILLIAMS, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

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

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF TRUST FUND FOR USDA PARTNERSHIP IN
EDUCATION PROGRAM (VAN NESS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL)

The USDA Office of the General Counsel has rendered a decision stating that the funds used to support activities associated with our "adopted" school, Van Ness Elementary should be placed in a trust fund under the provisions of 7 U.S.C. Sec. 2269 and 31 U.S.C. Sec. 1321(b), 1323(c). In accordance with the attached opinion, please provide the name of a point of contact with whom my staff can work to establish the proper trust fund and implement the necessary procedures for its management.

Mr. Ron De Munbrun of my staff can answer any questions you may have concerning this matter. He can be reached by beeper, (202) 542-3339 (after dialing this, enter the number you wish him to call and hit the # sign).

I want to thank you in advance for assistance in this matter.

Attachment

cc: A. Webb



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of the
General
Counsel

Washington,
D.C.
20250-1400

MAR 29 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR JOEL BERG
DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF PUBLIC LIAISON

FROM: James Michael Kelly
Associate General Counsel

SUBJECT: Van Ness Elementary School Bank Account

Issue

Whether the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Office of Public Liaison (OPL), may maintain a bank account in a private banking institution on behalf of Van Ness Elementary School students to hold USDA employee donations and to pay for certain of the costs associated with the USDA Adopt-A-School Partnership in Education Program.

Background

This is in response to your December 1, 1993, memorandum requesting an opinion as to whether the Van Ness School Bank account is authorized.

The Partnership in Education Program originated with Proclamation No. 5112, 48 Fed. Reg. 45371 (1983), which called upon Federal agencies and their employees to become involved with their local schools. The Proclamation encouraged Federal agencies to establish special programs to provide such schools a wide range of volunteer services.

USDA, like many other Federal agencies, participates in the Partnership in Education Program, under which Federal agencies adopt a local school. The Van Ness Elementary School, located in the District of Columbia, has been the designated USDA Partnership in Education Adopted School since 1983.

The USDA OPL coordinates the USDA Partnership in Education Program, which includes tutoring Van Ness students, a Holiday drive, career shadowing, taking students to events and on field trips, and other activities. OPL maintains an account at Riggs Bank in the name of "Van Ness Students." The account is used to deposit and hold employee donations in order to pay the costs of the adopted school program. We understand that the account was created a number of years ago by a political appointee, but that when the last administration departed, the signature card was

transferred to a career employee, who has since paid for several events out of the account.

Discussion

Although the USDA Adopt-A-School Partnership in Education Program is sanctioned by Proclamation No. 5112, there is no specific statutory authority for this program. Similarly, no appropriations act provides specifically that funds appropriated to USDA are legally available for purposes of this program.

Under 31 U.S.C. § 1301(a), "[a]ppropriations shall be applied only to the objects for which the appropriations were made except as otherwise provided by law." However, the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) has held consistently that an appropriation made for a particular purpose, by implication, provides the agency with the authority to incur expenses that are reasonably necessary or incident to the proper execution of the authorized purpose. See, e.g., 67 Comp. Gen. 254, 256 (1988); 66 Comp. Gen. 356 (1987); 50 Comp. Gen. 534 (1971). Thus, Federal resources, whether in the form of funds, facilities, or employee time, generally are legally available for the Partnership in Education Program if reasonably necessary or incident to the agency to carry out an authorized purpose.

Recently, the Comptroller General concluded that the expenditure of limited amounts of Federal resources in support of civic, charitable, or similar community support activities, is reasonably necessary or incident to the proper execution of the agency's official functions and, thus, is within the discretion of an agency head. See Matter of: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Use of Government Motor Vehicles and Printing Plant Facilities for Partnership in Education Program, 71 Comp. Gen. 469 (1992). In this matter, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) asked GAO whether it had used improperly its printing plant facilities and Government motor vehicles in connection with its Adopt-A-School Partnership in Education Program. FERC had on one occasion printed 500 copies of a school newsletter and had used Government vehicles to transport students from its adopted school to and from FERC headquarters for partnerships in education programs and other agency activities. In finding these expenditures authorized, GAO explained:

Government cooperation in charitable fund raising campaigns has been a long-established, authorized practice, notwithstanding lack of specific legislation, and we view the requisite congressional intent as implied. These campaigns clearly require some work time of federal employees, government supplies and equipment, and limited purchases of promotional materials. In this context, we have not questioned the limited use of agency resources for such community

health and welfare or civic activities as blood drives . . . and savings bond drives

An agency's community and employee relations activities are generally committed to the sound discretion of the head of an agency in managing and controlling the agency's employees and resources. The exercise of such discretion must of course be consistent with relevant statutory authority and with our decisions on the use of appropriated funds. However, the federal government does not exist in a vacuum insulated from the day-to-day civic and charitable needs of the communities in which it operates, and limited participation in recognized and publicly accepted community support activities, such as partnerships with local schools, may well be viewed as incident to the discharge of its responsibility to contribute to the welfare of the community. . . .

71 Comp. Gen. at 472-73 (citations omitted) (emphases added).

While it is within the discretion of the Secretary to obligate a "limited" amount of Federal resources to support the USDA Partnership in Education Program, "an agency's authority to commit its resources to such activities is not without limits." 71 Comp. Gen. at 473. The Comptroller General declined to attempt to define the limits of this authority, finding that this is more properly a subject for the President or Congress. *Id.* As of this date, neither the President nor Congress has issued any guidelines on the scope of agency authority to obligate funds in connection with its Partnership in Education Program.

Proclamation No. 5112 also encouraged Federal employees, as individuals, to become involved in their local schools. While a Federal agency may expend only a limited amount of its resources, including employee "official" time, on its Partnership in Education Program, agency employees are encouraged to give their own resources, including their own time or funds, for the benefit of the adopted school of an agency.¹ However, under the current practice, USDA employee donations are not made directly to the school or its students, but instead are being made to, and solicited by, USDA officials in the name of "Van Ness Students," and such funds are being used by USDA to pay the costs of the USDA Partnership in Education Program, an official USDA function. Thus, the employee donations in fact are conditional gifts to USDA for the purpose of carrying out an official function.

¹ The Office of Personnel Management has issued guidelines for the limited use of excused absences for employee volunteer activities in FPM Letter 992-1 (April 19, 1991).

As a general rule, a Federal agency may not accept for its own use gifts of money or other property absent specific statutory authority. See, e.g., 16 Comp. Gen. 911 (1937); B-13378 (Nov. 20, 1940); A-44015 (March 17, 1937). The Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to accept gifts pursuant to Pub. L. No. 95-442, codified at 7 U.S.C. § 2269, which provides, in pertinent part:

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to accept, receive, hold, utilize, and administer on behalf of the United States gifts, bequests, or devises of real and personal property made for the benefit of the United States Department of Agriculture or for the carrying out of any of its functions. For the purposes of the Federal income, estate, and gift tax laws, property accepted pursuant to the authority granted in this section shall be considered as a gift, bequest, or devise to the United States. Any gift of money accepted pursuant to the authority granted in this section . . . shall be deposited in the Treasury of the United States for credit to a separate fund and shall be disbursed upon order of the Secretary of Agriculture. . . .

7 U.S.C. § 2269 (emphases added).

This office has held that the Secretary has the authority to solicit gifts that he may accept, i.e., that such authority is implied from the authority to accept gifts. However, the solicitation and acceptance of gifts of personal property or money by USDA is prescribed by section 104-43.8003 of the Agricultural Property Management Regulations (APMR), which provides, in pertinent part:

Conditional offers of gifts or of money shall be referred to the Assistant Secretary for Administration for acceptance or rejection.

The acceptance of a gift(s) shall be executed in writing by the Assistant Secretary for Administration, Agency heads, or their duly designated representative(s). The acceptance of such gifts shall in no way imply an endorsement of the gifts or the giver, nor impose any obligation on the part of the recipient to provide the giver with data or information as to usage or performance. The property shall contain no advertising matter. An appropriate indication that the gift(s) was given by the donor is permitted, provided such indication is of no possible advertising or commercial benefit to the donor. No gift shall be

accepted from an "interested party" as defined in 7 CFR 0.735-12.

APMR § 104-43.8003 (emphasis added).²

² The APMR prescribes rules for the acceptance of gifts by USDA. However, APMR § 104-43.8003 incorporates by reference the definition of an "interested party" contained in the USDA employee responsibility and conduct regulations, which prohibits USDA employees from soliciting or accepting, "for themselves or another person, directly or indirectly, any gift . . . from any interested party." 7 C.F.R. § 0.735-12(a) (emphasis added). An "interested party" is defined as:

any person, firm, corporation, other entity, or an individual acting in behalf thereof, which:

- (1) Has or is seeking to engage in, procurement activities or other contractual, business, or financial relations with the Department;
- (2) Conducts operations or activities that are regulated by the Department; or
- (3) Has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the official duty of [a USDA] employee.

7 C.F.R. § 0.735-12(a).

The USDA employee conduct regulations have been superseded by the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) Government-wide ethics regulations at 5 C.F.R. Part 2635. The OGE regulations prohibit Federal employees from accepting gifts from any "prohibited source." 5 C.F.R. § 2635.202(a). The definition of a "prohibited source" contained in the OGE regulations at 5 C.F.R. § 2635.203(d) is similar substantially to the definition of an "interested party" contained in 7 C.F.R. § 0.735-12(a). However, because the OGE regulations apply only to the conduct of Federal employees, the definition of a "gift" for purposes of the regulations does not include "[a]ny gift accepted by the Government under specific statutory authority" 5 C.F.R. § 2635.203(b)(8).

