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

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.

March 24, 1994

To: Fred Slabach
From: Joel Berg *JB*
Subject: **The Secretary's Participation in the National Holocaust Remembrance**

Ali asked me to respond to your note on the Holocaust Memorial Museum's request that the Secretary participate in "Days of Remembrance" activities.

Last year, I wrote the attached statement for the Secretary, which we released to the press, commemorating the opening of the museum. It is my understanding that the Secretary was very pleased with the statement. I would suggest some or all of the following activities for this year:

- Combine*
- 1) The Secretary issue another **press** statement commemorating the Holocaust.
 - 2) The Secretary make a major speech on relations between African-Americans and Jewish-Americans. Attached is a decision memo I recently sent to the Secretary on this matter.
 - 3) The Secretary issue a statement to USDA employees encouraging them to tour the museum. Additionally, he could re-visit the museum this year with a group of USDA employees.

I would be honored to coordinate any or all of these activities for the Department. Let me know how you would like to proceed.

cc: Ali Webb

TO: Joel,

*I recommend you draft a statement to all USDA employees commemorating the Holocaust and encouraging them to visit the museum. Send it to the Sec in a decision memo with a time sensitive date (Apr 3-10) and get it to him. *JB**

UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

FAX TRANSMITTAL COVER SHEET

DATE: MARCH 9, 1994

TIME: 12:15 pmNUMBERS OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER SHEET: 7RECEIVER'S FAX NUMBER: 720-5435TO: Ronald H. Blackley*change to Fred*

FROM: BENJAMIN MEED, CHAIRMAN, DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE

MESSAGES OR COMMENTS:

THANK YOU.

*Called
3/10
1:30pm
changed to
Fred
KH*

SENDER'S FAX NUMBER: (202) 488-2696

IF THIS TRANSMISSION IS NOT COMPLETE, PLEASE CALL
488-0485
(202) 653-9220.

SENDER'S NAME: JENNIFER ROGIN



A Project of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington, DC 20024-2190, Telephone (202) 488-0400, Fax (202) 488-2690

UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

March 9, 1994

Mr. Ronald H. Blackley
Chief of Staff
Administration Building Rm. 200A
14th Street & Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Blackley:

The United States Holocaust Memorial Council was mandated to lead the nation in annual commemorations of the victims of the Holocaust, known as Days of Remembrance. Millions of American citizens will participate in observances throughout the nation, this year from Sunday, April 3, through Sunday, April 10.

Enclosed is a copy of the letter we sent to the Secretary in hopes that Remembrance observances and activities will be encouraged in the Department. We would be most appreciative of your support.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 488-0459 with any questions regarding Days of Remembrance. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Benjamin Meed
Chairman
Days of Remembrance

Enclosure



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

March 31, 1994

DECISION MEMO FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director, Office of Public Affairs JB
Through: Ali Webb, Director, Office of Public Affairs CW
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

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 its 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

NEWS

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Public Affairs

News Division
Room 404-A
Washington, D.C. 20250

Release No. 0308.93

Joel Berg (202) 720-4623

Statement

by

Mike Espy

Secretary of Agriculture

On the Opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Washington, D.C.
April 22, 1993

It is my somber honor to note the opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. It is highly fitting that this museum is located in the very core of our nation's capital, because it is critical that all Americans understand the history and lessons of the Holocaust.

On behalf of the men and women of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, I welcome this museum to our neighborhood around this nation's Mall. I have already toured the museum and will encourage all our employees to visit it.

We all wish we didn't have to extend this welcome. We wish we didn't have to spend our time today focusing on horrible deeds of the past. Yet we must accurately understand all sides of the human condition. It is important for our children to visit the nearby National Gallery of Art--to stand only a few feet away from actual canvasses by Rembrandt Van Rijn or Mary Cassatt--to understand the glorious beauty that can be created by fellow human beings. But it is just as important for these children to visit the new Holocaust museum--to be taught that the choice between the beauty and the ugliness is in their very own hands.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." To me, those words represent the most important lesson of the Holocaust--the lesson that it is our supreme moral duty to stand up against injustice wherever and whenever we find it.

This lesson has been taught well by Elie Wiesel, the great Nobel-prize winning author and Holocaust survivor who has dedicated his life to opposing human rights abuses around the world, from the former Soviet Union to South Africa.

This lesson was taught equally well by Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Cheney, two white Jewish men and one black Christian man, who gave their lives fighting against racial inequality in my home state of Mississippi. And so this lesson must be learned--and learned well--by all of us.

We must all find the moral courage to stand up for the sanctity of human rights around the globe. We must act with the understanding that the fate of the world is in our very own hands. We must never allow ourselves to be silent again.

UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

February 23, 1994

The Honorable Mike Espy
Secretary of Agriculture
Department of Agriculture
14th and Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The United States Holocaust Memorial Council was mandated to lead the nation in annual commemorations of the victims of the Holocaust, known as Days of Remembrance [Public Law 96-388, 10/7/80, enclosed]. Millions of American citizens, both at home and abroad will participate in Remembrance observances from Sunday, April 3, through Sunday, April 10, 1994. The theme for this year's commemoration is *Fifty Year Ago: Darkness Before Dawn*. We recall the events of 1944, a year in which Nazi Germany decimated the Jewish populations of Hungary, northern Italy, France, the Greek Islands, and the Netherlands. Thousands of European Gypsies were killed in this year alone. East European forced laborers, ill with tuberculosis, were murdered in the so-called euthanasia centers.

The annual Days of Remembrance provide Americans with an opportunity to reflect anew upon our history and to contemplate our moral responsibilities to humankind, values our ancestors held dear. As President Clinton declared on April 22, 1993, during the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Opening Ceremony, "...it is to the ceaseless struggle to preserve human rights and dignity that we rededicate ourselves. And because we have engaged ourselves in the work of remembrance, we will never relent, and we will prevail".

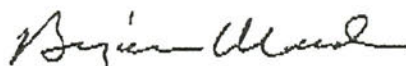
Your personal leadership in this national commitment to remember and commemorate is essential now. Your words and deeds set an example for the Department. Thus, we respectfully encourage you to issue a special Days of Remembrance message and distribute it to your employees nationwide as well as encouraging observance programs throughout your Department.

As you know, the Museum, which opened to the public last April, has had an extremely successful year greeting well over one million visitors.

page 2

We aspire to spread our message of learning and remembrance to all Americans through the Museum and the Days of Remembrance. We deeply appreciate your active leadership in this noble challenge.

Sincerely,



Benjamin Meed
Chairman
Days of Remembrance

Enclosures

February 16, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: KIM SCHNOOR

FROM: JOEL BERG

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

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

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

SOURCE OF FUNDS

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

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

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

IMPACT ON PROJECTS

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

AMOUNT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE

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

LEGALITY OF USING USDA FUNDS

OGC staff members have made the following observations:

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

SUMMARY

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

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

SCS NATIONAL SERVICE STATUS

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

SOURCE OF FUNDS

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

IMPACT ON PROJECTS

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

AMOUNT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE

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

LEGALITY OF USING THE FUNDS

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



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250-1300

December 17, 1993

INFORMATIONAL MEMO FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director of Public Affairs *JB*
Through: Ali Webb, Director of Public Affairs
Subject: **National Service Goals for 1994**

Eli Segal and the White House continue to recognize USDA as the leading federal agency in promoting national service (now known as AmeriCorps), which is one of President Clinton's top personal priorities. Eli was particularly pleased with your article on national service that appeared in *Tikkun* magazine. *Education Week* also reported some of the national service activities we are now planning. (Copies of both articles are attached.)

As you announced in your Senate testimony, we are now planning a Rural Development Team, an Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, and a Public Lands and Environment Team. All three teams will concretely demonstrate your commitment to reinventing government, boosting the forgotten middle class, and empowering the poor.

In response to a recent decision memo on national service, you indicated that you would like to discuss the matter with me. In advance of that discussion, this memo will provide you with more detailed background on exactly what our pilot programs might do, where they might be located, what benefits they could provide, how much they may cost, and how they might interact with other USDA human resources programs.

Who Would Participate in AmeriCorps/Teams USDA:

Starting in the Fall of 1994, up to 2,500 diverse participants could serve in 45 AmeriCorps/Team USDA pilot projects in every region of the country. The Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team and the Public Lands and Environment Team will allow participants to join the programs before, during, or after post-secondary education or job training; the Rural Development Team will be composed mostly of college or professional schools graduates. Participants in the Empowerment Team and the Environmental Team will earn small living stipends of around \$8,000 per year, while the older and better educated participants in the Rural Development Team will earn around \$15,000 per year. In addition, participants in all three teams will earn an educational voucher of \$4,725, which they may use to pay for college, vocational school, job training, or graduate school. All participants will also be entitled to health insurance, as well as child care if they have children. Participants in all three programs teams will be from diverse racial, social, and economic backgrounds.

How the Rural Development Team Would Work:

The Rural Development Team would establish regional clusters of "professional" and "paraprofessional" participants who would be placed in individual communities to help the communities identify 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 your recent Rural Development Forum. The USDA Rural Development Team can help redress that need. 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.

Some possible job descriptions:

- 1) Assistant State Rural Development Coordinator - Assists USDA State Rural Development Coordinators in helping boost Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Collects data, provides outreach, coordinates community resources, helps develop strategic plans, helps implement the program, analyzes local data for agencies and organizations so that the needs of the under-served are considered.
- 2) 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.
- 3) 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.
- 4) 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.
- 5) Recreation Specialist - The team member would provide technical assistance for all activities relating to recreation and tourism, including coordinating efforts among all government agencies, furnishing recreation planning and design, and collecting and disseminating information on what alternatives will best fit local needs.
- 6) Regional 4-H Youth Development Coordinator - The team member would work with county Extension agents and 4-H coordinators to manage local students involved in youth service.

How the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team Would Work:

Participants would work in brigades of ten 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 you and President Clinton.

Some possible tasks:

- 1) Providing Outreach/access services - The team member would educate eligible people about program availability and helping make benefits accessible. Outreach workers would inform target populations about program availability. Drivers would take people to social welfare offices to help eligible people apply for and receive program benefits. Delivery aides would help deliver program benefits to homebound elderly, physically disadvantaged, and homeless people. Bilingual aides would provide program information, help with applications, and perform other tasks to help to non-English-speaking citizens. Service facilitators would follow-up with people who don't keep appointments and direct people to related services.
- 2) Bolstering the infrastructure - The team member would provide the human capital necessary to deliver the programs. Food handlers would stock, warehouse, manage, and distribute food products. Day care workers would provide child/adult care services to allow eligible people to apply for and receive program benefits. Bilingual case assistants would help case manager with non-English-speaking clients. Nutrition assistants would help with nutrition education and cooking demonstrations. WIC office staff would be assigned to support duties at WIC clinics in order to boost state participation in the WIC program. Team members can also help staff homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and food banks.
- 3) Boosting innovative new empowerment programs - The team members would go door-to-door in neighborhoods dispensing information on a wide array of empowerment initiatives for which that neighborhood's residents might be eligible. 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 education and anti-hunger services. Team members could help families obtain the newly expanded Earned Income Tax Credit, aid individuals in securing microenterprise loans to start small businesses, assist poor urban communities in developing urban gardens in which they can grow their own food, inform families on how to apply for loans from community development banks, work with families to develop savings plans as part of assets development programs. Indian reservations could be encouraged to grow foods that could be sold to USDA commodity programs and then provided to the reservation through various USDA feeding programs.