Since the definition of an "interested party" contained in 7 C.F.R. § 735-12(a) has been superseded by the definition of a "prohibited source" contained in 5 C.F.R. § 2635.203(d), it could be argued that the OGE definition of a "prohibited source" should apply to the APMR. On the other hand, since neither governed the acceptance of gifts by USDA under its gift authority and the APMR

(continued...)

Thus, the Secretary has the authority, subject to the prohibited source rules, to accept and solicit gifts to USDA for the purpose of carrying out the USDA Partnership in Education Program.³

Donations to USDA for the purpose of the USDA Partnership in Education Program must be accounted for as trust funds. Under 7 U.S.C. § 2269 and 31 U.S.C. §§ 1321(b), 1323(c), such funds received by USDA as trustee must be deposited in an appropriate trust fund account in the Treasury. Thus, the donations of USDA employees received by USDA in the name of "Van Ness Students" may not be held in a private banking institution; rather, such funds must be deposited into the Treasury in an appropriate trust fund account.

Conclusion

It is within the discretion of the Secretary to expend a limited amount of Federal resources to support the USDA Partnership in Education Program. Because this is an authorized function of the Department, USDA may accept donations, subject to the prohibited source rules, in trust for the purpose of carrying out the program. The solicitation of gifts from USDA employees may be conducted, subject to OPM approval. Funds received by USDA for the USDA Partnership in Education Program must be

²(...continued)
merely incorporated by reference the definition of an "interested party" contained in 7 C.F.R. § 735-12(a), it also could be argued that the now-defunct USDA definition of an "interested party" continues to apply. Regardless of which term applies, the APMR prohibition on the acceptance of gifts from any "interested party" remains in effect.

³ A fund-raising campaign for the USDA Partnerships in Education Program, focused exclusively on USDA employees, raises concerns since, as recognized in OPM regulations implementing the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), "[t]he CFC is the only authorized charitable fund-raising drive in the Federal workplace." 5 C.F.R. § 950.102(a). Under these regulations, no other charitable fund-raising drive may be conducted in the Federal workplace without the express written permission of the Director of OPM. *Id.* The regulations also prescribe specifically the solicitation methods that may be used in the Federal workplace. *See* 5 C.F.R. § 950.602. Because the Van Ness Elementary School does not qualify as an "agency" or "voluntary agency" eligible to receive donations through the CFC, a fund-raising drive conducted in the Federal workplace for the USDA Partnership in Education Program would require express written permission from the Director of OPM.

deposited into the Treasury in an appropriate trust fund account established for this purpose.



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

Memo

April 4, 1994

To: Bob Nash

From: Joel Berg

JB

Attached is our updated project design and strategic plan for the USDA Rural Development Team.

The draft reflects your suggestion that we focus on rural water, as well as Sharon Longino's suggestion that we try to find a role for the former Delta Commission.

I need the help of your agencies immediately so we can finalize our budgets and program details by the April 15 deadline.

I would very much like to meet with you and Peter sometime today for ten minutes. My new number is 720-6350.

CC: Peter Necheles



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

Memo

April 4, 1994

To: Mike Dunn
From: Joel Berg *JB*
Subject: National Service Follow-Up

Attached is our updated project design and strategic plan for the USDA Rural Development Team. The document incorporates many of Sharon Longino's ideas for combining national service with welfare reform and meeting Secretary Espy's goal of finding continuing functions for the former Delta Commission.

We still need to identify specific funds in your FY95 budget that can help fund these programs, as well as a member or members of the FmHA staff who can help complete our application over the next two weeks. Our applications must be complete by April 15.

If you have any questions, please call me at my new number at 720-6350.

cc: Sharon Longino, Angela Courtney



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

memo

April 4, 1994

To: Wilbur Peer
From: Joel Berg *JB*
Subject: **National Service Follow-Up**

Attached is our updated project design and strategic plan for the USDA Rural Development Team. The document incorporates many of your previous suggestions about how RDA can participate.

We still need to identify specific funds in your FY95 budget that can help fund these programs, as well as a member or members of the RDA staff who can help complete our application over the next two weeks.

I will continue to work with Ben Carter on these matters. If you have any questions, call me at my new number at 720-6350.

CC: Ben Carter



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

*Memo
from*

April 4, 1994

To: Assistant Secretary Lyons
From: Joel Berg *JB*
Subjects: Follow-Up On Our Last Discussion

After Eli Segal briefed the sub-cabinet last Thursday, you indicated that you wanted to meet with me this week. As we discussed, your office can provide our departmental national service efforts an important boost by helping to rapidly resolve the following issues:

1) Forest Service Budget: SCS is working to obtain \$10 million for national service in FY95, and the FS has allocated \$7 million -- \$4 million from the National Forest System and \$3 million from State and Private Forestry. However, the FS Human Resources managers, with whom I have been working, have identified high quality projects that will cost more than the FS budget office has allocated. If you can help us earmark \$3 million more in the National Forest System -- equalizing the FS total with SCS at \$10 million -- then we will be able to run high quality national service projects this fall in forests in seven out of the nine regions.

2) Urban Resources Partnership: I will rely on your guidance to determine how to continue interfacing with the partnerships in New York, Chicago, Atlanta, and Seattle.

3) Cooperation with EPA and Interior: We need to develop a strategy to best increase the number and the scope of projects that we will run jointly with other Federal departments.

I work with Margaret to obtain a time we can discuss these and other issues.

Golden Eagle Passport

① need Farmer
for Award



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

April 3, 1994

Dear USDA Employee:

I am writing to ask you to join with me this week in the annual national commemoration of the victims of the Holocaust, known as Days of Remembrance.

Soon I will join a handful of USDA employees in re-visiting the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which is located barely feet away from the USDA headquarters in Washington.

I urge all USDA employees, whether they live in Washington or plan to visit the area, to take a few hours to personally experience the museum's potent and somber testimonial to one of the greatest tragedies of world history.

We must understand and learn from the mistakes of the past so we can pledge ourselves never to repeat them. Yet we live in a time when a few extreme voices on the right and left fringes of society make headlines through their hopeless addiction to the pathology of denying the undeniable:

Denying the Holocaust's mass murder of millions ... or denying the recurring outbreaks of American anti-semitism ... or denying the wrongs of slavery and segregation ... or denying the continuing inequalities in our society.

These extremists deny reality because the truth is tough --- tough to understand, tough to embrace, and even tougher to act upon. The truth is that the only way this nation can solve its pressing economic and social problems is for Americans of all races and religions to come together across the deep divisions between us.

The truth is that we must roll up our sleeves, get to work, and toil tirelessly in the vineyards of change until we achieve real progress.

No wonder the extremists think it's easier to simply split the nation apart with cheap demagoguery.

The stakes are too high for us to allow our enemies to divide us. A few decades ago, the great African-American poet Langston Hughes spoke out against the extremists of his time who scapegoated Jews. In his book, *Montage of a Dream Deferred*, Hughes combined poems of both soaring beauty and bitter pain to convey the struggle of African-Americans to achieve the American dream, which, for them, has been continually deferred. But Hughes also included a poem, "Likewise", a powerful indictment of contemporary anti-semitism which included the lines:

Sometimes I think
Jews must have heard
the music of
a dream deferred.

Hughes made the critical point that all groups of people, at one time or more in their history, are subject to persecution. Commemorating the Holocaust reminds us of the dreadful outcomes possible if all humans of good conscience do not rise up against the forces of hate. Thus, we use this week of remembrance to reaffirm our common belief that we, as Americans and as world citizens, are in this together.

Sincerely,

Mike Espy



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

April 1, 1994

BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director, Office of Public Affairs JB
Subject: National Service Projects Being Planned in Vermont

Although we cannot yet publicly announce any of our national service programs because funding issues are in the process of being resolved, you should be aware of the programs we are planning in Vermont.

Anti-Hunger Team

Assuming we obtain sufficient funding, this Fall we will start a 20-30 person anti-hunger national service team in conjunction with the Vermont Youth Service Corps and local anti-hunger groups. The team would focus on providing services that relate to the unique problems of the low-income and rural areas of the state such as driving people to sign-up for our feeding programs and providing outreach to undernourished senior citizens. Since we have already had conversations with the Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger and with Senator Leahy's Agriculture Committee staff about the potential for such a program, you may be asked about it by the Senator or the group. I strongly recommend that, while you express your personal support for this project, you also stress that the final funding decision will at least partially be made by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Rural Development Team

We are now studying how to place Rural Development Team members in a region including the northern parts of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine to provide technical assistance with rural water systems, help protect the regional watersheds, and provide rural economic planning assistance.

Public Lands and Environment Team

Senator Leahy recently wrote to the Forest Service asking about their plans to continue or expand youth service programs in Vermont. However, even before USDA received the Senator's letter, I had been working with the Forest Service to plan a national service project in the Green Mountain National Forest in Vermont.

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.

March

Divider Title: _____



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

memo from

March 31, 1994

DECISION MEMO FOR THE SECRETARY

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

Through: Ali Webb, Director, Office of Public Affairs

Subject: **This Year's Holocaust Commemoration**

As you may remember, last year you released the attached statement to commemorate the opening of the Holocaust Memorial Musuem. This year, the United States Holocaust Memorial Council is again requesting that you take action to commemorate the Holocaust for the week starting April 3, 1994.

I recommend that you issue the following letter to employees and agree to re-visit the musuem soon with a group of rank-and-file USDA employees.

Agree _____

Date _____

Agree with attached changes to letter _____

Disagree _____

Discuss with Me _____



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

File Correspondence

Mr. Jack Ward Thomas
Chief, Forest Service
Auditors Building
4th Floor
Northwest Wing
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Chief Thomas:

I am writing to express my appreciation to you for the outstanding work of Forest Service personnel in the development of a grant proposal for a national service summer program in Arizona. The proposal was submitted to the Corporation for National and Community Service on March 14, 1994.

Under tight deadline pressure, Katherine Allen, Assistant Director of Human Resources Program, Jim Rawlinson, Region 3 Tonto National Forest Human Resources Program Manager, and Vertis Stovall, Program Specialist in the Human Resources Program, provided invaluable assistance in the development of the proposal.

As I have discussed with you, Secretary Espy has directed me to develop plans for a Rural Development Team, an Empowerment and an Anti-Hunger Team, and a Public Lands and Environment Team. The deadline to submit this proposal is April 29, 1994. Forest Service personnel are also assisting with the development of the Public Lands and Environment Team. I am currently working closely with your staff to meet this deadline.

I also want to thank you personally for the vital institutional support the Forest Service is providing to this initiative. Together, we will build the best program in the Federal government.

Sincerely,

Joel Berg
Deputy Director of Public Affairs
Director of Office of National Service

CC: Assistant Secretary James Lyons
Deputy Chief in charge of Administration Lamar Beasley
Deputy Assistant Secretary Adelia Backiel



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

Correspondence

Mr. Jack Ward Thomas
Chief, Forest Service
Auditors Building
4th Floor
Northwest Wing
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Chief Thomas:

I am writing to express my appreciation to you for the outstanding work of Forest Service personnel in the development of a grant proposal for a national service summer program in Arizona. The proposal was submitted to the Corporation for National and Community Service on March 14, 1994.

Under tight deadline pressure, Katherine Allen, Assistant Director of Human Resources Program, Jim Rawlinson, Region 3 Tonto National Forest Human Resources Program Manager, and Vertis Stovall, Program Specialist in the Human Resources Program, provided invaluable assistance in the development of the proposal.

As I have discussed with you, Secretary Espy has directed me to develop plans for a Rural Development Team, an Empowerment and an Anti-Hunger Team, and a Public Lands and Environment Team. The deadline to submit this proposal is April 29, 1994. Forest Service personnel are also assisting with the development of the Public Lands and Environment Team. I am currently working closely with your staff to meet this deadline.

I also want to thank you personally for the vital institutional support the Forest Service is providing to this initiative. Together, we will build the best program in the Federal government.

Sincerely,

Joel Berg
Deputy Director of Public Affairs
Director of Office of National Service

CC: James Lyons, Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources & Environment
Lamar Beasley, Deputy Chief for Administration
Adelia Backiel, Deputy Assistant Secretary



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

*Correspondence
from
Gail*

March 29, 1994

Dear Urban Resource Partnership Committee Member:

I am writing to inform you of the Administration's exciting new national service initiative -- AmeriCorps -- and to suggest ways that this initiative might be able to dovetail with projects you are already planning as part of the Urban Resources Partnership.

As you continue to collectively decide for yourself what kind of environmental projects make most sense for your cities, you may want to consider AmeriCorps as a cost-effective and efficient delivery mechanism for those projects.

AmeriCorps is a new program in which citizens will be able to provide service to their communities for a year or two while earning a small stipend and a large educational scholarship. At USDA, the Soil Conservation Service, the Forest Service, and the Extension Service are now working together to craft environmental service projects in many urban areas throughout America, including Atlanta, Chicago, New York, and Seattle. The U.S. Department of Interior and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are also planning similar projects. All federal projects must be finalized by April 29, 1994.

The USDA/AmeriCorps plan and the Urban Resource Partnerships share much of the same vision, concept, and anticipated outcomes: reinventing government to be responsive to people's needs, using existing resources to improve and rehabilitate the nation's environment, and supporting community-based conservation projects.

The following are some urban AmeriCorps projects that USDA has been considering:

Urban Farming Projects- AmeriCorps team members can help low-income urban residents to grow their own food.

Water quality assessments- AmeriCorps team members can conduct samplings and provide technical help with delivery systems.

Education- AmeriCorps team members --- going door-to-door, working in schools, speaking at civic clubs, and sponsoring booths at street fairs --- can teach a wide variety of topics: preventing non-point source pollution, ecosystems management, how to recycle, forestry basics, energy conservation, watershed protection, how to make your household more eco-friendly, etc.

Energy Conservation- AmeriCorps team members, possibly in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Energy, can work in crews to provide physical assistance in weatherizing homes and generally making them more energy efficient.

River and Streams Protection- AmeriCorps team members can work to protect and re-nourish urban rivers and streams.

Tree Planting - As part of the Clinton Administration's initiative to combat global warming, AmeriCorps teams could play a role in expanding the number of trees planted in urban areas on both public and private lands.

Urban Conservation Projects- AmeriCorps team members can repair facilities in public parks, paint murals, fix playgrounds and other facilities at public schools, and run recycling programs.

Transportation Right-of-Ways- Possibly in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Transportation or individual state departments of transportation, AmeriCorps team members can engage on tree-planting, flower gardening, or other greening projects on highway, rail, or bike path right-of-ways.

It is clear that AmeriCorps programs could provide one structure to help get the Urban Partnership off the ground in a relatively short time period in your cities. Your partnership could either sponsor specific AmeriCorps projects, recruit part-time volunteers to aid AmeriCorps projects, or determine some other innovative way for collaboration that you determine would be beneficial to your area.

Since AmeriCorps is a top priority of President Clinton, Secretary Espy, and myself, the program may be able to provide significant additional financial and staff resources to your partnerships' projects. In short, AmeriCorps could provide a well-structured yet non-bureaucratic vehicle to help jump-start your programs.

You can call me at (202) 720-6350 or Ginny Cohn at (202) 720-1847 to obtain more information about AmeriCorps. It will be up to you to decide if there is a need for collaboration before the Department's April 29 deadline.

Thank you once again for your cooperation in building an exiting new framework for tackling America's urban environmental problems.

Sincerely,



Joel Berg
USDA National Service Coordinator



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

March 29, 1994

Dear Friend:

I am writing to update you on Secretary Espy's plans to incorporate into AmeriCorps, President Clinton's national service program.

As you may know from previous materials sent to you, USDA will submit a proposal to the Corporation by the April 29 deadline to create service teams nationwide in the areas of rural development, anti-hunger and nutrition and empowerment, and public lands and environment.

There is still a very limited time to submit proposals to us to be considered for incorporation into the USDA/AmeriCorps grant application. If you are interested in becoming a partner with USDA in any of the three areas, the deadline to submit your proposal is April 15.

USDA can provide additional technical assistance in helping your institution apply through the other options offered by the Corporation for National Service. We encourage you to take this approach, since the potential amount of funding is larger with the other options.

I am enclosing copies of the 1) application that USDA must submit; 2) the final regulations for the Corporation for Community and National Service; and a 3) flyer with the Corporation's deadlines for its various programs.

For additional information, please contact Joel Berg at (202) 720-6350, or Katherine Gibney at (202) 720-4369.

Sincerely,

Joel Berg
USDA Office of Public Affairs
Office of National Service



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

Memo Book

March 29, 1994

BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR THE SECRETARY AND THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

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

JB

Subject: Eli Segal's Meeting With the Sub-Cabinet on Thursday

At your invitation, Eli Segal, Assistant to the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, will be meeting with the sub-cabinet at their regular meeting on Thursday, March 31.

Eli will arrive at the meeting at 8:30 a.m. and speak for 15-20 minutes before taking questions.

Eli will likely focus his comments on the importance of national service to the President and the tight deadline that all federal agencies face in submitting funding applications to the Corporation by April 29. He will stress the need for Federal departments to match Corporation funds with money of their own, as well as the need for departmental applications to be extremely specific about the programs the department proposes to run.

I have informed all Under and Assistant Secretaries that Mr. Segal will be at the meeting. Most of them are aware of the basic actions their agencies are taking to boost national service, but I offered to provide them any additional information they might need prior to the meeting.

You should also be aware of our progress in the following areas:

1) **Summer of Service Application Program** - With the help of Kim Schnoor, Larry Wachs of OPBA, and Ken Cohen of OGC, the Department was able, under an extremely tight deadline, to submit two applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service that combine environmental work with community policing initiatives. Only a few federal departments were able to meet this deadline. The first application requests \$192,148 for a program to be run jointly by the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences, the U.S. Department of Justice, and USDA. The second application requests \$115,080 for a program to be run jointly by the Forest Service, Arizona State University, and the Arizona Department of Youth Treatment and Rehabilitation. The Corporation will inform us next week if we won the grants.

2) Follow-Up With Mel Blount - Subsequent to the Secretary's meeting with Mr. Blount, I met with him, called his staff, and sent his staff a detailed package of application information. I offered by phone and by mail to provide necessary help in preparing their applications for direct submission to the Corporation or to help them apply for inclusion in our application. I also asked the Soil Conservation Service's national service coordinator in Georgia to investigate how we may be able to help.

3) Interest Expressed by The Senate Agriculture Committee - Doug O'Brien, who works for Chairman Leahy on the Senate Agriculture Committee, recently contacted me after he learned that we are planning a possible anti-hunger team pilot project in Vermont. He told me that Senator Leahy was very interested in the project, and asked me to send information about our plans. I sent him a general outline of our plans, and, at Fred Slabach's suggestion, I stressed verbally and in writing that all our plans were simply in the proposal stage and that they would have to be approved by our General Counsel, by the Secretary, and, ultimately, by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

4) Victory on Hunger Language in the National Service Regulations - In the original draft regulations issued by the Corporation, hunger was not listed as a priority area for service. However, as a result of written comments provided by myself, Congressman Tony Hall, and others, the final regulations included hunger as a top priority for service.

5) National Teleconference on Service Sponsored by USDA - The Office of Public Affairs and the Extension Service, in conjunction with the Corporation, produced a national teleconference for higher education institutions. The Corporation was highly complimentary of our work.

6) Progress on Internal Legal Issues - The Acting General Counsel to the Corporation for National and Community Service, Terry Russell, came to USDA recently to brief our Office of General Counsel on legal issues regarding national service. Subsequent to that meeting, our OGC has been able to make great progress in identifying legal ways for the Department to proceed.