How the Public Lands and Environment Team Would Work:

Participants would work in brigades of ten in both urban and rural components. Participants could renovate urban and rural parks, plant trees, perform conservation work in national forests, teach environmental education, promote urban farming, test water quality, boost sustainable agriculture, clean-up rivers and lakes, help families weatherize their homes, instruct the public on how to dispose of household chemicals, and restore wetlands. Many of the participants in our rural programs will be housed on national forests and will perform work mostly on the forests, thereby meeting the congressional mandate that USDA manage a Public Lands Corps.

Some possible tasks:

1. Conservation work on national forests and parks - Team members can also engage in some of the following types of work, which are already performed by participants in the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) that is now run by the Forest Service: trail maintenance, recreation management, fish and wildlife management, timber management, facility construction and maintenance, water and soil work, range and forage management, administration, and research.
2. 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.
3. Tree planting - As part of the Clinton Administration's initiative to combat global warming, the team members could play a lead role in tremendously expanding the number of trees planted annually in urban and rural areas throughout America.
4. 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.
5. Wetlands Restoration - The Interior Department and EPA have expressed interest in jointly running programs to restore large wetlands ecosystems, such as the Everglades.
6. Urban Farming Projects - Team members could help low-income urban residents to grow their own food. We could possibly run such a program at public housing complexes in tandem with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. We could possibly run a citywide program in Chicago in tandem with the Chicago high school of agriculture.
7. 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 building fences, needed to implement a sustainable agriculture plan.

Where USDA Pilot Programs May be Located:

We will make every effort to locate our pilot projects in Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Pilot programs could also be specifically targeted at rural communities facing short-term job dislocations because of NAFTA, the Northwest Forest Plan, or military base closings or defense plant shut-downs.

Some of the following regions or states that we are considering for Rural Development Teams: the Mississippi Delta, the Texas/Mexico Border, Maine, Kansas, the Pacific Northwest, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Southern Illinois, Tennessee, Four Corners (Arizona, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico), Alaska, Appalachia, and Northern California.

Some of the sites we are considering for the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team include: Washington, D.C, Vermont, Appalachia, Los Angeles, the Mississippi Delta, New York City, Chicago, Jackson, Mississippi, and Boston.

Some of the sites we are considering for Public Lands and Environment Teams include: The Pacific Northwest, Southern Florida, Kansas, Los Angeles, the Hudson River Valley, The Mississippi Delta, West Virginia, Maine, the New Jersey Coast, and Washington State.

We are also now studying how and where USDA may participate in this year's "Summer of Service" program, which is used by the White House to obtain extra attention to national service during the summer months. This year's theme is public safety and we are exploring how to engage gang members or young people in the juvenile justice system in urban gardening or work in national forests.

What AmeriCorps/Team USDA Could Accomplish For You and the President:

Americorps/Team USDA programs will provide a quick, dramatic, and visible vehicle with which you and President Clinton can demonstrate your success in reinventing government. Furthermore, we have the ability to place pilot projects almost immediately in critical states and regions. Not only will these projects perform work that is critical to the communities in which they are placed, but they will also provide thousands of families with significant monetary awards -- thousands of young people will receive a full year of employment in addition to an almost \$5,000 scholarship. These programs will likely be highly popular and obtain frequent and favorable national and local media attention.

Our programs will:

- * Reunite the interests of the middle class and the poor by allowing young people from all types of families to earn their way through post-secondary education.
- * Prove that groups of socio-economically diverse young people can work together.

* Provide valuable service to the community by systematically filling unmet social needs.

Also, many key USDA constituency groups, particularly anti-hunger, environmental, and rural development groups, are very excited about working with our department on AmeriCorps.

What Institutional Support Is Needed to Run AmeriCorps/USDA:

Secretary Babbitt obtained funds in his FY94 budget to create an Office of National Service at Interior. I strongly believe that, if we are to run our own AmeriCorps programs as a Team USDA project that cuts across traditional USDA agency lines, we need to create our own center for of national service. I would recommend the new center function until October 1, 1994 with employees detailed from various USDA agencies. I would further recommend that the FY 95 budget includes line item funding for the new center. To begin with the center would need seven employees: a Director, a Communications Coordinator, an Administrative Coordinator, a Pilot Project Coordinator, a Recruitment and Training Coordinator, a Private Fundraising Coordinator, and an Office Manager/Support Staff.

All Under and Assistant Secretaries and Agency Administrators in relevant areas would have to give their full support and cooperation. The Office of Budget and Program Analysis, the Office of General Counsel, and the Office of Personnel will all have to play critical roles in helping the national service center cut through the bureaucracy and red tape to make the AmeriCorps/Team USDA programs a success.

What Funding Is Needed To Support These Programs:

If most participants in the Environmental Team are residential, then our estimated cost is about \$20,000 per server. Thus a pilot program with 1,000 servers would cost \$20 million. This would allow us ten rural sites of 50 each, and five urban sites of 100 each.

If we roughly estimate that each server in the non-residential Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team will cost \$15,000 per year, then 1,000 participants would cost \$15 million. That would fund twenty sites, half-urban and half-rural, with 50 participants at each site.

If we roughly estimate that each server in the Rural Development Team will cost approximately \$30,000 per year, accounting for their higher pay, then 400 servers would cost \$10 million. That would fund ten state programs with 40 participants each.

The total for all three proposals is \$45 million. We could potentially meet this target with a combination of Corporation for National Service Funds, Golden Eagle Passport funds, USDA program funds, and private and non-profit funds.

Potential sources of funds:

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 sets-aside \$18 million for the management of AmeriCorps programs run by federal agencies. There is an additional pot of money to pay for the educational benefits of the participants in federal programs. I estimate, roughly, that USDA will receive between \$2 million - \$5 million.

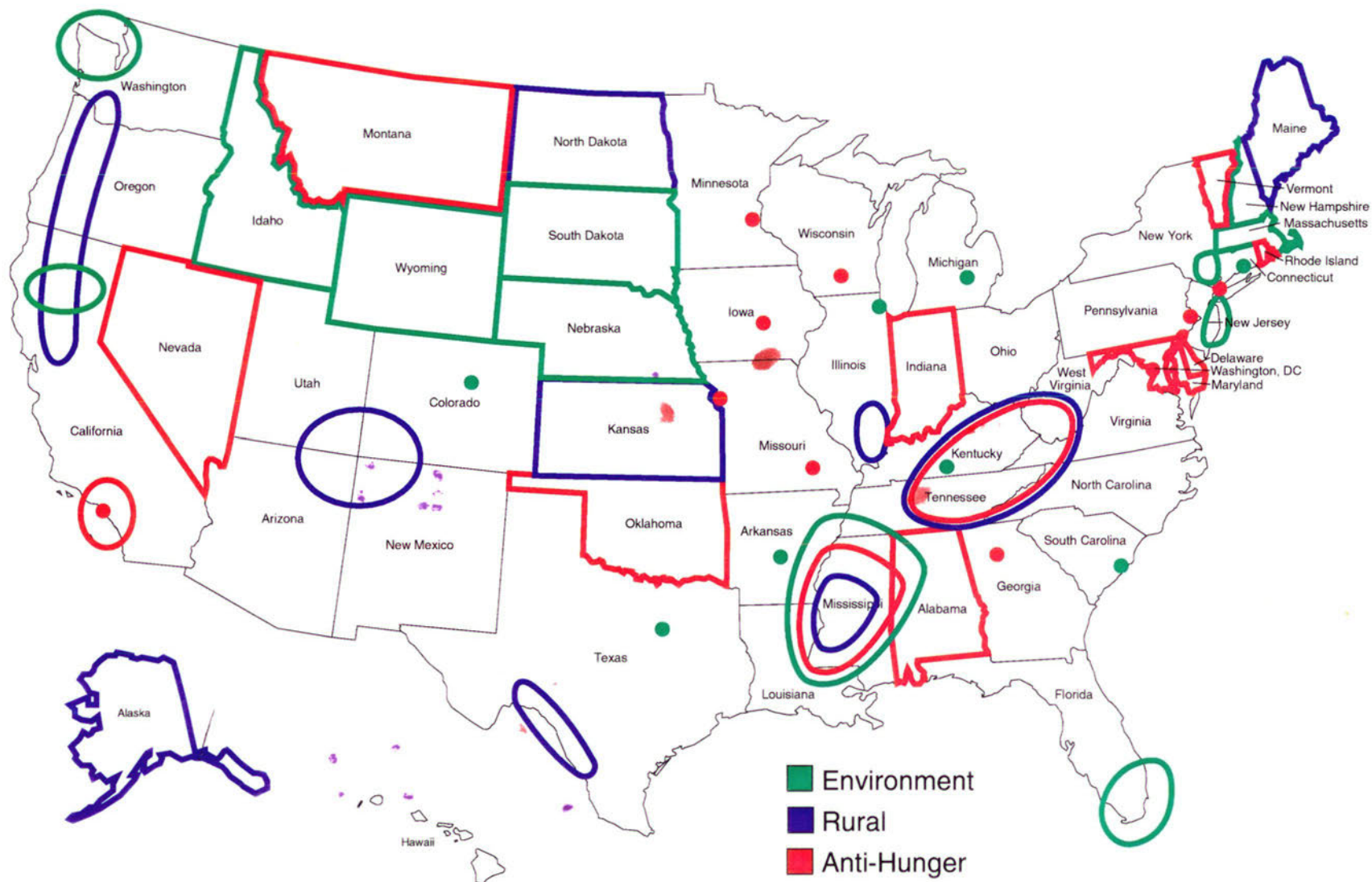
We already have a significant source of additional funding for a Public Lands Corps this year. The FY 94 budget passed by Congress authorizes the Forest Service to begin collecting fees at certain sites and to also jointly sell Golden Eagle Passports in conjunction with the Department of Interior. The proceeds of all non-federal sales of the passports --- also recently authorized by Congress -- will go to conservation corps activities run by Interior and Agriculture, to be divided up in proportion to the total amount of revenue each Department generates from entrance fees. The National Recreation Association estimates that this fund could generate an estimated \$50 million for youth service in FY 94, of which a minimum of about \$2.5 million would go to USDA. We could possibly negotiate with Interior to receive a much larger percentage of their \$50 million in passport fees.

The White House also intends us to fund our programs through specific line item requests in the USDA FY 95 budget. **Eli Segal recently wrote to you to request that you earmark funds in the USDA budget for national service.** I requested that the White House provide us with a contact at OMB with whom we can work on placing such line item proposals in the final budget the President presents. Many USDA agencies already fund projects similar to those that will be conducted by our AmeriCorps Teams; in many cases, our AmeriCorps teams will be able to perform the same projects much more cost effectively. We could possibly fund our environmental programs through the Forest Service and SCS. We could fund our sustainable agriculture projects through ARS and ACRS. We could possibly fund our anti-hunger programs through FNS and our nutrition programs through HNIS and the Extension Service. We could possibly fund our rural development programs through RDA, REA, FmHA, and the Forest Service.

We will also attempt to raise money through private corporations, non-profit organizations, and charitable organizations. The National Forest Foundation could also help us raise private money, although most of members of the board are still Republicans appointed by Secretary Madigan.

I would also like to raise money from USDA employees. I have requested the White House to ask the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to allow agencies to raise money from their employees, outside of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), to help fund their own AmeriCorps programs. I would like to help create a "National Federal Employee Serve-A-Thon" in which federal employees perform a day of community service on a designated Saturday in order to raise money for agency AmeriCorps projects. At USDA alone, if every employee raised just \$10 from family and friends, we could collect over \$10 million for our AmeriCorps programs.