7) Clarification on USDA Budget - We are close to providing the Secretary with a final recommendation on how much USDA money may be able to be matched with Corporation money to run our Rural Development Team, our Anti-Hunger, Nutrition, and Empowerment Team, and our Public Lands and Environment Team. The Soil Conservation Service has identified a potential \$10 million in its budget and the Forest Service has identified a potential \$7 million in its budget. Other agencies should have figures for us soon. Prior to presenting our recommendations to the Secretary, we will have each agency's proposal approved by Kim Schnoor, OGC, and OBPA.

Memo book

March 28, 1994

To: Fred Slabach
From: Joel Berg *JA*
Subject: Response to Your Questions on Senator Leahy's Request for Information on National Service

The Secretary has given me approval to develop three programs for submission to the Corporation for National and Community Service: a Rural Development Team; an Anti-Hunger and Empowerment Team; and an Environment and Public Lands Team. The development of these programs involves identifying specific projects, determining what USDA funds, if any, may be used to support the projects, and then presenting them to the Secretary. The Under and Assistant Secretaries, OGC, OBPA, and the Agency Administrators are all heavily involved in this process.

You should also know that I have made it clear to Doug O'Brien on Senator Leahy's Senate Agriculture Committee that the projects I discussed with him were only **PROPOSED** projects. All projects still must be passed through our internal review process and are subject to final approval by the Secretary and the Corporation for National and Community Service.



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

Memo from

March 28, 1994

To: Bruce Reed

From: Joel Berg

Subject: Combining National Service and Welfare Reform

10 pages, including this cover

Attached is a draft proposal outlining how USDA is considering a pilot project in the Mississippi Delta to combine national service and welfare reform.

I'd really appreciate your feed-back on whether these ideas are good, crazy, or just need some work.

I will call to follow-up in a few days but you can reach me at 720-6350.

I've also sent a copy to HH and to Will Marshall for comments.

Hope all is well. (After all, baseball season is soon).



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

*Memo
From*

March 28, 1994

To: Will Marshall

From: Joel Berg

JB

Subject: Combining National Service and Welfare Reform

10 pages, including this cover

Attached is a draft proposal outlining how USDA is considering a pilot project in the Mississippi Delta to combine national service and welfare reform.

I'd really appreciate your feed-back on whether these ideas are good, crazy, or just need some work.

I will call to follow-up in a few days but you can reach me at 720-6350.

I've also sent a copy to Bruce Reed for ~~com~~ments.

Hope all is well.



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

Correspondence

March 24, 1994

Ms. Carol Lockey
Mel Blount Youth Home
RD#1, Box 91
Claysville, PA 15323

Dear Ms. Lockey:

Per our conversation today, and following up on the recent meeting between Secretary Espy and Mr. Blount, I have enclosed the following materials:

- 1) Draft applications for service-learning programs in which school districts receive money to promote student volunteer programs. You would apply for these funds through your state education department.
- 2) General draft information on AmeriCorps programs through which a socio-economic mix of young people over the age of 17 might be able to mentor the younger people in your programs. You would apply for these funds through your state commission on national and community service, which can be contacted through John Cosgrove at PENNSERVE, 717-787-1971.
- 3) Information on the environmental, anti-hunger, and rural development teams which are now being planned by USDA. Since I am coordinating these initiatives with the Department, you would work with my office to be considered for inclusion.

Please contact me at 202-720-6350 or 202-720-4623 to discuss how you might want to proceed to apply for any or all of the above three programs.

While I cannot guarantee that you will receive funds through any of those competitive processes, I will provide you appropriate technical assistance to submit quality applications. Secretary Espy has made it clear that he wants the Department to consider varied ways it can legally aid worthy, agriculturally related, service organizations such as Mr. Blount's.

Sincerely,

Joel Berg
National Service Coordinator



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

Memo

Correspondence

March 24, 1994

Ms. Carol Lockey
Mel Blount Youth Home
RD#1, Box 91
Claysville, PA 15323

Dear Ms. Lockey:

Per our conversation today, and following up on the recent meeting between Secretary Espy and Mr. Blount, I have enclosed the following materials:

- 1) Draft applications for service-learning programs in which school districts receive money to promote student volunteer programs. You would apply for these funds through your state education department.
- 2) General draft information on AmeriCorps programs through which a socio-economic mix of young people over the age of 17 might be able to mentor the younger people in your programs. You would apply for these funds through your state commission on national and community service, which can be contacted through John Cosgrove at PENNSERVE, 717-787-1971.
- 3) Information on the environmental, anti-hunger, and rural development teams which are now being planned by USDA. Since I am coordinating these initiatives with the Department, you would work with my office to be considered for inclusion.

Please contact me at 202-720-6350 or 202-720-4623 to discuss how you might want to proceed to apply for any or all of the above three programs.

While I cannot guarantee that you will receive funds through any of those competitive processes, I will provide you appropriate technical assistance to submit quality applications. Secretary Espy has made it clear that he wants the Department to consider varied ways it can legally aid worthy, agriculturally related, service organizations such as Mr. Blount's.

Sincerely,

Joel Berg
National Service Coordinator

Memo
Book

March 24, 1994

To: Fred Slabach
From: Joel Berg JB
Subject: **Senator Leahy's Request on National Service**

Doug O'Brien, who works for Senator Leahy on the Senate Agriculture Committee, called me today to request more information on our planned national service anti-hunger programs, particularly the project we are planning in Vermont. According to Doug, Senator Leahy plans to discuss the matter with Senator Bumpers in the near future to suggest potential appropriations language setting aside specific funding for the Vermont project.

In response to Doug's request, I sent him the attached three-page summary of our plans.

As you may be aware, the Secretary is speaking on April 4 to the Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger. While he will not be able to publicly announce the details of our Vermont program at that time, I will provide him up-to-date briefing materials on what we are planning there.

Joel,
remind me whether this money
is already available. Also, has
this proposal been approved by
the Secy? If not you should
run this by OBP, OGC, HAAS
and anyone else affected & then
submit a decision memo to the
Secy. You should also make clear
to Leahy's staff that this is
only a proposal which has not been
approved yet. J

THE AMERICORPS/USDA ANTI-HUNGER, NUTRITION, AND EMPOWERMENT TEAM

In small pilot projects in rural and urban areas across America, USDA will help coordinate AmeriCorps national service programs to fight hunger, improve nutrition, and empower poor citizens to lift themselves out of poverty.

Some pilot locations under consideration are:

Vermont
Mississippi Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi)
District of Columbia
Milwaukee
Los Angeles
Southern Illinois
New York City
Montana

In most instances, USDA would partner up with an existing youth service corps and an existing anti-hunger group at each pilot site. We have already had discussions with the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, the D.C. Service Corps, the Delta Service Corps, the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, and the Milwaukee Community Service Corps. USDA has also begun discussions with VISTA about potentially partnering up on such projects.

In most cases, each pilot location will have fifty participants, although the Vermont Youth Service Corps has expressed their preference for a smaller program of 20-30 participants. The 50-person sites will cost about \$1 million each.

Participants will earn small living stipends of about \$7,400 while performing the community service work. For each year of service successfully performed, participants will also earn an educational voucher of \$4,725, which they may use to pay for college, vocational school, job training, or graduate school. Because these programs will engage a socio-economic mix of participants, they will help some middle class families -- who currently don't qualify for most federal student financial aid -- to be able to afford to pay for post-secondary educations. Of course, low-income families will also benefit from this program.

Team members will would work in urban and rural areas to help low-income families and individuals move towards self-sufficiency. The main focus of the team would be fighting domestic hunger. Team members could help individuals apply for food stamps, Women, Infants, and Children, and the school breakfast program; overhaul their diets; learn to prevent foodborne illnesses; and obtain the expanded Earned Income Tax Credits, microenterprise loans, and help from community development banks. In short, this team would help put into effect the entire empowerment agenda promoted by President Clinton and Secretary Espy.

Participants would provide outreach and access services, build the anti-hunger and anti-poverty infrastructure, and run innovative new empowerment programs. Some possible job descriptions:

1) Provide outreach/access services (educating eligible people about program availability and helping make benefits accessible)

- * Outreach Workers - Inform target populations about program availability (all programs)

- * Drivers - Help eligible people apply for and receive program benefits (WIC, CACFP, TEFAP, NPE, CSFP)

- * Delivery Aides - Deliver program benefits to homebound elderly, physically disadvantaged, and homeless people (TEFAP, CSFP, FDPIR)

- * Bilingual Aides - Provide program information, help with applications, etc. to eligible, non-English-speaking people (all programs)

- * Service Facilitator - Conduct telephone follow-up with people who don't keep appointments, direct people to related health and welfare services (WIC, CSFP)

2) Bolster the infrastructure (providing the human capital necessary to deliver the programs according to congressional intent):

- * Food Handlers - Stock, warehouse, manage, distribute food products (TEFAP, charitable institutions, NPE, CSFP, school programs, FDPIR)

- * Day Care Workers - Provide child/adult care services to allow eligible people to apply for and receive program benefits (WIC, TEFAP, FDPIR)

- * Bilingual Case Assistants - Assist case managers with non-English-speaking clients (WIC)

- * Kitchen/Cafeteria Aides - Help with meal preparation and serving, maintaining, monitoring lunchrooms, and sanitation (school food, CACFP, and commodity programs)

- * Nutrition Assistants - Help with nutrition education, cooking demonstrations (WIC, school food programs)

- * CACFC Assistant - Improve supervision ratio of provider-to-participant in child care/meal preparation functions (CACFP)

3) Boost innovative new empowerment programs

- * EITC - Help families obtain the newly expanded Earned Income Tax Credit
- * Microenterprise - Teach people how to start small businesses
- * Community Development Banks - Inform families on how to apply for loans from community development banks
- * Assets Building - Work with families to develop savings plans
- * Tenant management - Help public housing tenants to develop organizations for self-management
- * Homelessness Programs - Help staff homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and food banks; find innovative ways to include homeless citizens in USDA nutrition programs
- * Apprenticeship - Work with local schools and businesses to develop new school-to-work transition programs
- * Improvements in USDA Feeding Programs - Indian reservations could be encouraged to grow foods that could be sold to USDA commodity programs and then provide the food to the reservations through various USDA feeding programs. This could save taxpayers money while allowing the reservations to produce healthier and more culturally sensitive food for their residents.