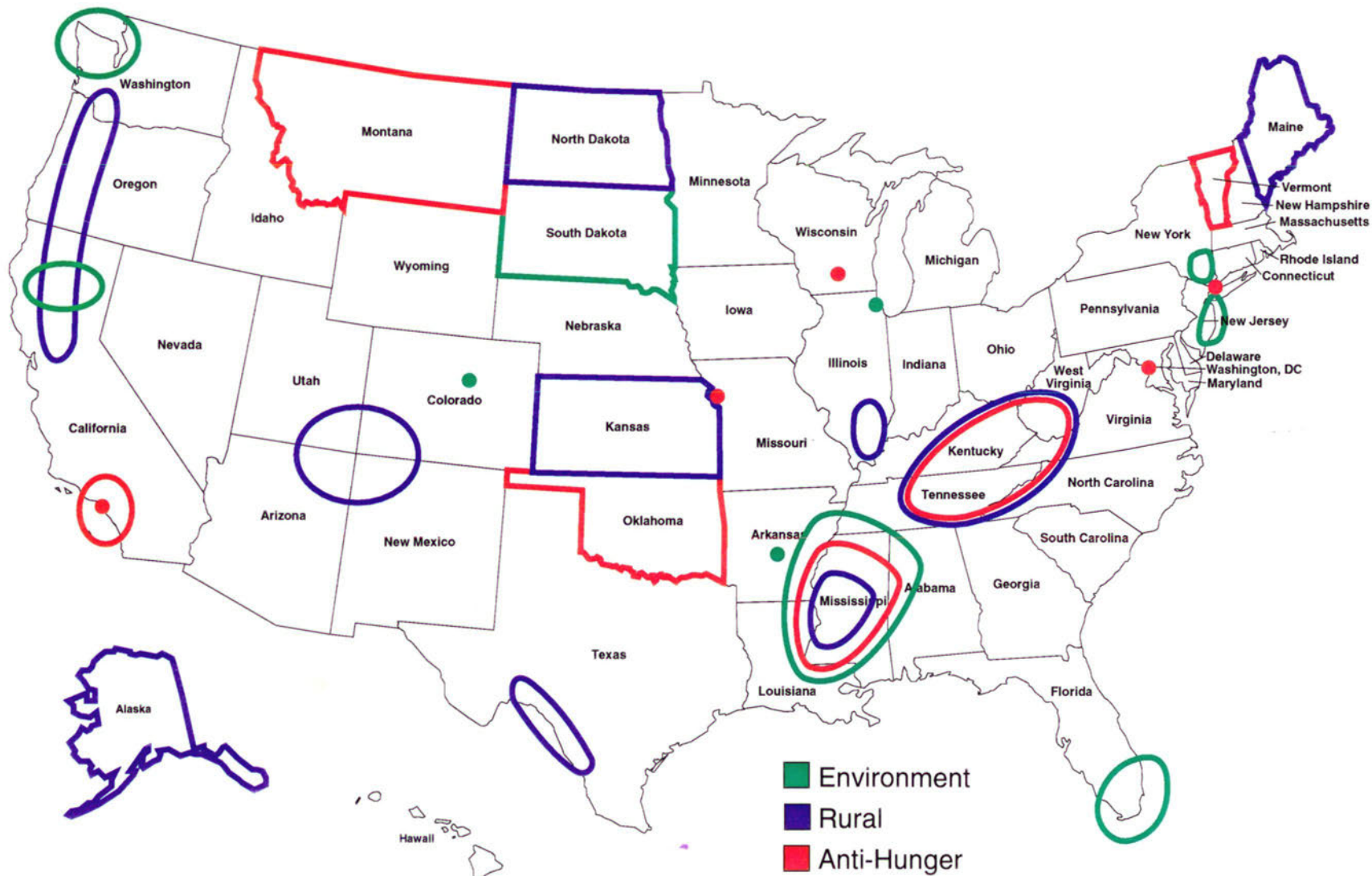
Atlanta
Charleston
Chicago
Dallas
Denver
Des Moines
Detroit
Hartford
Kansas City
Little Rock
Los Angeles
Louisville
Milwaukee
Minneapolis
New York City
Philadelphia
St. Louis
Washington, DC



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





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

February 14, 1994

BACKGROUND MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

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

Subject: **Background on Your Meeting with Eli Segal**

Eli Segal, the Assistant to the President for National Service and Chief Executive Officer of the new Corporation for National and Community Service, will be meeting with you on Wednesday to obtain an update on USDA's national service activities. Eli is in the process of meeting privately with each Cabinet Secretary in order to help federal agencies meet the April 15 deadline for applications to the Corporation.

Eli and the Corporation continue to recognize USDA as one of the leading federal agencies in promoting the President's national service initiative, now known as AmeriCorps. He was particularly pleased with your article on national service that appeared in *Tikkun* magazine (attached).

We have spent the last number of months working with many of our constituency groups -- including environmental groups, 1890s institutions, anti-hunger groups, and rural development groups -- to help them prepare to apply for funding directly from the Corporation. However, the legislation that created AmeriCorps also empowers federal agencies such as ours to run programs directly. In order to meet that mandate, you announced in your Senate testimony last June 8 that USDA is planning three programs of our own: a Rural Development Team, an Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, and a Public Lands and Environment Team. All three teams will concretely demonstrate your commitment to reinventing government, boosting the forgotten middle class, and empowering the poor.

Who Would Participate in AmeriCorps/Teams USDA:

Starting in the Fall of 1994, up to 2,500 diverse participants could serve in 45 AmeriCorps/Team USDA pilot projects in every region of the country. The Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team and the Public Lands and Environment Team will allow participants to join the programs before, during, or after post-secondary education or job training; the Rural Development Team will be composed mostly of college or professional school graduates. Participants in the Empowerment Team and the Environmental Team will earn small living stipends of around \$8,000 per year, while the older and better educated participants in the Rural Development Team will earn around \$15,000 per year.

In addition, participants in all three teams will earn an educational voucher of \$4,725, which they may use to pay for college, vocational school, job training, or graduate school. Participants in all three teams will be from diverse racial, social, and economic backgrounds.

How the Rural Development Team Would Work:

The Rural Development Team would establish regional clusters of "professional" and "paraprofessional" participants who would be placed in individual communities to help the communities identify 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 your recent Rural Development Forum. The USDA Rural Development Team can help redress that need. 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.

Some possible job descriptions:

- 1) Assistant State Rural Development Coordinator - Assists USDA State Rural Development Coordinators in helping boost Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Collects data, provides outreach, coordinates community resources, helps develop strategic plans, helps implement the program, analyzes local data for agencies and organizations so that the needs of the underserved are considered.
- 2) 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.
- 3) 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.
- 4) 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.

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

6) Regional 4-H Youth Development Coordinator - The team member would work with county Extension agents and 4-H coordinators to manage local students involved in youth service.

How the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team Would Work:

Participants would work in brigades of ten 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 you and President Clinton.

Some possible tasks:

1) Providing Outreach/access services - The team member would educate eligible people about program availability and helping make benefits accessible. Outreach workers would inform target populations about program availability. Drivers would take people to social welfare offices to help eligible people apply for and receive program benefits. Delivery aides would help deliver program benefits to homebound elderly, physically disadvantaged, and homeless people. Bilingual aides would provide program information, help with applications, and perform other tasks to help non-English-speaking citizens. Service facilitators would follow-up with people who don't keep appointments and direct people to related services.

2) Bolstering the infrastructure - The team member would provide the human capital necessary to deliver the programs. Food handlers would stock, warehouse, manage, and distribute food products. Day care workers would provide child/adult care services to allow eligible people to apply for and receive program benefits. Bilingual case assistants would help case managers with non-English-speaking clients. Nutrition assistants would help with nutrition education and cooking demonstrations. WIC office staff would be assigned to support duties at WIC clinics in order to boost state participation in the WIC program. Team members can also help staff homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and food banks.

3) Boosting innovative new empowerment programs - The team members would go door-to-door in neighborhoods dispensing information on a wide array of empowerment initiatives for which that neighborhood's residents might be eligible. 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 education and anti-hunger services.

Team members could help families obtain the newly expanded Earned Income Tax Credit, aid individuals in securing microenterprise loans to start small businesses, assist poor urban communities in developing urban gardens in which they can grow their own food, inform families on how to apply for loans from community development banks, work with families to develop savings plans as part of assets development programs. Indian reservations could be encouraged to grow foods that could be sold to USDA commodity programs and then provided to the reservation through various USDA feeding programs.

How the Public Lands and Environment Team Would Work:

Participants would work in brigades of ten in both urban and rural components. Participants could renovate urban and rural parks, plant trees, perform conservation work in national forests, teach environmental education, promote urban farming, test water quality, boost sustainable agriculture, clean-up rivers and lakes, help families weatherize their homes, instruct the public on how to dispose of household chemicals, and restore wetlands. Many of the participants in our rural programs will be housed on national forests and will perform work mostly on the forests, thereby meeting the congressional mandate that USDA manage a Public Lands Corps.

Some possible tasks:

1. Conservation work on national forests and parks - Team members can also engage in some of the following types of work, which are already performed by participants in the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) that is now run by the Forest Service: trail maintenance, recreation management, fish and wildlife management, timber management, facility construction and maintenance, water and soil work, range and forage management, administration, and research.

2. 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.

3. Tree planting - As part of the Clinton Administration's initiative to combat global warming, the team members could play a lead role in tremendously expanding the number of trees planted annually in urban and rural areas throughout America.

4. 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.

5. Wetlands Restoration - The Interior Department and EPA have expressed interest in jointly running programs to restore large wetlands ecosystems, such as the Everglades.

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

7. 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 building fences, needed to implement a sustainable agriculture plan.

Where USDA Pilot Programs May be Located:

We will make every effort to locate our pilot project in Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Pilot programs could also be specifically targeted at rural communities facing short-term job dislocations because of the Northwest Forest Plan or defense conversion.

The number and locations of our pilot projects depends upon the size of our total funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service and internal USDA sources. **The attached three maps outline three possible options.** Some of the following regions or states that we are considering for Rural Development Teams: the Mississippi Delta, the Texas/Mexico Border, Maine, Kansas, the Pacific Northwest, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Southern Illinois, Tennessee, Four Corners (Arizona, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico), Alaska, Appalachia, and Northern California. Some of the sites we are considering for the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team include: Washington, D.C, Vermont, Appalachia, Los Angeles, the Mississippi Delta, New York City, Chicago, Jackson, Mississippi, and Boston. Some of the sites we are considering for Public Lands and Environment Teams include: the Pacific Northwest, Southern Florida, Kansas, Los Angeles, the Hudson River Valley, the Mississippi Delta, West Virginia, Maine, the New Jersey Coast, and Washington State.

We are also now studying how and where USDA may participate in this year's "Summer of Service" program, which is used by the White House to obtain extra attention to national service during the summer months. This year's theme is public safety and we are exploring how to engage gang members or young people in the juvenile justice system in urban gardening or work in national forests.

What AmeriCorps/Team USDA Could Accomplish For You and the President:

AmeriCorps/Team USDA programs will provide a quick, dramatic, and visible vehicle with which you and President Clinton can demonstrate your success in reinventing government. Furthermore, we have the ability to place pilot projects almost immediately in critical states and regions. Not only will these projects perform work that is critical to the communities in which they are placed, but they will also provide thousands of families with significant monetary awards -- thousands of young people will receive a full year of employment in addition to an almost \$5,000 scholarship. These programs will likely be highly popular and obtain frequent and favorable national and local media attention.

Our programs will:

- * Reunite the interests of the middle class and the poor by allowing young people from all types of families to earn their way through post-secondary education.
- * Prove that groups of socio-economically diverse young people can work together.
- * Provide valuable service to the community by systematically filling unmet social needs.

Also, many key USDA constituency groups, particularly anti-hunger, environmental, and rural development groups, are very excited about working with our department on AmeriCorps.

Outstanding Decisions You Need to Make

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

I will provide a report to Kim Schnoor when this analysis is complete.

You will then need to quickly make decisions in the following six areas:

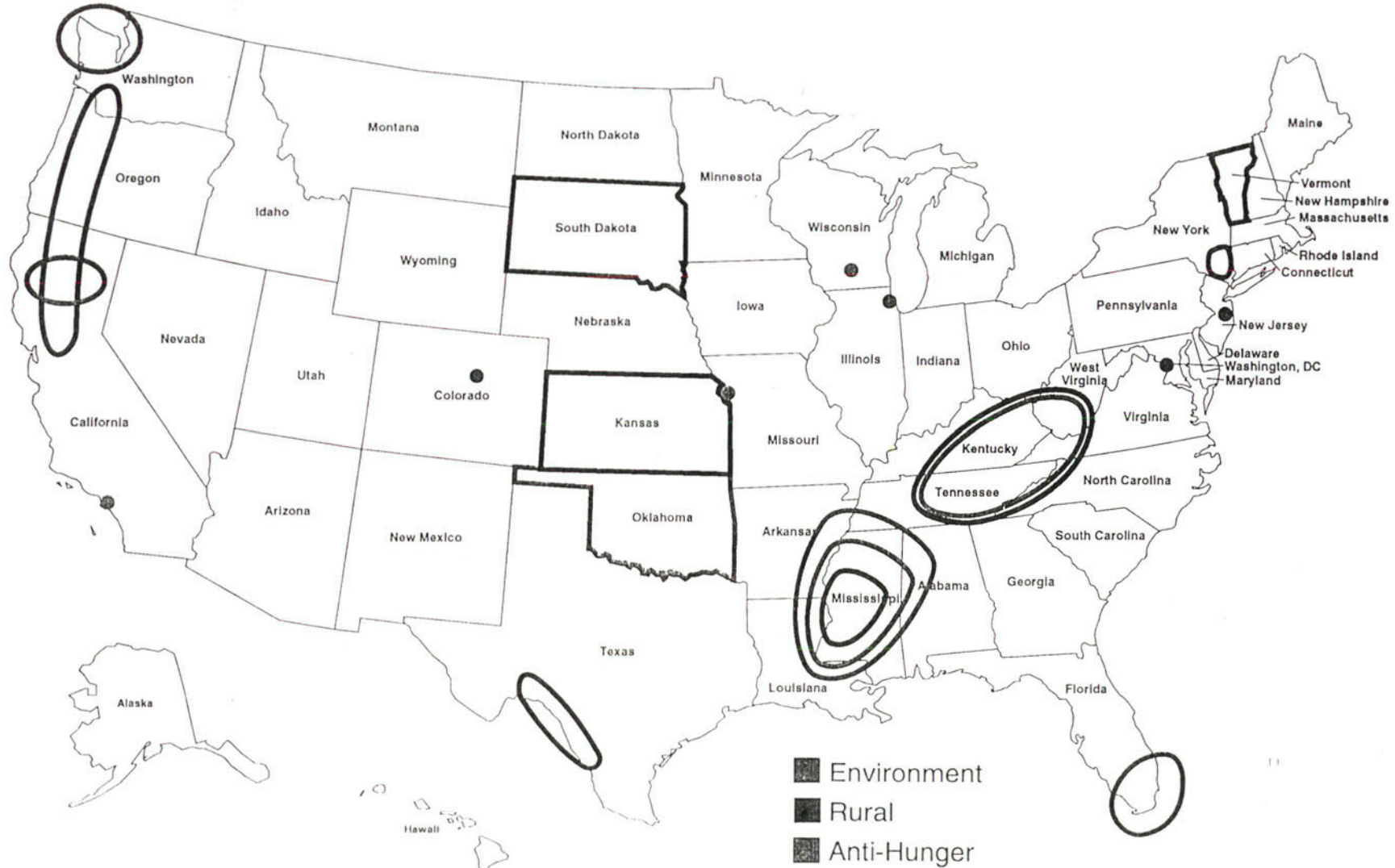
- 1) The overall funding level of USDA programs.
- 2) The management structure and staff needed to submit proposals and run programs.
- 3) The extent of our collaboration with other federal agencies.
- 4) The locations of our pilot projects.
- 5) The extent of our participation in the National Civilian Community Corps.
- 6) The extent of our participation in Summer of Service programs.

\$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

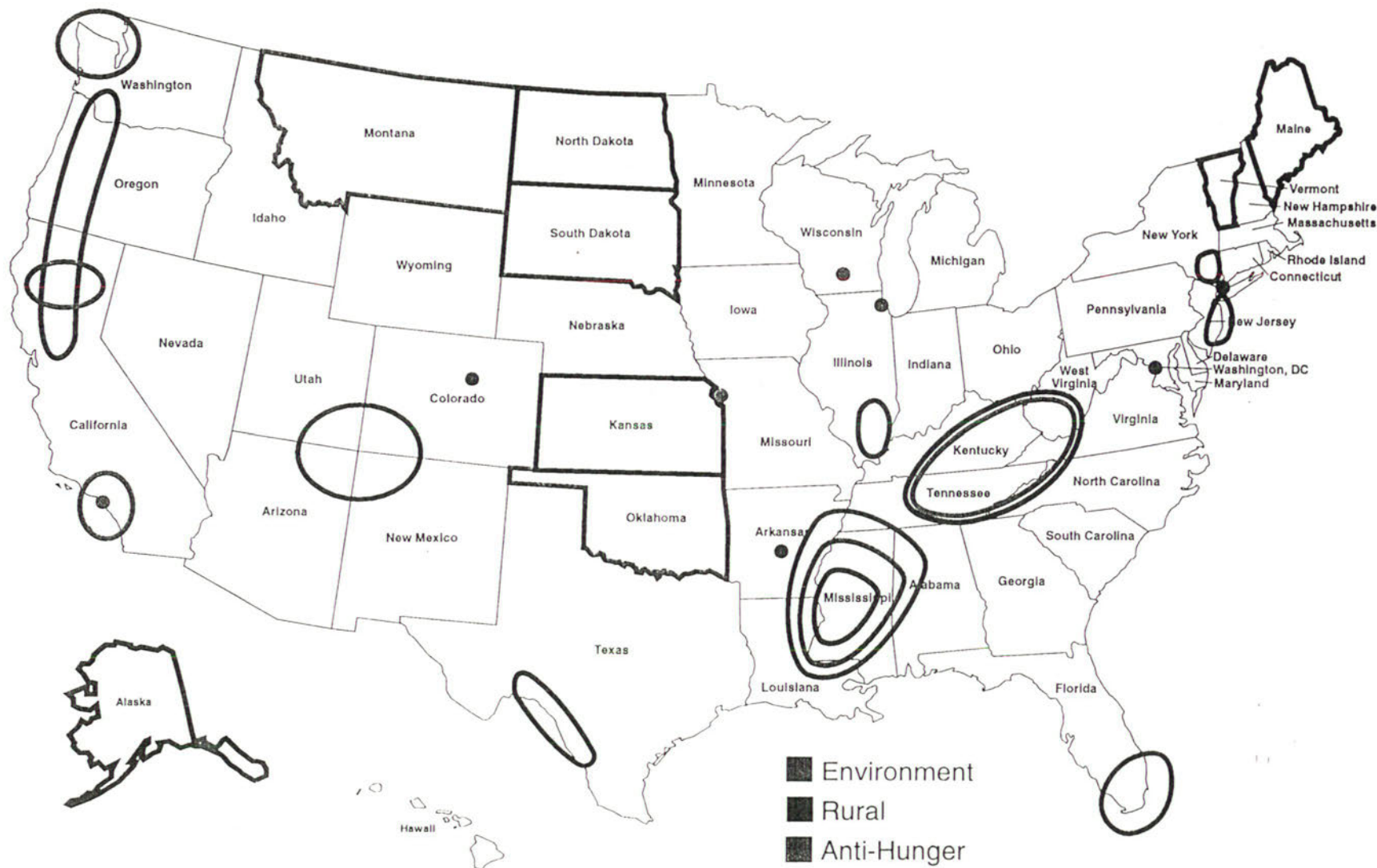


\$25 Million Option - Possible AmeriCorps/USDA Pilot Sites

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



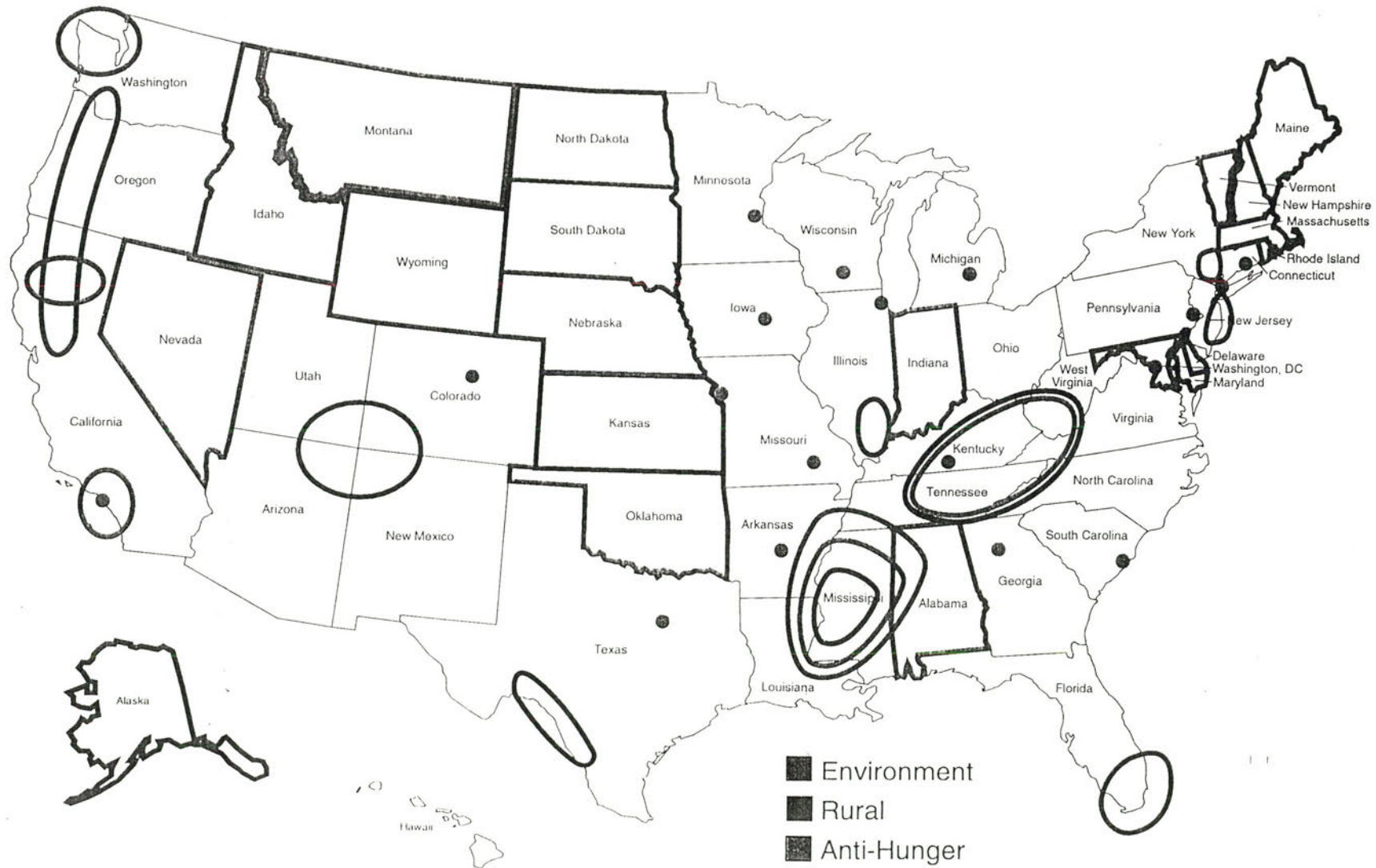
\$45 Million Option - Possible AmeriCorps/USDA Pilot Sites

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



National Service and the Politics of Meaning

Mike Espy

There has been an immense amount of discussion in recent weeks over the so-called "politics of meaning" championed by TIKKUN magazine and advanced by some in the Clinton administration, including the First Lady.