4) Engage in Community Outreach

Team members can go door-to-door in neighborhoods dispensing information on all the above-listed programs. The information distributed would be holistic, tying together our nutrition, anti-hunger, welfare reform, and food safety initiatives.

We can also experiment with innovative approaches such as "healthy baby festivals," where we attract crowds with music and food and then provide nutrition and anti-hunger services.

Team members can also partner with participants in the Retired Senior Volunteer Program to convince eligible seniors to apply for and use food stamps.

March 14, 1994

MEMORANDUM

From: Joel Berg
To: Kim Schnoor
Subject: **Summer of Service Application Deadline Today**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

with considerably longer lead time.



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

March 11, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS AND OFFICE HEADS

FROM: JOEL BERG, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS JB

SUBJECT: NATIONAL SERVICE BUDGET DEADLINE

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

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

To meet our deadline for submitting the Department's application to the Corporation for Community and National Service, I must have your responses by COB Monday, March 14, 1994.

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



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

Memo

March 10, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: **BOB NASH, UNDER SECRETARY FOR SMALL COMMUNITY AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

FROM: **JOEL BERG**

SUBJECT: **NATIONAL SERVICE UPDATE**

As we approach the April 15 deadline to submit the USDA proposal to the Corporation for National and Community Service, one of our top priorities is to finalize work with your staff to identify projects and funding for our application. I will soon submit a memo to your two agencies, following up on Ron Blackley's memo of January 10, 1994, asking them to match up the national service ideas you have suggested with possible appropriations.

In addition, the Corporation will shortly begin its application review process and I think that you could provide valuable assistance in this area. As you may know, there are essentially two types of national service applications: those that will be submitted by federal departments and those that will be submitted by non-profit and other organizations through their state national service commissions to the Corporation. Through the latter application, some of your constituent groups may apply directly to the Corporation for their own funds.

An essential part of the Corporation's process will be the review of each application by independent experts in the various subject areas, such as rural development and rural housing. The reviews will be done by two panels. One panel will be composed of experts who are **not** government employees. This panel will review the applications submitted by the federal departments. The second panel will be made up of experts from all sectors including the federal government. This panel will review applications from all non-federal sources. The panels will perform the initial evaluations of the applications and grade them according to criteria established by the Corporation. Based on these ratings, the Corporation will make its final selection of the projects to be funded. Because of your expertise, I feel it would be most helpful to the Corporation and to the Department if you could provide me with the names of three or four key independent experts who might be willing to serve on either panel reviewing projects related to nutrition and anti-hunger.



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

*Joel signed
original
after copies
made*

March 9, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: ELLEN HAAS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND CONSUMER SERVICES

FROM: JOEL BERG, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

SUBJECT: NATIONAL SERVICE UPDATE

As we approach the April 15 deadline to submit the USDA proposal to the Corporation for National and Community Service, one of our top priorities is to finalize work with your staff to identify projects and funding for our application. Today, I have submitted a memo to Bill Ludwig and Bill Wasserman, following up on Ron Blackley's memo of January 10, 1994, asking them to match up the national service ideas you have suggested with possible appropriations. This needs to be completed by COB March 10, 1994.

In addition, the Corporation will shortly begin its application review process and I think that you could provide valuable assistance in this area. As you may know, there are essentially two types of national service applications: those that will be submitted by federal departments and those that will be submitted by non-profit and other organizations through their state national service commissions to the Corporation. Through the latter application, some of your constituent groups may apply directly to the Corporation for their own funds.

An essential part of the Corporation's process will be the review of each application by independent experts in the various subject areas, such as nutrition and anti-hunger. The reviews will be done by two panels. One panel will be composed of experts who are **not** government employees. This panel will review the applications submitted by the federal departments. The second panel will be made up of experts from all sectors including the federal government. This panel will review applications from all non-federal sources. The panels will perform the initial evaluations of the applications and grade them according to criteria established by the Corporation. Based on these ratings, the Corporation will make its final selection of the projects to be funded. Because of your expertise, I feel it would be most helpful to the Corporation and to the Department if you could provide me with the names of three or four key independent experts who might be willing to serve on either panel reviewing projects related to nutrition and anti-hunger.

(2)

The Corporation expects to begin establishing the panels by the last week of April. Persons selected to serve on a panel would probably be asked to spend two or three days in Washington, D.C. The Corporation will pay their transportation and per diem costs. Panelists may also receive an honorarium for their service.

In making your recommendations, please note the person's affiliation, address, and phone number. Please forward your recommendations to me by Friday, March 11, so I can forward them to the Corporation to meet its deadline. I will forward their names to the Corporation and if they are selected the Corporation will contact them directly.



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

Paula Jones
Dee Dee DeHon
SCS

March 9, 1994

Memo
Pool

MEMORANDUM

TO: AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS AND OFFICE HEADS

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

SUBJECT: NATIONAL SERVICE BUDGET DEADLINE

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

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

To meet our deadline for submitting the Department's application to the Corporation for Community and National Service, I must have your responses by COB tomorrow, March 10, 1994.

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

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

Soil Conservation Service

Possible national service tasks:

Water quality assessments - Team members can conduct samplings and provide technical help with delivery systems. They can also work on sanitation and sewerage (wastewater treatment) system improvement.

Environmental education - Team members --- going door-to-door, working in schools and speaking at civic clubs --- could teach a wide variety of topics: safe handling of food, how to make your household more eco-friendly, testing for radon.

Energy Conservation- Team members could work in crews to provide the physical assistance in weatherizing homes and generally making them more energy efficient. Participants could work in public housing and low-income areas in both urban and rural communities. Team members would need basic training in carpentry, electrical or plumbing skills. We would recruit professional carpenters, electricians, and plumbers to help with basic training or to serve as team leaders.

Environmental audits - Team members could provide help similar to the that of the Extension Service's and the Soil Conservation Service's joint Farm-A-Syst program.

River and Streams Protection - We could possibly run river protection teams in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency. In a Hudson River Team, USDA participants could work with farmers in the river's watershed to reduce the run-off of agricultural pesticides.

Urban Conservation Projects - These would work very closely with Assistant Secretary Lyon's urban environmental initiative.

Urban Farming Projects - Team members could help low-income urban residents to grow their own food. We could possibly run such a program at public housing complexes in tandem with the Department of Housing and Urban Renewal. We could possibly run a city-wide program in Chicago in tandem with the Chicago high school of agriculture.

Wetlands Restoration - The Department of Interior and the Environmental Protection Agency have expressed interest in potentially running a joint program to help restore the Everglades.

Disaster Relief and Recovery - Existing youth corps have played a vital role in the recovery of the flooded Midwest. For most disasters, team members could provide physical labor so critical to short-term clean-up, as well as human services needed for long-term recovery. They could also assist in some of the long-term infrastructure repair such as levee re-building.

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

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

Small Business Plan Developer and Information Broker - Assists in the assessment and development of markets for unique local products.

Regional Circuit Rider - Works part time in a number of towns in a region. Provides technical assistance to communities throughout a region in brokering, strategic planning, and community assessment.

Watershed Assistance Process Facilitator - Works to coordinate local watershed protection programs in order to save wetlands, guard drinking-water quality, and prevent flooding. The team member would explain watershed assistance programs, identify key potential participants in local watershed steering committees, arrange local organizational meetings, and facilitate the identification of watershed needs, problems, and concerns.

Recreation Specialist - The team member would provide technical assistance for all activities relating to recreation and tourism, including coordinating efforts among all government agencies, furnish recreation planning and design, and collect and disseminate information on what alternatives will best fit local needs.

Soil Conservation Service Volunteer Coordinators - The team member would recruit and supervise adult and youth volunteers from local communities to work on Soil Conservation Service "Earth Team" volunteer projects.

Disaster Relief and Recovery - Existing youth corps have played a vital role in the recovery of the flooded Midwest. For most disasters, team members could provide physical labor so critical to short-team clean-up, as well as human services needed for long-term recovery. They could also assist in some of the long-term infrastructure repair such as levee re-building.

Sustainable Agriculture Advisor - Works with farmers in the region to help them develop model sustainable agriculture farms. Directs 4-H volunteers to perform some of the labor intensive work, such as fence-building, needed for successful sustainable farming.

Natural Resource Specialist - Under the direction of a Soil Conservation Service professional employee, the team member would work in low-income and socially disadvantaged areas to assist in the acceleration of watershed protection, work with field engineers in the design and layout of community projects, and work with the local Resource Conservation & Development(RC&D) Coordinator for economic development for disadvantaged groups.

Landscape Architect - The team member would work with soil conservation districts, RC&D councils, and area conservationists to coordinate and include landscape architectural planning for the purpose of maintaining, enhancing, or restoring ecological, social, and economic conditions.

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.