The phrase was debated on newspaper op-ed pages and dissected by television talking heads. The pundits gleefully argued over whether it was indeed possible to infuse politics with a greater sense of morality, purpose, community, and caring, or whether such a goal was hopelessly idealistic.

Yet for all this discussion of general philosophy, relatively little effort has been spent publicly analyzing actual policies that embrace the politics of meaning. One such policy is national service—a dramatically bold initiative that will reinvent the way government interacts with our citizens, and the way citizens interact with our government.

National service is a concrete proposal that will allow this country to move from the self-centeredness of recent American history toward a greater understanding that we, as Americans, are all in this together.

In the years preceding this past presidential election, then-Governor Clinton led a movement that was dedicated to reuniting the interests of the poor and the middle class by fashioning innovative new avenues of upward mobility. I was proud to have been a part of that movement.

We searched for fresh approaches to governing that would discard the failed and divisive ideologies of the old Left and the old Right, and would instead implement practical, real-world solutions for the unique new challenges of today.

We based our efforts on the idea that government should promote three fundamental principles: community, opportunity, and responsibility. One proposal more than any other—voluntary national service—embodied the very essence of each of those principles.

That is why, as a member of the House of Representatives, I was so proud to have been a co-sponsor of the National and Community Service Act of

1990, which helped create national service pilot programs that prove that the President's more ambitious proposal will in fact work.

And that's why President Clinton has continued to adamantly insist that national service be a cornerstone of his administration.

Community

This nation was founded, in the words of Benjamin Franklin, on the premise that "We must all hang together or we will most assuredly hang separately." A few decades later, a Frenchman touring the infant republic, Alexis de Tocqueville, wrote eloquently of how America was unique because its citizens banded together into voluntary organizations that worked for the common good.

Volunteers formed fire departments. They created granges. Built settlement houses. Started PTA's. It was the unbridled spirit of community service that made this the greatest nation on the planet.

National service brings us back to our origins as a nation. Properly executed, it will begin to tear down the walls that separate us. It will begin the process of giving all Americans a shared experience to which they can relate.

Some mistakenly view national service as a jobs program targeted at the poor. Others mistakenly view the idea as a "noblesse oblige" feel-good scheme for the well-off. It is neither.

National service is a civic compact in which any citizen can be tied to the nation by the simple virtue of making a difference in the lives of others.

National service can play a large role in healing this nation's gaping racial, religious, social, and economic divisions.

When young people spend their time together planting a tree or cleaning out cockroaches from the apartment of a low-income senior citizen or teaching younger children how to read, they simply don't have the time or the energy to hate each other. Not only that, with each wipe of their sweaty brows, they look into each other's eyes and increasingly come to the conclusion that

Mike Espy is the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

they are as much alike as they are different.

That is why it would be such a mistake to turn national service into a targeted program just for the disadvantaged. Yes, we need new, innovative programs to help the less fortunate in society. My department is contemplating a wide variety of approaches to eradicate domestic hunger. This administration is sponsoring an array of empowerment initiatives to combine opportunity with responsibility to help citizens lift themselves out of poverty. Such targeted programs have an important role, but national service will play a much different role. By engaging young people from all types of backgrounds, national service can make this country whole again.

This is not some utopian pipe dream. It is already happening, in some form or another, in youth service programs now operating in each of our fifty states.

Because we believe in community, we believe in national service.

Opportunity

We also believe in opportunity—the ability to advance in this society as far as your hard work, ingenuity, determination, and natural skills will take you. Every American deserves his or her fair shake at earning his or her own slice of the American dream.

Lack of opportunity is not only morally wrong, but it is economically stupid. President Clinton often says that “we don’t have a person to waste.” He’s absolutely right. The only way we can compete successfully in the new global economy is to make sure that our best and the brightest have a real chance to work their way to the top.

One answer to this problem lies in the lessons of the original G.I. bill—the most successful student aid system this nation ever created. The Clinton national service initiative is a new kind of G.I. bill—based on the concept that Americans deserve a chance at upward mobility in return for significant service to their country.

It is true that national service is expensive, but it is not as expensive as wasting a life. We now pay for Americans in prison, on welfare, in hospitals with gunshot wounds, and collecting unemployment. The question is whether we continue paying for only hardships, or whether we want to start investing in success.

Not only will national service benefit the individual participants, but it will also provide valuable work to urban, suburban, and rural communities across America. This work—in schools, on public lands, in soup kitchens, on community policing patrols, for example—will also promote opportunity for the citizens served.

Because we believe in opportunity, we believe in national service.

Responsibility

This President and this administration also believe in responsibility. It is truly amazing how some have come to the conclusion that citizens owe nothing, absolutely nothing, to their society. This administration has a very different philosophy. Our philosophy is that it is each American’s responsibility to take advantage of this country’s opportunities while avoiding its pitfalls. We believe it is this country’s responsibility to make higher education available, but the responsibility of students and their families to make sure the students stay in school, study hard, and by serving their community, earn the privilege to attend institutions of higher education.

America’s young people don’t want handouts and charity, they want a fair opportunity to make it on their own. Young Americans want more responsibility to become full participants in this society, and we agree with that aim.

National service will also promote responsibility at every level of society, because the success of this initiative rests squarely on the shoulders of non-profit agencies, corporations, states, and local community groups. This program will not be run by a large and burdensome Washington bureaucracy; rather it will be administered mostly by committed citizens at the local level. And so, because we believe in responsibility, we believe in national service.

How My Department is Planning to Participate

President Clinton has made it absolutely clear to his cabinet members that he wants every one of us to make national service a top priority.

While most of the service participants will be managed by non-profit organizations, private youth corps, and state and local governments, a small percentage may be managed directly by the federal government. Toward that end, I have directed my department to prepare three different proposals for possible incorporation into the President’s national service program: a National Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Corps, a National Conservation Corps, and a National Rural Development Corps.

If any or all of these proposals are eventually funded by the new Corporation for National Service, we hope to use our programs as models of reinventing government. They will be managed by existing employees and will be entrepreneurial and non-bureaucratic in design.

(Continued on p. 96)

NATIONAL SERVICE

(Continued from p. 12)

The President's goal is nothing short of creating a national service program so successful that it will become a permanent fixture of American society.

Why the Naysayers are Wrong

In my opinion, this President has real guts for proposing national service. The Washington insiders who defend the failing status quo pontificated that Clinton would drop his national service campaign pledge as soon as he settled into the Beltway. After all, national service has no existing constituency. It's complicated to explain. Furthermore, the people most likely to benefit from national service do not vote at very high levels. Just drop the idea, advised the sufferers of permanent Potomac fever.

But the President stood by his vision. He kept talking about the issue wherever he went, he presented a specific and well thought-out legislative proposal, and he made it a top personal priority to include national service as an integral part of a budget proposal notable for its cuts in so many other areas.

Why, the naysayers ask, is this President so hell-bent on making national service a reality, against all political odds?

I think I know. In December of 1991, Bill Clinton visited a remarkable program in Boston called City Year. City Year is an incredible effort—originally started with only private funding—that brings together youths from backgrounds as diverse as anyone can imagine. During Clinton's visit, participants in the program looked straight into his eyes and poured their hearts out to him. One by one, they told him how their national service experience had transformed their lives. How City Year took them off the streets, expanded their understanding and respect of others, and gave many of them a sense of purpose for the first time in their short lives.

On that day, national service for Bill Clinton was transformed from an intellectual abstraction to the most deeply felt passion.

I had similar feelings when I recently visited the Van Ness Elementary School in Southeast Washington, along with USDA employees who volunteer countless hours tutoring students. When those children looked up at me, I saw in their eyes rare glimmers of hope for the future. I understood immediately why this country does indeed need a new politics of meaning. And I understood why President Clinton believes so deeply that national service can help give us that new politics. □

February 24, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: KIM SCHNOOR

FROM: JOEL BERG

JB

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

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

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

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



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

December 8, 1993

INFORMATIONAL MEMO FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg, Deputy Director of Public Affairs JB

Subject: **Moving National Service from Planning to Implementation**

Eli Segal and the White House continue to recognize USDA as the leading federal agency in promoting national service (now known as AmeriCorps), which is one of President Clinton's top personal priorities. Eli was particularly pleased with your article on national service that appeared in *Tikkun* magazine (copy attached). Two other publications, the *Washington Monthly* and *Education Week*, have also inquired about our national service activities.

As you announced in your Senate testimony, we are now planning a Rural Development Team, an Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team, and a Public Lands and Environment Team. All three teams will concretely demonstrate your commitment to reinventing government, boosting the forgotten middle class, and empowering the poor.

In response to a recent decision memo on national service, you indicated that you would like to discuss the matter with me. In advance of that discussion, this memo will provide you with more detailed background on exactly what our pilot programs might do, where they might be located, what benefits they could provide, how much they may cost, and how they might interact with other USDA human resources programs.

Who Would Participate in AmeriCorps/Teams USDA:

Starting in the Fall of 1994, up to 2,500 diverse participants could serve in 45 AmeriCorps/Team USDA pilot projects in every region of the country. The Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team and the Public Lands and Environment Team will allow participants to join the programs before, during, or after post-secondary education or job training; the Rural Development Team will be composed mostly of college or professional schools graduates. Participants in the Empowerment Team and the Environmental Team will earn small living stipends of around \$8,000 per year, while the older and better educated participants in the Rural Development Team will earn around \$15,000 per year. In addition, participants in all three teams will earn an educational voucher of \$4,725, which they may use to pay for college, vocational school, job training, or graduate school. All participants will also be entitled to health insurance, as well as child care if they have children. Participants in all three programs teams will be from diverse racial, social, and economic backgrounds.

How the Rural Development Team Would Work:

The Rural Development Team would establish regional clusters of "professional" and "paraprofessional" participants who would be placed in individual communities to help the communities identify 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 your recent Rural Development Forum. The USDA Rural Development Team can help redress that need. 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.

Some possible job descriptions:

- 1) Assistant State Rural Development Coordinator - Assists USDA State Rural Development Coordinators in helping boost Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Collects data, provides outreach, coordinates community resources, helps develop strategic plans, helps implement the program, analyzes local data for agencies and organizations so that the needs of the under-served are considered.
- 2) 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.
- 3) 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.
- 4) 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.
- 5) Recreation Specialist - The team member would provide technical assistance for all activities relating to recreation and tourism, including coordinating efforts among all government agencies, furnishing recreation planning and design, and collecting and disseminating information on what alternatives will best fit local needs.
- 6) Regional 4-H Youth Development Coordinator - The team member would work with county Extension agents and 4-H coordinators to manage local students involved in youth service.

How the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team Would Work:

Participants would work in brigades of ten 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 you and President Clinton.

Some possible tasks:

1) Providing Outreach/access services - The team member would educate eligible people about program availability and helping make benefits accessible. Outreach workers would inform target populations about program availability. Drivers would take people to social welfare offices to help eligible people apply for and receive program benefits. Delivery aides would help deliver program benefits to homebound elderly, physically disadvantaged, and homeless people. Bilingual aides would provide program information, help with applications, and perform other tasks to help to non-English-speaking citizens. Service facilitators would follow-up with people who don't keep appointments and direct people to related services.

2) Bolstering the infrastructure - The team member would provide the human capital necessary to deliver the programs. Food handlers would stock, warehouse, manage, and distribute food products. Day care workers would provide child/adult care services to allow eligible people to apply for and receive program benefits. Bilingual case assistants would help case manager with non-English-speaking clients. Nutrition assistants would help with nutrition education and cooking demonstrations. WIC office staff would be assigned to support duties at WIC clinics in order to boost state participation in the WIC program. Team members can also help staff homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and food banks.

3) Boosting innovative new empowerment programs - The team members would go door-to-door in neighborhoods dispensing information on a wide array of empowerment initiatives for which that neighborhood's residents might be eligible. 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 education and anti-hunger services. Team members could help families obtain the newly expanded Earned Income Tax Credit, aid individuals in securing microenterprise loans to start small businesses, assist poor urban communities in developing urban gardens in which they can grow their own food, inform families on how to apply for loans from community development banks, work with families to develop savings plans as part of assets development programs. Indian reservations could be encouraged to grow foods that could be sold to USDA commodity programs and then provided to the reservation through various USDA feeding programs.

How the Public Lands and Environment Team Would Work:

Participants would work in brigades of ten in both urban and rural components. Participants could renovate urban and rural parks, plant trees, perform conservation work in national forests, teach environmental education, promote urban farming, test water quality, boost sustainable agriculture, clean-up rivers and lakes, help families weatherize their homes, instruct the public on how to dispose of household chemicals, and restore wetlands. Many of the participants in our rural programs will be housed on national forests and will perform work mostly on the forests, thereby meeting the congressional mandate that USDA manage a Public Lands Corps.

Some possible tasks:

1. Conservation work on national forests and parks - Team members can also engage in some of the following types of work, which are already performed by participants in the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) that is now run by the Forest Service: trail maintenance, recreation management, fish and wildlife management, timber management, facility construction and maintenance, water and soil work, range and forage management, administration, and research.
2. 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.
3. Tree planting - As part of the Clinton Administration's initiative to combat global warming, the team members could play a lead role in tremendously expanding the number of trees planted annually in urban and rural areas throughout America.
4. 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.
5. Wetlands Restoration - The Interior Department and EPA have expressed interest in jointly running programs to restore large wetlands ecosystems, such as the Everglades.
6. Urban Farming Projects - Team members could help low-income urban residents to grow their own food. We could possibly run such a program at public housing complexes in tandem with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. We could possibly run a citywide program in Chicago in tandem with the Chicago high school of agriculture.
7. 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 building fences, needed to implement a sustainable agriculture plan.

Where USDA Pilot Programs May be Located:

We will make every effort to locate our pilot projects in Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Pilot programs could also be specifically targeted at rural communities facing short-term job dislocations because of NAFTA, the Northwest Forest Plan, or military base closings or defense plant shut-downs.

Some of the following regions or states that we are considering for Rural Development Teams: the Mississippi Delta, the Texas/Mexico Border, Maine, Kansas, the Pacific Northwest, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Southern Illinois, Tennessee, Four Corners (Arizona, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico), Alaska, Appalachia, and Northern California.

Some of the sites we are considering for the Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team include: Washington, D.C, Vermont, Appalachia, Los Angeles, the Mississippi Delta, New York City, Chicago, Jackson, Mississippi, and Boston.

Some of the sites we are considering for Public Lands and Environment Teams include: The Pacific Northwest, Southern Florida, Kansas, Los Angeles, the Hudson River Valley, The Mississippi Delta, West Virginia, Maine, the New Jersey Coast, and Washington State.

What AmeriCorps/Team USDA Could Accomplish For You and the President:

Americorps/Team USDA programs will provide a quick, dramatic, and visible vehicle with which you and President Clinton can demonstrate your success in reinventing government. Furthermore, we have the ability to place pilot projects almost immediately in critical states and regions. Not only will these projects perform work that is critical to the communities in which they are placed, but they will also provide thousands of families with significant monetary awards -- thousands of young people will receive a full year of employment in addition to an almost \$5,000 scholarship. These programs will likely be highly popular and obtain frequent and favorable national and local media attention.

Our programs will:

- * Reunite the interests of the middle class and the poor by allowing young people from all types of families to earn their way through post-secondary education.
- * Prove that groups of socio-economically diverse young people can work together.
- * Provide valuable service to the community by systematically filling unmet social needs.

Also, many key USDA constituency groups, particularly anti-hunger, environmental, and rural development groups, are very excited about working with our department on AmeriCorps.

What Institutional Support Is Needed to Run AmeriCorps/USDA:

Secretary Babbitt has recently directed his staff to create an Office of National Service at Interior. I strongly believe that, if we are to run our own AmeriCorps programs as a Team USDA project that cuts across traditional USDA agency lines, we need to create our own office of national service. This new office could either remain tied to public affairs by being placed in the new Office of Communications 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. We would call it the USDA "Center" for National Service so that you technically would not be creating a new agency at the same time you are trying to reduce our agencies from 43 to 30.

I would recommend the new center function until October 1, 1994 with employees detailed from various USDA agencies. I would further recommend that the FY 95 budget includes line item funding for the new center. To begin with the center would need seven employees: a Director, a Communications Coordinator, an Administrative Coordinator, a Pilot Project Coordinator, a Recruitment and Training Coordinator, a Private Fundraising Coordinator, and an Office Manager/Support Staff.

All Under and Assistant Secretaries and Agency Administrators in relevant areas would have to give their full support and cooperation. The Office of Budget and Program Analysis, the Office of General Counsel, and the Office of Personnel will all have to play critical roles in helping the national service center cut through the bureaucracy and red tape to make the AmeriCorps/Team USDA programs a success.

What Funding Is Needed To Support These Programs:

If most participants in the Environmental Team are residential, then our estimated cost is about \$20,000 per server. Thus a pilot program with 1,000 servers would cost \$20 million. This would allow us ten rural sites of 50 each, and five urban sites of 100 each.

If we roughly estimate that each server in the non-residential Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Team will cost \$15,000 per year, then 1,000 participants would cost \$15 million. That would fund twenty sites, half-urban and half-rural, with 50 participants at each site.

If we roughly estimate that each server in the Rural Development Team will cost approximately \$30,000 per year, accounting for their higher pay, then 400 servers would cost \$10 million. That would fund ten state programs with 40 participants each.

The total for all three proposals is \$45 million. We could potentially meet this target with a combination of Corporation for National Service Funds, Golden Eagle Passport funds, USDA program funds, and private and non-profit funds.

Potential sources of funds:

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 sets-aside \$18 million for the management of AmeriCorps programs run by federal agencies. There is an additional pot of money to pay for the educational benefits of the participants in federal programs. I estimate, roughly, that USDA will receive between \$2 million - \$5 million.

We already have a significant source of additional funding for a Public Lands Corps this year. The FY 94 budget passed by Congress authorizes the Forest Service to begin collecting fees at certain sites and to also jointly sell Golden Eagle Passports in conjunction with the Department of Interior. The proceeds of all non-federal sales of the passports --- also recently authorized by Congress -- will go to conservation corps activities run by Interior and Agriculture, to be divided up in proportion to the total amount of revenue each Department generates from entrance fees. The National Recreation Association estimates that this fund could generate an estimated \$50 million for youth service in FY 94, of which a minimum of about \$2.5 million would go to USDA. We could possibly negotiate with Interior to receive a much larger percentage of their \$50 million in passport fees.

The White House also intends us to fund our programs through specific line item requests in the USDA FY 95 budget. I have asked the White House to designate a contact at OMB with whom we can work on placing such line item proposals in the final budget the President presents. Many USDA agencies already fund projects similar to those that will be conducted by our AmeriCorps Teams; in many cases, our AmeriCorps teams will be able to perform the same projects much more cost effectively. We could possibly fund our environmental programs through the Forest Service and SCS. We could fund our sustainable agriculture projects through ARS and ACRS. We could possibly fund our anti-hunger programs through FNS and our nutrition programs through HNIS and the Extension Service. We could possibly fund our rural development programs through RDA, REA, FmHA, and the Forest Service.

We will also attempt to raise money through private corporations, non-profit organizations, and charitable organizations. The National Forest Foundation could also help us raise private money, although most of members of the board are still Republicans appointed by Secretary Madigan.

I would also like to raise money from USDA employees. I have requested the White House to ask the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to allow agencies to raise money from their employees, outside of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), to help fund their own AmeriCorps programs. I would like to help create a "National Federal Employee Serve-A-Thon" in which federal employees perform a day of community service on a designated Saturday in order to raise money for agency AmeriCorps projects. At USDA alone, if every employee raised just \$10 from family and friends, we could collect over \$10 million for our AmeriCorps programs.

How AmeriCorps Might Interact with USDA Human Resources Programs:

Recently, Rocky Solas, a regional coordinator for the Forest Service human resources programs, came to Washington to meet with Mike Alexander and myself. Rocky passionately argued human resource programs needed to be coordinated department-wide throughout USDA. He pointed out that the Forest Service runs Job Corps and JTPA programs, that the Extension Service runs youth-at-risk programs, and that FNS has large responsibility for incorporating job training under welfare reform, yet none of these programs are coordinated centrally by any entity at USDA. He argued that either USDA could coordinate our human resource programs centrally in order to improve them, or they would be stripped from USDA -- a possibility hinted at by the Vice-President's reinventing government report. Not surprisingly, Rocky volunteered himself for a detail to work on coordinating these programs. Mike Alexander and I agreed that such a function could eventually be placed in the USDA national service office, expanding its name and mission to the USDA Center for National Service and Youth Development.

I look forward to discussing these matters with you shortly.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
the Secretary

Office of
Public Affairs

Washington, D.C.
20250

October 8, 1993

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

From: Joel Berg *JB*
Subject: Status of National Service at USDA

Thanks for plugging national service at the beginning of your Rural Development Forum. Every time you mention the issue publicly, it provides a big boost to our internal planning efforts.

One of the clearest themes throughout your forum was the need to foster leadership in rural communities. Our national service programs at USDA can play a major role in developing that leadership.

Our programs can begin to reverse the rural "brain drain" by encouraging talented and well-educated young people to stay and work in the communities in which they grew up.

Per the recent decision memo you signed on the future of national service at USDA, I look forward to personally discussing our efforts with you soon after your return from Asia. In the meantime, I thought you might want to see the following draft action plan detailing suggestions for our programs.

Basic Principles

The purpose of this plan is to outline how we will can trun our generalized plans for national service into concrete, specific, realistic, and comprehensive grant proposals to be submitted to the soon-to-be formed Corporation for National service.

Two thirds of the funds provided by the National Service Trust Act will be distributed through state commissions to existing youth corps, non-profit organizations, and state and local government-managed programs. We will provide all of our constituency groups with information and technical assistance that will help them apply for these grants.

Yet the focus of this action plan is on the three service programs that USDA itself will run. As you testified in the Senate, I am now directing working groups that are planning three different grant proposals to develop for submission to the Corporation for National Service: a National Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Corps, a National Environmental Corps, and a National Rural Development Corps.

We are also investigating whether we can supplement funding for these corps with USDA program funds and/or private and non-profit contributions.

We intend to make our programs models of reinventing government. All the USDA national service programs should:

- * Reinvent government by promoting opportunity, responsibility, and community.
- * Reunite the interests of the middle class and the poor by allowing young people from all types of families to earn their way through college.
- * Provide models for how the federal government can manage national service programs.
- * Expand dramatically as the President phases-in a full-scale national program.
- * Recruit groups of participants that are socio-economically diverse.
- * Provide valuable service to the community by systematically filling unmet social needs.
- * Allow young people to perform service either before **or** after attending post-secondary education.
- * Forge links to youth apprenticeship programs run by USDA and other Cabinet agencies.
- * Give the participants at least a minimum wage living expense, as well as adequate supervision and training.
- * Limit the work performed to tasks that fulfill significant missions of USDA and are supported by our major constituency groups (farming, consumer, commodity, environmental, etc.).
- * Encourage the leveraging of funds from states, localities, non-profit organizations, and corporations.
- * Act as a multiplier of other national service programs throughout the country.