February

Divider Title: _____

News from Joel
February 28, 1994

To: DOI, EPA, DOE, DOT AmeriCorps Projects
From: Joel Berg, USDA
Subject: Possible Joint DOI, EPA, DOE, and DOT AmeriCorps Projects

1) Everglades Recovery Corps (South Florida), 100 residential participants, budget about \$1.2 million

Possible agencies involved: USDA's Soil Conservation Service, USDA's Extension Service, EPA's Office of Water, Dept. of Interior's Fish & Wildlife Service, South Florida Water Management District

Malaluca Eradication Project

Malaluca is an exotic, rapid growing plant that absorbs a lot of water and has been disrupting the Everglades ecosystem. Removal of the plant and replacement with native flora is critical to restoring the health of the Everglades. Under the guidance and direction of USDA, EPA and the Fish and Wildlife Service, an Americorps ecosystem management project would be established and in operation by Fall 1994. This project would involve at least a 10 person crew, with one supervisor/crew leader, doing the physical removal of the plant and replacement with other native species. During the course of the project, volunteers would learn about the wetlands ecosystem, botany, and hydrology. Although the acreage covered would not seem extensive in relation to the size of the Everglades area, the project's benefits to the health of the ecosystem would be enormous.

The Florida Conservation Corps has been conducting a malaluca removal project north of Lake Okechobee. Coordination and cross-training with FCC would be critical to the success of an Americorps project.

Water Quality Management in the Everglades Agricultural Area

Water pollution caused by pesticide and fertilizer run-off from the approximately 600,000 acres of farm land is a major problem in South Florida. Water quality management education and training for farmers would help them adopt practices to decrease water pollution and improve the quality of the groundwater, rivers, and streams.

USDA's Extension Service and Soil Conservation Service would work with the EPA's water quality experts to design an educational and technical water quality management/enhancement program for farmers in the Everglades Agricultural Area. The program would be operating by Fall 1994.

USDA's Extension Service already has an effective national program called "Farm *A* Syst" which helps farmers do a voluntary assessment of their groundwater and the impacts their farming activities and farmstead structures have on water quality. Once the assessment is completed, voluntary actions to protect drinking water at the site are recommended. Participating farmers are also given information on available financial, technical, and educational resources available.

The Farm *A* Syst program is currently working with Future Farmers of America (FFA) students in Kansas to enable the students to help educate farmers about water quality. This concept could be adopted for Americorps volunteers.

Americorps volunteers would work with local conservationists, Extension agents, and EPA hydrologists and water quality analysts to teach surveying, assessment, and remedial activities to farmers. The volunteers would ideally have some science or engineering background because of the technical nature of the project.

USDA's Extension Service would coordinate with the EPA to provide educational and training materials for both volunteers and the participating farmers in this project.

This project would likely require coordination and consultation with the South Florida Water Management District.

2) River Corps (Hudson River, Columbia River), 50 participants each, \$1 million each; wide variety of water quality, physical clean-up, wildlife protection, environmental education, and pollution prevention work in and around rivers

3) Well Testing in South Texas - EPA Projects? (Exact location?, number of total participants?, cost?)

4) Pacific Northwest Public Lands Corps (Olympia Peninsula, Central Oregon, Northern California) Each residential site would have 50 participants and cost \$1 million. Because all team members will be at least 18 years old, all of them will be able to use equipment and machinery that will allow them to perform the most valuable work needed on public lands. One type of obvious work that team members can perform is trail maintenance.

Team members can also engage in some of the following types of work, which are already performed by YCC participants: recreation management, fish and wildlife management, timber management, facility construction and maintenance, water and soil work, range and forage management, administration, protection, and research. More specifically, they can build barricades around restoration areas, replace old fire pits with new fire grates/stoves, maintain anti-bear food storage bins, build foot bridges, build campsites, make facilities wheelchair accessible, and construct leach fields for collecting graywater.

5) Rural Development Teams (The Mississippi Delta, The Texas/Mexico Border, Maine, Kansas, The Pacific Northwest, Oklahoma, New England, The Dakotas, Southern Illinois, Four Corners, Alaska, Appalachia, Oklahoma, California) Each pilot site would have about 40 participants and each participant would cost about \$30,000 per year.

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

The need to develop new leadership in rural America was a continuing theme of Secretary Espy's recent Rural Development Forum. Americorps/USDA Rural Development Team can help redress that need by playing a major role in developing that leadership.

We will make a concerted effort to recruit participants who want to return to areas similar to those in which they were raised. Thus, this program can help begin reversing the "brain drain" from rural America.

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

6) Sustainable Agriculture Teams - (Dakotas, Southern Illinois, Mississippi) Teams of 50 costing \$1 million each. Team members could work under the direction of Extension agents or other sustainable agriculture experts to help local farmers complete some of the labor intensive work - such as constructing fences -- that is needed to implement a sustainable agriculture plan.

7. Rural and Urban Environmental Corps (New York City, Atlanta, Seattle, Chicago, Mississippi Delta, New Jersey Shore, etc) Each project has fifty participants and costs \$1 million. Wide variety of task, including:

Environmental Education:

Team members --- going door-to-door, working in schools and speaking at civic clubs --- could teach a wide variety of topics: safe handling of food, how to make your household more eco-friendly, testing for radon.

Energy Conservation

Team members could work in crews to provide the physical assistance in weatherizing homes and generally making them more energy efficient. Participants could work in public housing and low-income areas in both urban and rural communities. Team members would need basic training in carpentry, electrical or plumbing skills. We would recruit professional carpenters, electricians, and plumbers to help with basic training or to serve as team leaders. Team members could also provide practical advice about basic ways to make homes more energy efficient. The participants could also develop educational material on energy conservation, such as "how to save dollars and help the planet" or a "guide to existing cost-saving programs provided by utility companies," etc.

Tree planting

As part of the Clinton Administration's initiative to combat global warming, the Public Lands and Environmental team could play a lead role in tremendously expanding the number of trees planted annually in America. Plantings could take place in urban and rural areas on both public and private lands.

Urban Conservation Projects

Team members can repair facilities in public parks, paint murals, fix playgrounds and other facilities at public schools, run recycling programs, and run urban farming programs in which low-income individuals grow their own food.

Urban Farming Projects

Team members could help low-income urban residents to grow their own food. We could possibly run such a program at public housing complexes in tandem with the Department of Housing and Urban Renewal. We could possibly run a city-wide program in Chicago in tandem with the Chicago high school of agriculture.

Other potential tasks include wetlands restoration and working with the Department of Transportation on right-of-ways and working with the Department of Commerce on Fisheries.

February 24, 1994

Kathryn
FYI

MEMORANDUM

TO: KIM SCHNOOR

FROM: JOEL BERG *JB*

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

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

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

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

February 16, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: KIM SCHNOOR

FROM: JOEL BERG

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

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

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

SOURCE OF FUNDS

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

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

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

IMPACT ON PROJECTS

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

AMOUNT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE

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

LEGALITY OF USING USDA FUNDS

OGC staff members have made the following observations:

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

SUMMARY

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

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

SCS NATIONAL SERVICE STATUS

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

SOURCE OF FUNDS

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

IMPACT ON PROJECTS

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

AMOUNT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE

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

LEGALITY OF USING THE FUNDS

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

Memo from

February 8, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sharon Longino
Associate Administrator, FmHA

FROM: Joel Berg JB

SUBJECT: Funding for National Service Initiatives

The preliminary concept for funding of national service initiatives involves three possible strategies:

1. A portion of agency funds in specific program areas could be earmarked to be expended using participants in approved national service programs. For example, a portion of the existing grants for housing repair or construction could be designated to be given to an approved national service program managed by USDA or in partnership with other organizations.
2. A portion of agency funds could be combined with funds from other agencies to form a pool of money used to support the Department's national service programs.
3. Funding is requested as a separate line item in the Department's appropriations request.

It is too late to request a line item appropriations for FY 95, so funds for FY 94 and FY 95 will have to come from one of the first two strategies or a combination of both.

In conjunction with the Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA) and the Office of General Counsel (OGC), my staff and I have been doing preliminary investigations into the legality of earmarking existing funds and/or reprogramming funds. As a first step, the Department's FY 94 budget was analyzed to determine program areas where funds might be earmarked or pooled. Obviously, before any final determination is made as to the disposition of funds, each agency must review their programs and assess the impact of earmarking or pooling funds.

In the case of FmHA, the attached table lists the programs that at first glance seem to be a potential source of funds. As a starting point in our effort to frame FmHA's participation in the national service effort, it would be helpful for you and your staff to review the attached list and evaluate if there are any obstacles to either earmarking a portion of the funds or pooling a portion of the funds into a national service "pot". I would also like you to consider other areas in your budget where funds might be available. Mr. Ron De Munbrun of my staff has been working most closely with OBPA and OGC and he is ready to meet with you and your staff to discuss these strategies. He may be reached at 720-3260, (202) 542-3339 (beeper).

POSSIBLE FUNDS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM
ALREADY IN USDA BUDGET

TITLE	DESCRIPTION FROM FY 94 EXPLANATORY NOTES	POTENTIAL FUNDS (IN MILLIONS)
FMHA Very Low-Income Repair Grants	Provides funds for grants to very low-income elderly owner-occupants to make necessary repairs to improve and modernize their dwellings in order to remove safety and health hazards.	25.000
FMHA Rural Housing for Domestic Farm Labor	Provides funds for USDA to share with state or other political subdivisions, public or private nonprofit organizations, or nonprofit organizations of farmworkers the cost of providing low-rent housing, basic household furnishings and related facilities to be used by domestic farm laborers.	8.000
FMHA Mutual and Self-Help Housing Grants	Provides funds for grants made to local organizations to promote the development of mutual or self-help housing programs under which groups of usually six to ten families build their own homes by mutually exchanging labor. Funds may be used to pay for construction supervisors who will work with the families.	12.750
FMHA Rural Housing Preservation Grants	Provides funds for grants to eligible private nonprofit groups, Indian tribes, and government agencies for the rehabilitation of single family housing owned by low-income and very low-income families and the rehabilitation of rental and cooperative housing for low and very low-income families.	23.000
FMHA Supervisory and Technical Assistance Grants	Provides funds for grants to public and private nonprofit organizations for packaging loan applications for housing assistance under the various housing programs of FMHA.	1.000

¹The Dollar amounts have been adjusted to reflect approximate budget request amounts for FY 95 but the explanatory notes have not been changed because they were unavailable.