- * Forge a new form of entrepreneurial and non-bureaucratic government.
- * Build a management team from existing USDA personnel.
- * Be managed across traditional USDA agency lines.

The purpose of this action plan is to create a framework by which we can turn the general plans for three corps, based on the above principles, into concrete proposals for each one.

Rural Development Corps

The Department of Agriculture would establish a corps 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.

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

This group of individuals would be able to assist communities of all sizes facing economic recovery and local leadership development issues to plan and prioritize efforts. The corps would then assist the community in locating financial resources, preparing proposals, designing educational programs, and implementing strategies necessary for revitalization. The entire focus would be on the community generating its own vision for the future and the USDA corps assisting them in creating and attaining that vision.

Individuals will be placed in communities where their particular talents can be best utilized. 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. Etc. General planners would also be matched up with communities that need to develop overall economic plans.

The increased economic viability of our rural communities and small towns could be a major outcome. With the assistance of the corps, communities would be better able to develop a sound economic base that will take them into the next century. A core of community leaders for the future would be developed. Planning and implementing long-range strategies could result in increased environmentally sound agricultural production, a viable pollution-free light industry, and increased local tourism.

a. Social problems to be solved

Some of the worst pockets of poverty and highest rates of unemployment exist in rural America. While President Clinton's overall economic program should help significantly, special efforts are needed to boost rural America.

A recent study by USDA indicates that physical infrastructure is rarely sufficient by itself to promote rural economic development; it is necessary to develop the human infrastructure.

Some rural communities that can afford to do so now pay high-priced consultants to advise them on development; for instance, the Forest Service now gives grants to some communities to hire such consultants. With proper training, our corps members could take the place of these consultants and help communities develop their tourism, high-tech industries, recreation sites, etc. The corps members would work with each community to create an economic development action plan that makes sense for that particular community.

This program could give a significant boost to our overall rural development efforts.

The objectives of the program would be:

- * accomplish much needed community planning activities necessary to assure the economic vitality and productivity of our rural and mid-sized communities;
- * teach specific skills in community building, coalition building, strategic planning, visioning, and leadership development;
- * develop improved federal ties with units of local government which people encounter in their everyday living;

b. How the corps will work with existing programs

Most states have local Planning and Development Districts which provide for the overall strategic and project planning efforts for a multi-jurisdictional area. Some of these cover several counties, and some cover multiple communities within a county or township. They are staffed by local citizens and all have one thing in common: they are understaffed.

Bob Nash has suggested to me strongly that our corps participants be physically located within the offices of local districts, so that they work with the districts and do not pose the threat of competition over turf.

We must still answer how this program will specifically interact with existing programs and the ambitious new rural development initiatives being planned by the Administration.

To support these corps members, there already exists an information data base at the National Agriculture Library called the National Rural Information Center. This information center maintains a data base of organizations which provide financial support to communities on a national, regional, and local basis. This data base is available to the Corps members for assisting the community in developing its own action plan and applying for funding.

Curricula for teaching leadership, volunteer development, program management, basic life skills, and understanding of basic business principles would be necessary.

c. Sizes and sites of pilot projects

Where should the pilot projects be situated and how large should they be?

We should carefully coordinate our efforts with the Administration's new enterprise zones and enterprise communities.

Thirty-two states currently have economic development councils or rural development councils so early pilot programs would be easy. Bob Nash and I agree that, for policy and public purposes, pilot projects should begin in many of the following states and/or regions:

- The Mississippi Delta
- The Texas/Mexico border region
- Maine
- Kansas
- The Pacific Northwest (near old growth forests)
- Oklahoma
- North Dakota
- The Appalachia Region
- Four Corners: Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona
- West Virginia

Pilot programs could also be specifically targeted at rural communities facing short-term job dislocations because of NAFTA, the Northwest Forest Plan, or military base closing or defense plant shut-downs.

e. USDA Staff needed

The Rural Development Corps should have a Director, who reports directly to the head of USDA national service programs, as well as the Undersecretary for Rural Economic and Community Development. The Director of the Rural Development Corps should have deputies in charge of the following areas:

- Recruitment
- Training
- Internal Communications
- Day-to-Day Project Management
- Intergovernmental, Congressional, and Public Affairs
- USDA Inter-Agency Coordination
- Fundraising, Grants, and Development
- Monitoring and Evaluation

e. Partnerships

Possible partnerships include:

- 1890's, 1860's, and historically Hispanic colleges
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- U.S. Department of Labor
- National Association of Counties
- National Association of Development Organizations
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- National Governors Organization
- National Association of Towns and Townships
- State Rural Development Councils
- State Economic Development Councils or Agencies
- Local Planning and Development entities both private and public
- VISTA
- Association of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers

f. Special training and supervision issues

Participants of this program would hold either Bachelor's degrees or graduate degrees and use the benefits to pay back student loans. Unfortunately, only two graduate schools in the country now specifically teach rural development; perhaps we could form partnerships with others to do so. Participants could also be trained in public administration, civil engineering, or agricultural science. The participants would need to spend a period of training before being assigned to the local districts.

Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Corps

Corps members would work in urban and rural areas to help low income families and individuals move towards self-sufficiency. The main focus of the corps would be fighting domestic hunger; it would be similar to the Extension service's EFNEP program, but would have a greatly expanded mission. Corps members would help individuals apply for food stamps, WIC, and the school breakfast program; overhaul their diets; learn to prevent foodborne illnesses; obtain the expanded Earned Income Tax Credits, microenterprise loans, and help from community development banks. In short, this corps would help put into effect the entire empowerment agenda promoted by President Clinton and Secretary Espy. A full-scale program could eventually provide a big boost to our efforts to eradicate domestic hunger.

a. Social problems to be solved

Hunger has risen in America over the last decade, particularly among children. One in ten American now use food stamps, and many more are eligible. Many women and children now eligible for WIC do not receive it.

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

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 manager 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 participants 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
- * Homlessness 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

b. Partnerships

We must definitely work with state social service agencies. potential other partners include the Association of WIC Providers, the Food Research Action Center, the Children's Defense Fund, the Safe Food Coalition, the Urban League, etc. What other groups should be contacted?

Environmental Corps

The National Environmental Corps would have both urban and rural components. The urban component would be mostly non-residential and members would work on conservation projects on public and private lands in cities of various sizes. The rural component would be both residential and non-residential and would perform conservation-related work projects on private and public lands in rural America. The programs would linked, with Corps members having the option of transferring between the rural and urban settings. For example, a Corps member could work in a rural environment for six months and then in an urban environment for another six months.

a. Social problems to be solved

There are currently an estimated 8 million tree-planting sites in communities across America with the current replacement rate being one tree planted for every four removed. Thousands of water quality projects nationwide are awaiting manpower in our communities and our rural areas, as are wetlands restoration, erosion control, stream improvement, roadbank stabilization, and wildlife habitat projects. Urban gardening and sustainable agriculture would also have important places in this program.

Approaches:

Urban: More than 80 percent of the American population now live in cities of varying size. Currently, the Forest Service, with 620 Ranger Districts across the country, and the Soil Conservation Service, with more than 2,000 offices nationwide, have existing partnerships and delivery systems in many cities.

The program would take the Corps to where the people are, operating in any urban community with an existing network of Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, or Extension Service programs in partnerships with local governments or non-profit organizations.

This non-residential program would focus on urban conservation projects in the areas of water quality, waste disposal, erosion control, running environmental program in schools, roadbank and streambank stabilization, urban gardening, the creation of urban buffers, rehabilitation and maintenance of deteriorating community infrastructure, urban forestry, and the recycling and reuse of resources. Corps members would live in the community or already be a community member.

While the Forest Service has authority over public lands or lands owned by non-profit organizations, the Soil Conservation Service has authority to perform work on private lands as well, allowing for a broad range of work projects.

Rural: Corps members would live in a residential setting in a rural area. The program would provide full-time logistical support for Corps members. As in the urban program, the Corps members would be expected to pay for living expenses from their wages.

Work projects could be in erosion control, fire prevention, fire suppression, building or improving recreation areas, restoration of infrastructure such as buildings and bridges, watershed protection, and other similar conservation projects. The land base of the National Forests would be available for projects as well as the privately held land in partnerships with the Soil Conservation Service.

Corps members could also focus on teaching sustainable agriculture, helping small farmers stay on the land, building rural housing, and engaging in rural development projects. Environmental Corps members could also work under the direction of older participants in the USDA Rural Development Corps.

The Corps would provide much needed manpower for nationwide conservation projects. The work of the Corps could reduce the backlog of conservation-related work across the country.

With the shift from a rural population to an urban one, Americans are losing the ability to learn firsthand about natural resources. We currently have a relatively uneducated and uninformed citizenry with regard to natural resources and conservation issues. The Corps would provide an opportunity to learn about America's natural resources, their uses, and the need to protect them. The end result would be a citizenry better informed on national conservation issues.

c. Potential types of service performed

1. National Forests and Parks conservation

- trail maintenance

- a. Existing programs:

- Appalachian Trail Conference-David Startzell, 304-535-6331
 - Appalachian Mountain Club-Kelly Short, 617-523-0636
 - American Hiking Society-Susan Henley, 703-385-3252
 - Student Conservation Association
- b. Specific Americorps activities
- work with and expansion of existing programs.
- c. Volunteer profile and training needs- any age, but preference for people interested in physical labor outdoors, probably seasonal duration.

2. Water quality assessments sampling and technical help with delivery systems. Sanitation and sewerage (wastewater treatment) system improvement.

- a. Existing programs:
- Clean Water Action-Paul Schwartz, 202-457-1286, ext. 130
 - Friends of the Earth-Velma Smith, 202-544-2600, ext. 294
- b. Specific Americorps activities:
- assist with existing programs operated by non-profits and local government programs.
 - team with chemistry background could conduct water sampling studies.
- c. Ideal volunteer profile and training needs for program:
- full-year program for rotating team of volunteers.
 - college grads with some engineering or scientific skills.

3. Education- POSSIBLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH EPA -- safe handling of food (USDA); how to make your household more eco-friendly; testing for radon (Greenpeace has information programs on the latter two); recycling and waste reduction.

- volunteers with college education could help develop an environmental literacy program geared to enviro health issues. Duration: several months- could travel to different communities and speak to local Rotary Clubs, Lions Club, etc. Volunteers could make rounds to elementary, middle, and high schools and initiate community awareness projects.

Examples:

The Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) offers a "waste away" program each year to teach elementary students about the challenges of the solid waste problem. VINS provides program curriculum and tries to engage entire community by culminating program with community-wide event - a "trash festival."

VINS also has an excellent education program called "ELF" -- Environmental Learning for the Future" geared for elementary students. VINS trains volunteers to go into the classrooms monthly for an afternoon filled with role playing, hands-on projects, and field trips. The complete curriculum is taught over the course of five years and is enthusiastically supported by the community. (802)457-2779.

American Forest Foundation's Project Learning Tree is an award winning K-12 curriculum and training program. Contact: Kathy McGlauffin, 202-463-2455.

4. Energy Conservation -- POSSIBLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH US DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY -- practical advice about basic ways to make homes more energy efficient -- weatherization.

a. Existing programs

- Christmas in April- national volunteer program established by University of Pennsylvania students in 1980s to address basic housing needs of low-income communities in urban areas. With the help of church and community groups, CIA identifies families that have greatest need for assistance in home maintenance- weatherization, painting, carpentry, plumbing, cleaning - and organizes groups of volunteers to spend a full day doing the work. Materials are donated by corporate sponsors.

Christmas in April USA: 202-326-8268

- EPA's Green Lights program

b. Specific Americorps activities:

- youth volunteers could work in teams to do the physical work necessary for making homes more energy efficient. Length of service would depend on community need and setting. Youth volunteers could be dispatched to do work in housing projects and low-income urban areas, as well as in rural areas. Ideally volunteers would have some basic carpentry, electrical or plumbing skills. Recruit professional carpenters, electricians, and plumbers to help with basic training or to serve as team leader.

- volunteers could also develop educational material on energy conservation - how to save dollars and help the planet; guide to existing cost-saving programs provided by utility companies, etc.

5. River and Streams Protection

- clean up

- restoration

a. Existing Programs:

- Trout Unlimited- stream restoration project including clean-up, habitat mapping, water quality monitoring.

Contact: Neil Emerald, 703-281-1100

- Izaak Walton League- Save our Stream program. Stream and river clean up and quality monitoring.

- b. Specific Americorps activities
 - assistance with above programs.

6. Tree planting (national forests and urban settings)

- a. Existing programs:
 - National Arbor Day Foundation- sponsors numerous tree planting programs. 402-474-5655.
 - American Forests' Global Releaf program, 202-667-3300.
 - Trust for Public Land- Jenny Cross, 714-557-2575. Urban Forestry Program.
 - Yale School of Forestry's Urban Resources Initiative. Lee Shemis, 203-432-5100
- b. and c. same as above. Less emphasis on physical labor.

(As for programs that do not involve highly skilled labor - repairing a trail in a national forest or replacing seagrass as part of an Everglades Recovery Program - a full-year program with pre-college participants could be the most effective. It may take a year for participants to learn skills. The longer time period would enhance the development of an esprit de corps among team members. Pre-college students would be the most likely to be challenged by the experience and the most likely to use the money.)

General Note: Community cleanup, restoration, and urban renewal activities should have an educational and outreach component. The long-term success of an effort is dependent on the personal investment of the participants. Groups of volunteers (led by an Americorps volunteer) who do the clean-up should include people who use the area, who are touched by the changes, who "benefit" from the restoration effort. This suggestion relates to the general challenge of attracting volunteers from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

d. Partnerships

Possible partnerships include:

U.S. Departments of Interior, Energy, and Commerce
 U.S Environmental Protection Agency
 National Association of Conservation Districts
 Audobon Society
 Army Corps of Engineers
 Land Grant universities
 National Association of State Foresters
 National Parks Foundation
 National Trust for Historic Preservation
 National Tree Trust
 Nature Conservancy

Timeline for Suggested Action:

By November 15, 1993: Detail staff or obtain full-time help from appropriate agencies to serve on a USDA working group to hammer out specific details of each proposal

By November 30, 1993: Identify possible pilot project locations and partnerships

By December 15, 1993: Meet with key leadership of 1890's institutions to create national service partnerships.

By December 20, 1993: Sign memorandums of understanding with other agencies with whom we will jointly makes proposal

By December 30, 1993: Preliminary proposal completed for submission to Corporation for National Service

By February 1, 1994: Work with OBPA to develop line item budget requests for FY95 budget

By March 1994: Start-up plans finalized for projects approved by the Corporation for National Service

By April 1994: Project personnel interviewed and placed

By May 1994: Recruitment of participants for Fall programs begin

By June 1994: Summer training starts for project managers crew leaders

By September 1, 1994: Pilot projects begin

By October 1, 1994: President Clinton and Secretary Espy begin to visit pilot locations and take credit for their success

Potential Costs and Budgets

If most servers in the Environmental Corps are residential, then our estimated cost is about \$20,000 per servers. Thus a pilot program with 1,000 servers would cost \$20 million. This would allow us five rural sites of 100 each, and two urban sites of 250 each.

If we roughly estimate that each server in the Empowerment and Anti-Hungers Corps will cost \$15,000 per year, then 1,000 participants would cost \$15 million. That would fund twenty sites, half urban and half rural, with 50 participants in each site.

If we roughly estimate that each server in the Rural Development Corps will cost roughly \$30,000 per year, accounting for their higher pay, then 400 servers would cost \$10 million. That would fund ten state programs with 40 participants each.

The total for all three proposals is \$45 million. We could potentially meet this target with a combination of Corporation for National Service Funds, USDA program funds, and private and non-profit funds.

I would also like to raise money from USDA employees. Can we get an exemption from the Combined Federal Campaign monopoly in raising money from federal employees?

Can we hold a national employees serve-a-thon in which USDA employees perform a day of service and get sponsored to do so by friends? If each of our 114,000 employees raises or personally donates an average of \$10, we will have raised over \$1 million.

The above-listed proposals -- if fully funded -- would allow us to have 37 pilot operations with a total 2,400 participants in our very first year of operation.

Even if we run programs somewhat less ambitious than the ones outlined above, USDA will have, by far, the LARGEST national service programs in the federal government. Properly managed, they will also be the BEST programs in the federal government.

President Clinton and the American people will surely be pleased with our initiative.



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

December 28, 1993

To: Eloise Thomas, Ron Blackley
From: Joel Berg JB
Subject: **MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY ON NATIONAL SERVICE**

I still need to meet with the Secretary in response to his September 30 request for us to personally discuss key national service issues.

With NAFTA and GATT behind him, I would hope the Secretary would have the time to meet with me for half an hour in early January. I desperately need his direction on critical issues regarding national service: budget, number of participants, pilot project locations, and staff resources.

President Clinton has made it clear in two different Cabinet meetings that national service is one of his top priorities. After meeting with the Secretary, I will be able to proceed rapidly in helping USDA build the best national service program in the federal government.



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

January 28, 1994

MEMORANDUM

To: Lawrence Wachs, Associate Director
Office of Budget and Program Analysis

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

Subject: **The Secretary's Senate Testimony on National Service**

As you review my decision memo to the Secretary on national service, it might be helpful for you to have a copy of the attached testimony he delivered on June 8, 1993 to the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

In this testimony, the Secretary first announced his intention for USDA to prepare national service proposals to run an Empowerment and Anti-Hunger Corps, an Environmental Youth Corps, and a National Rural Development Corps. Of course, this testimony was approved by your office, the Office of General Counsel, the appropriate Under and Assistant Secretaries, and OMB.

Please contact me if you need any additional information.



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

January 28, 1994

MEMORANDUM

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Office of Budget and Program Analysis

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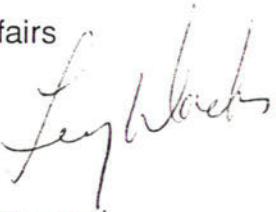
Please contact me if you need any additional information.



January 31, 1994

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Joel Berg
Deputy Director
Office of Public Affairs

FROM: Lawrence Wachs 
Associate Director

SUBJECT: National Service Proposal

This is in response to your memorandum of January 28. Attached for your information is a copy of the advice that we provided to the Deputy Secretary on this subject.

To enable the Secretary to make an informed decision on your National Service proposals, we suggest that you:

- Describe your plans in sufficient detail (including funding sources) to allow OGC to determine if the funding sources can be used to fulfill the requirements of your plan. Since the President's FY 1995 Budget has been completed and it does not include "new" money for USDA National Service initiatives, you will also need to work with the involved agencies to describe the impact on existing programs by funding this plan.
- After receiving OGC comments, ask the relevant Under/Assistant Secretaries to clear the proposals or provide comments (a simultaneous clearance would be the most expeditious way to accomplish this).
- Send the entire package to the Deputy Secretary/Secretary for a decision.

With this information in hand, the Secretary should more easily be able to determine the specific levels at which the Department should participate in the National Service Initiatives.

Attachment

JAN 27 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

FROM: Stephen B. Dewhurst ~~STEPHEN B. DEWHURST~~
Director

SUBJECT: Funding for USDA National Service Project

Charlie Rawls recently sent us a copy of Joel Berg's decision memorandum to the Secretary requesting decisions on a number of proposals to implement national service projects. Some of these proposals would affect the FY 1995 budget. The most significant proposal requests funding of \$19 to \$45 million for long-term USDA national service activities that would focus on rural development, hunger, and environmental issues. The decision memorandum indicates that the FY 1995 budget should include either line items or special earmarks for these activities. As you know, we are currently in the advanced stages of the budget process. Budget numbers and allocations were settled with OMB several weeks ago, and we are now reviewing galley proofs of the final budget documents. Needless to say it is too late to include new material in the President's budget.

It would be possible, however, to identify existing funding sources or programs that might be used to further national service objectives. A statement for inclusion in testimony or in other documents could be prepared which would indicate how we plan to carry out these initiatives through existing programs. The Office of the General Counsel would need to review the potential sources of funding identified in the decision memo to ensure that funds could, in fact, be used for the purposes that are proposed, and it would certainly be appropriate to request comments on the specifics of the plan and funding proposals from the relevant agencies and sub-cabinet before asking the Secretary for a decision. We would be glad to work with OGC and Joel Berg to facilitate this review, if you so desire.

cc: Kim Schnoor
Charlie Rawls

January 28, 1994

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALI WEBB
JOEL BERG ✓
FROM: KIM SCHNOOR
RE: DECISION MEMORANDUM CONCERNING BUDGET FOR USDA
NATIONAL SERVICE PROJECTS

The January 21 decision memorandum regarding the budget for the USDA National Service Projects was forwarded to the Secretary for review. Attached to the memorandum was a memorandum in response to a requested review from the Office of Budget and Program Analysis for the Deputy Secretary. (I have attached this document for your additional information.)

Per the Secretary's direction, prior to return of the decision memorandum, please provide the following information:

- 1) Determine the source of funds for the national service projects. This should include the agency, the amount of resources available, and the projects of those agencies that will be reduced, eliminated, or altered due to the reallocation of funds to national service projects. You will need to speak with the agencies to determine if they have any funding or resources that can be reallocated.
- 2) Determine the amount of funds available, if any and the priority determinations that the Secretary will have to make. (Please coordinate the above to issues with the OBPA.)
- 3) Determine through Office of General Counsel whether the funds identified can be used for the national service projects. For example, it may be that there are statutory restrictions on what the monies may be used for. As a result, it would be useless for the Secretary to make a decision regarding funding such projects and the level of fundings, if there isn't sufficient statutory authority.

When you have determined the availability and extent of resources and whether sufficient authorization and legal authority exists to use those identified funds, please return the decision memorandum specifying such details. However, nothing should be forwarded to OMB or the White House until this work is complete. Please let me know if you have any questions.

cc: Steve Dewhurst

CORPORATION FOR
NATIONAL
AND
COMMUNITY
SERVICE

January 26, 1994

The Honorable Mike Espy
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mike:

I certainly appreciate the fine work of the Department of Agriculture as it considers its proposals for national service programs. The deadline, I am fully aware, is tight, and your staff is to be commended for the dispatch and effort with which it has responded to the task.

As the federal agency application process nears completion, I intend to make the rounds over the next few weeks among the agencies. I hope to be able to answer questions or provide whatever assistance agencies may need from the Corporation. Should you wish to meet to discuss your national service initiatives, perhaps next week or the week thereafter, I would be most willing to do so. Please do not hesitate to call on me.

Sincerely,



Eli J. Segal
Chief Executive Officer



JAN 27 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

FROM: Stephen B. Dewhurst STEPHEN B. DEWHURST
Director

SUBJECT: Funding for USDA National Service Project

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Charlie Rawls