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

February 1, 1994

To: Jim Lyons
Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment

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

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

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

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

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

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



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

Memo

February 1, 1994

To: Jim Lyons
Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment

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

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

Per our brief discussion today, I have made an appointment to meet with you next Thursday, February 12.

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

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

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

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.

January

Divider Title: _____



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

*Memorandum
from
Joel*

January 31, 1994

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

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

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

Thank you again for your valued input.



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

January 25, 1994

Mr. Terry Russell
Acting General Counsel
Corporation for National and Community Service
1100 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20043

Dear Terry:

I am writing to comment on your proposed regulations for Corporation Grant Programs and Investment Activities.

In general, the proposed regulations are excellent. In non-bureaucratic language, they detail a concrete and sensible framework for a program that will fundamentally transform American society. Everyone involved in their drafting should be commended for outstanding work.

However, I have three very strong concerns:

Not Enough Guarantee of Diversity -

While page 6 and 7 appropriately state very specific requirements for diversity, they also provide for exceptions. Our experience with the first Summer of Service program indicates that most programs, left to their own devices, will not meet our definition of diversity. I believe there should be no exception to non-diversity by race or gender.

The regulation reads: "Despite its best efforts, a program may simply be unable to recruit the participants necessary to achieve diversity in some respect." That may be so, but I do not believe they should receive federal money. The Corporation will no doubt receive countless applications for every grant it can award -- surely given the high volume of applications, we can ensure that each and every one of our slots is in a diverse program.

President Clinton went to extraordinary lengths to select by far the most diverse Administration in American history -- often selecting high-ranking female and minority appointees from a small pool of potential appointees with the appropriate qualifications. Given that the only real qualification to participate in AmeriCorps is a desire to serve, and that the potential pool of applicants is in the tens of millions, there is no reason we can not recruit 20,000 fully diverse participants in our first year.

The regulation also states: "Some programs may have legitimate substantive, or philosophical reasons to include individuals who share a particular characteristic. Examples of such programs include, but are not limited to the following: a youth corps or other program might be designed to impart specific job skills .. and thus lack educational or economic diversity by design." I would argue that this statement absolutely flouts the meaning of true national service. I cannot understand that, having won a key Congressional fight against needs-testing AmeriCorps, we would voluntarily allow such needs-testing. In my view, the above-mentioned lines ignore three key principles critical to the success of the President's program:

- 1) AmeriCorps is **not** a job training program.
- 2) AmeriCorps is not targeted to the poor or to any one group.
- 3) If AmeriCorps does not "look like America" and include a substantial representation of the forgotten middle class, it will be both a political and policy failure.

Targeted programs -- such as YACC or CETA -- will eventually lose their public support and thus their funding. Only universal programs -- such as Social Security -- continue to expand. AmeriCorps must be universal.

Some suggestions for ensuring diversity:

* Mandate that each site be diverse, and that program planners expand the definition of communities. An example: The community for a program in D.C. should include suburban Maryland and suburban Virginia. If not, D.C. programs could have 80% African-American participants, thereby representing the population of the city. Suburban programs could be 80% white, thereby representing the population of the suburbs. Both programs would claim they were diverse representations of their communities, but they would not be. Every since 1954, the Supreme Court has stated that "separate but equal" is **not** equal. AmeriCorps must be diverse at every site - not just in its aggregate.

* Require -- don't just encourage -- each AmeriCorps grantee to recruit a minimum percentage of their participants from a national pool developed by the Corporation. This step could single-handedly ensure diversity in each project.

Fighting Hunger Is Not A Priority -

Given the fact than one in ten Americans now needs food stamps, and that childhood hunger has skyrocketed over the last decade, USDA believes very strongly that fighting hunger should be a national priority for FY94 under human needs.

Nutrition programs should also be cited as examples for possible programs tied to health. Congressman Tony Hall fought successfully to place specific language in the Act authorizing anti-hunger programs, and major anti-hunger organizations strongly support this position.

Economic Development is Not A Priority -

Economic development should also be listed as a priority under human needs. The regulation should also emphasize ties to the Administration's Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community initiative. Who was it who said: It's the economy, stupid?"

One other suggestion for the regulations:

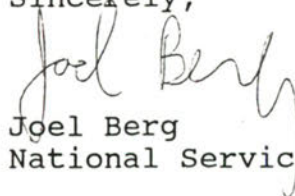
Suggestion for Federal Guidelines -

If federal agencies jointly submit proposed projects, those projects should be included in the complete application of each of the agencies involved. Each application should then clearly state what other agency applications have also included the same proposal.

Whatever you do, please do **not** change the proposed requirement that each federal agency submit only one application. This requirement significantly increases the leverage of myself and my counterparts in other agencies.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Joel Berg
National Service Coordinator

(File) memos to CNCS

January 23, 1994

To: Rick Allen, Susan Stroud
From: Joel Berg JB
Subject: Our Members Uninvited from Presidential Event in Los Angeles

Without my knowledge, our 77 AmeriCorps Members serving on the San Bernadino National Forest were invited, on late notice, to the President's MLK's birthday event in Los Angeles. All the Members --- and our staff --- cancelled their previous plans for their day off so they could attend the event. They were subsequently told that there was no room for them at the event. They were given the false impression that Congresswoman Waters did not want them at an event in her district.

To make their disappointment worse, they have also learned that not only did our 40 AmeriCorps Members fighting hunger in Los Angeles attend the event, but their sponsoring organization received 300 additional tickets. Given that many of our members working in San Bernadino are from Los Angeles, they did not understand why they were excluded.

I understand that the event was already getting unwieldy and that there were solid reasons for withdrawing their invitation, but these reasons have not yet been adequately communicated to the Members.

May I suggest that we send a letter of apology from either the President or Eli to each of the AmeriCorps Members and to our staff.

It would help us avoid miscommunications like this on the future if agency AmeriCorps coordinators could be contacted in advance if the President or Vice-President are going to visit areas in which we have AmeriCorps Members.

I would also offer to personally help advance any future Presidential or Vice-Presidential AmeriCorps events. I not only have advance experience from three different Presidential campaigns, I could help ensure that the advance teams have the proper sensitivity in interacting with AmeriCorps Members. USDA could probably pay for my travel.



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

January 21, 1994

DECISION MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

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

Background:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Phase 2, Starts July 1994

What: Team USDA Runs Summer of Service Programs

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

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

Number of Participants: 100 or 50

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

Phase 3, Starts September 1994

What: USDA Year-Round AmeriCorps Projects Begin

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

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

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

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

Decision #1: Personnel Support for April Projects in Maryland

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

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

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

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

Recommendation #1:

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

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

Agree _____

Date _____

Disagree _____

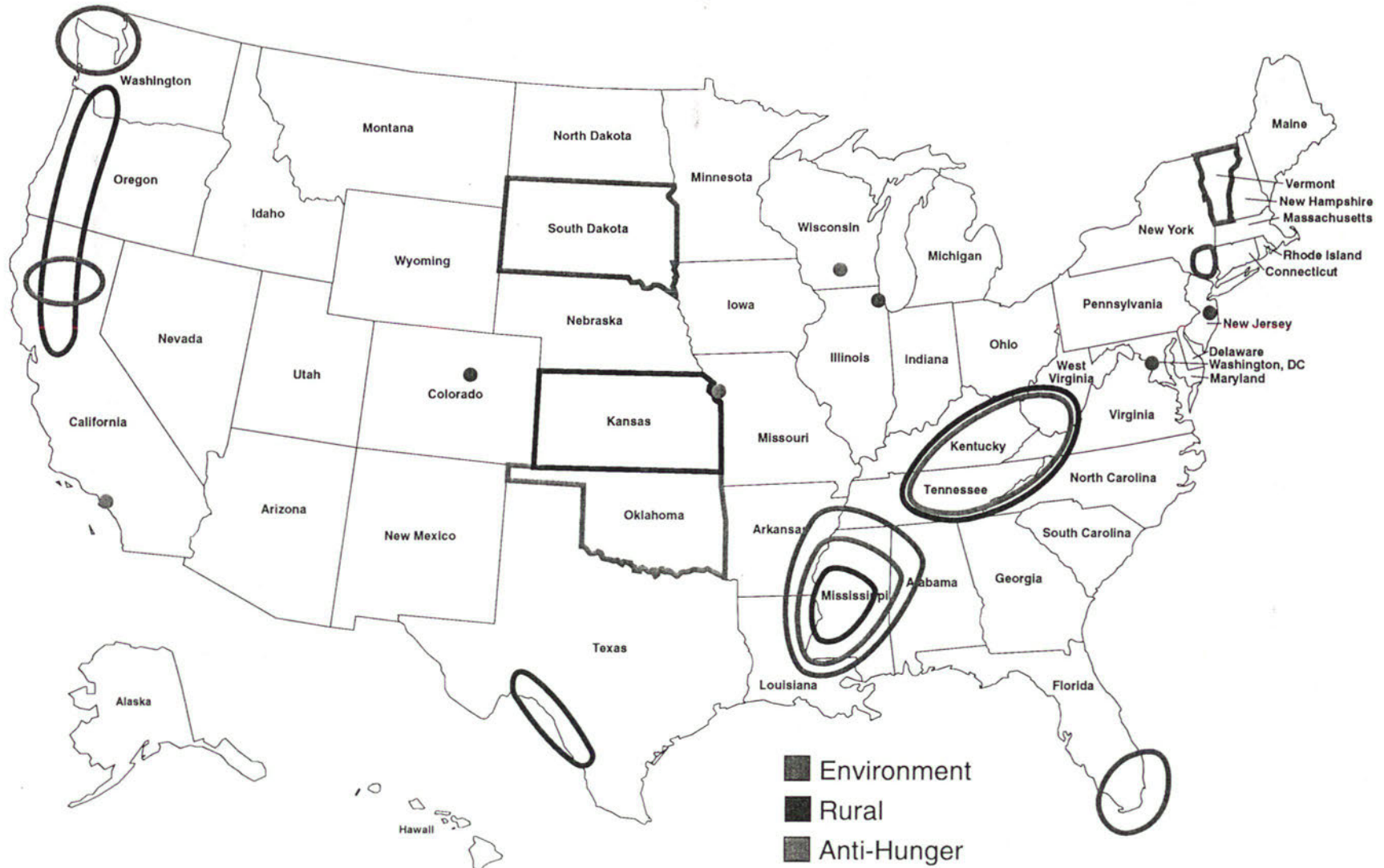
Discuss with me _____

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

States and Cities Represented:

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

Chicago
Denver
Kansas City
Los Angeles
Milwaukee
Washington, DC

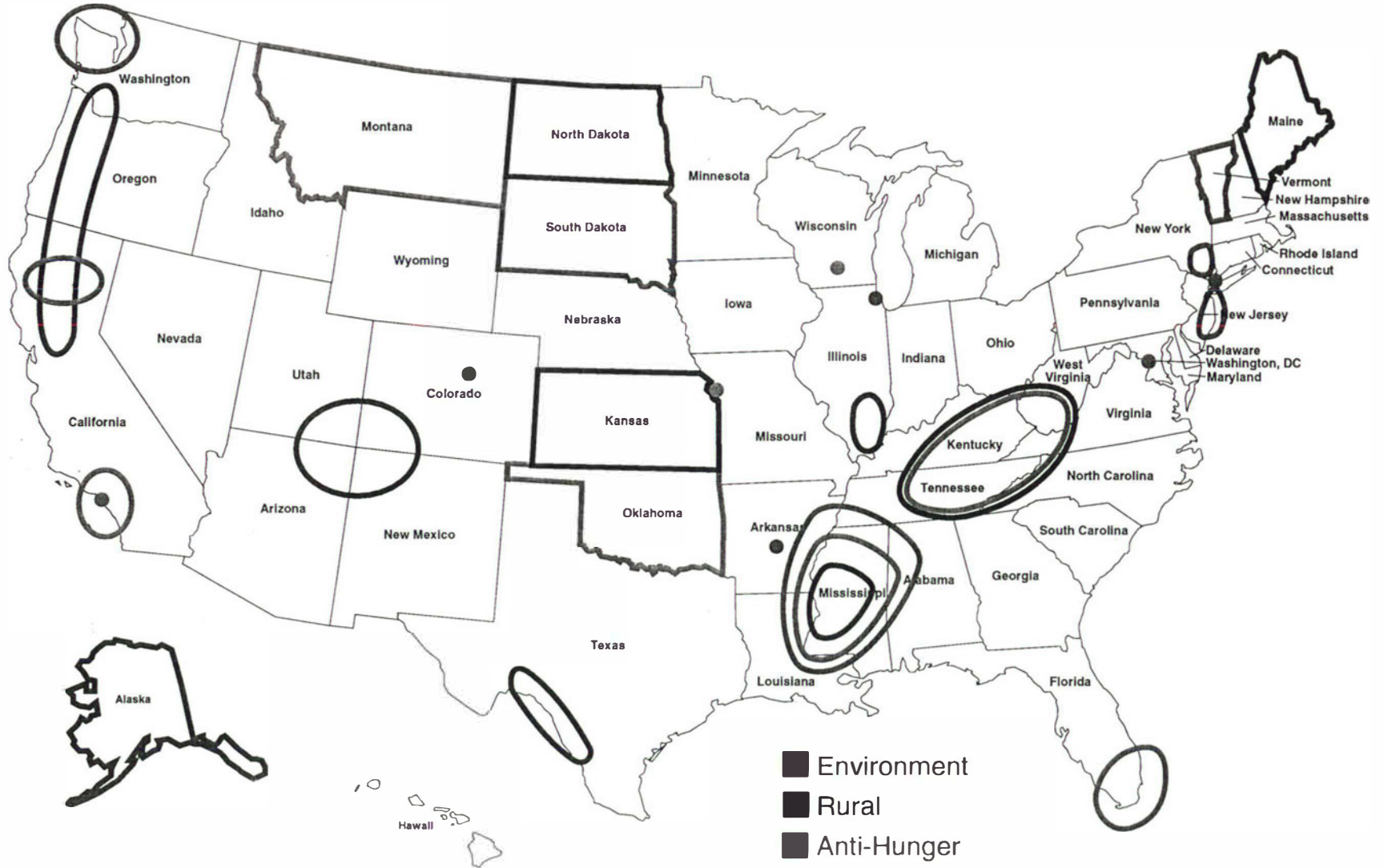


\$25 Million Option - Possible AmeriCorps/USDA Pilot Sites

States and Cities Represented:

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

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



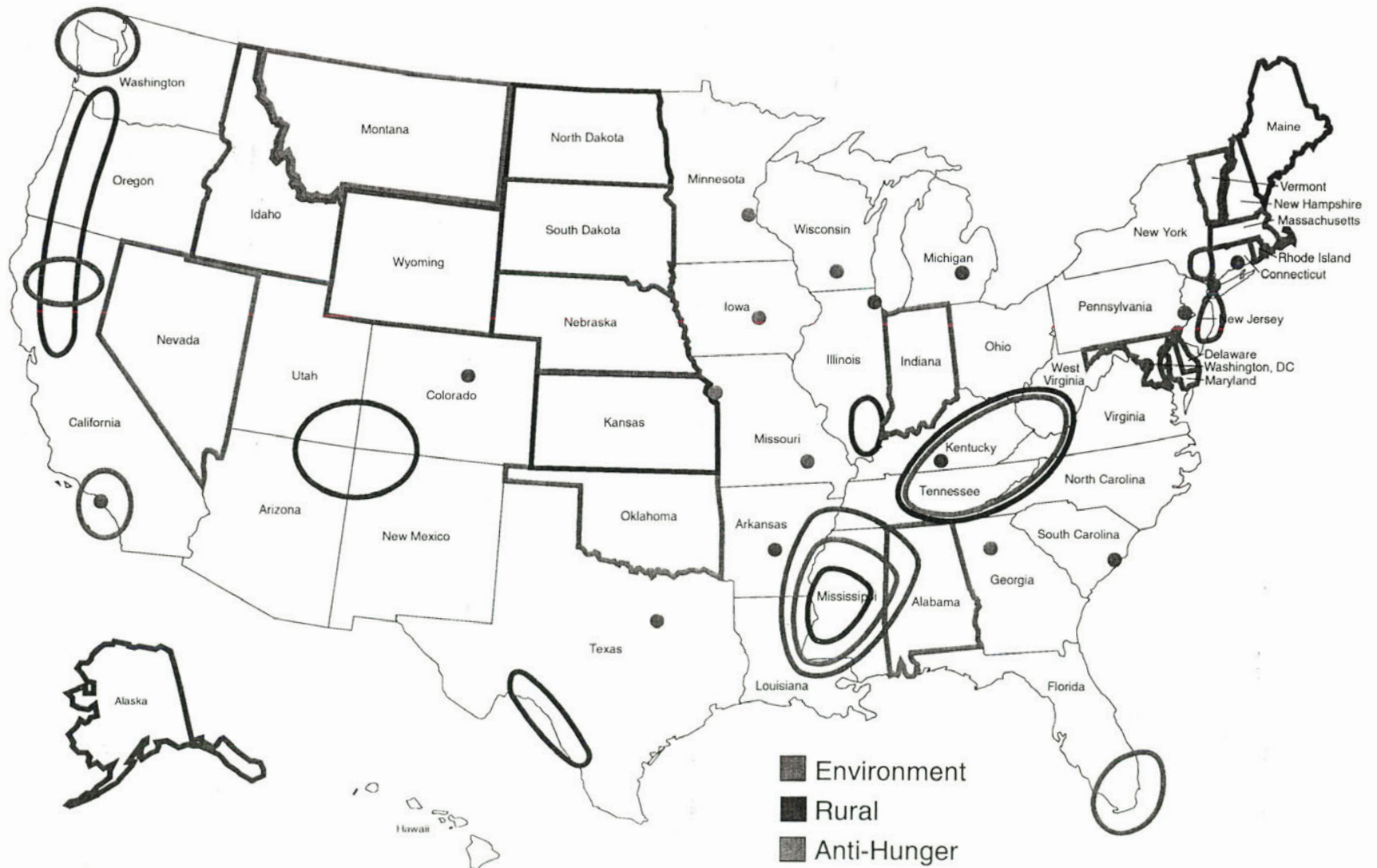
\$45 Million Option - Possible AmeriCorps/USDA Pilot Sites

States and Cities
Represented:

All States
Except Hawaii

Cities
Represented:

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



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

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

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

Recommendation #3:

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

Agree to \$25 million option _____

Date _____

Approve \$45 million option _____

Approve \$19 million option _____

Approve no USDA funds _____

Discuss with me _____

Decision #4: Creation of USDA Center for National Service

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommendation #4:

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

Date _____

Agree to new independent center with transferred employees _____

Approve new independent center with detailed employees _____

Approve new center within OC with transferred employees _____

Approve new center within OC with detailed employees _____

Disapprove of any new national service structure _____

Discuss with me _____

Decision #5: Method for Obtaining National Service Budget

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

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

Recommendation #5:

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

Agree to line item requests _____

Date _____

Approve of earmarking approach _____

Disapprove of any budget request _____

Discuss with me _____