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Delaware State Parks AmeriCorps Recovery Youth Conservation Corps.

"I remain firmly convinced that our state's best days are ahead of us. These problems may confront us, but they will not define us."

Dover, Delaware - Delivered by Governor Jack Markell - March 19, 2009

Like many states, Delaware is confronted with an enormous financial crisis creating an unprecedented budget shortfall. Governor Markell stressed the urgency of the type of program that the Recovery AmeriCorps members can create when he continued in his address,

"While far more than half of our budget solution is cuts and reductions, those cannot be our only solutions, not when our families, our friends, our neighbors, our seniors, our children and our small businesses are turning to state services more than ever."

Our current AmeriCorps State Park Partners grant clearly links the need for outdoor recreational spaces as a vital part of the physical and emotional well being of our communities. This has recently been demonstrated with sobering effect by current research:

- For the first time since WWII, it is anticipated that American children today will not live as long as their parents, an effect of a devastating obesity epidemic
- Outdoor recreational opportunities have a pronounced curative effect- reducing stress, anxiety and even speeding the healing process
- Green spaces and outdoor recreation have been shown to reduce the symptoms of ADHA in children, and curb aggressive and at-risk behavior
- Green spaces and outdoor recreation are vital to the well-being of local communities

These benefits are especially important in the current economic crisis. In the past year, Delaware has experienced an economic meltdown. Auto plants have closed and major employers are laying off employees as a result of the deepening recession.

In his address on March 19, Governor Markell reports, 'More than most states, Delaware was exposed to cracks in the foundation of our national economy. Delaware's reliance on manufacturing and financial services made our hit particularly hard. ...our unemployment rate nearly doubled over the last 12 months to 6.7% and will get worse as employees laid off at the end of last year continue to enter the unemployment rolls.

The results have been severe. Last June, we expected our revenue for 2010 to be \$3.542B. At the March forecasting meeting, our revenue projection had dropped to \$2.9B, creating a budget shortfall of \$750 million, larger than any in state history. It is quite possible that when Delaware's economic forecasting group meets again, the budget shortfall that grew by hundreds of millions between June and March

could grow by millions more each month between now and June.

If that is the case, these cuts may only get deeper; our reductions more severe and the need for shared sacrifices more certain."

In a budget reduction effort, Delaware State Parks will potentially lose 21 full-time merit employee positions, and leave an additional 8 positions vacant representing a staff reduction of almost 20%. In total the Division has been required to submit proposed operational cost reductions of 15%. More concessions are likely to be necessary to make up the difference. Delaware State Parks needs additional assistance to maintain basic services and make them available to the people of Delaware, especially in these worsening economic times. Low cost, accessible, outdoor recreation and green spaces for families and individuals with their inherent stress and health benefits are needed now more than ever. Yet at a time when the need is greatest, we have the least ability to help meet it.

The Recovery Youth Conservation Corps is an extension of the current program's core objective, to provide outdoor recreation and education opportunities to improve the wellness of our communities; however, the slot utilization is different. In these uncertain economic times; times of unprecedented worry and concern, people need the order and quiet; the peace and recreation that can be found only in an outdoor natural area or green space. Our parks are critical in helping to provide these to the people of our state.

The focus of the Youth Conservation Corps is first and foremost, to provide job training skills to the members while providing much-needed service in our parks for the citizens and visitors to the state of Delaware. Through this program, we will gainfully engage participants who are otherwise unable to secure paid employment resulting from the current economic crisis.

Program Design:

The program will place 40 AmeriCorps members, aged 17-26 in small teams to conduct conservation activities throughout the State of Delaware. State parks are easily accessible to all residents of the state, so the impact of this project is statewide. The quarter-time members will serve from June through August, the times of greatest park need and usage, with students out of school. The half-time members will serve from June through December. At the conclusion of the summer season, these half-time members will come together and operate as a team, continuing conservation activities throughout the fall.

We are requesting:

35 QT slots 5 HT Slots

Federal Share: \$153,912	Grantee Match: \$ 98,985	Total Grant: \$252,897
61%	39%	100%
MSY \$ 13,087	\$8,416	\$21,503

Members will gain work experience and valuable skills as they serve in the following capacities:

- Grounds and Landscaping- allowing for use of recreational areas
- Facility Maintenance- building maintenance and repair skills
- Environmental Stewardship - conservation activities preserving Delaware's environment
- Historic Site Preservation – maintaining and repairing culturally and historically significant sites while learning specific techniques and skills for working on historic buildings
- Trail Building and Maintenance- allowing maintenance and continued development of 147 miles of trails for multiple recreational uses throughout the state park system.

25 QT members will be divided into small working teams of 5 QT members each with 1 HT member serving as a team leader, conducting these service activities throughout a particular region in our state. These smaller teams will be supervised by full-time Park Administrators and Project Managers.

10 QT members will serve under the direct supervision of our full-time Historic Preservation staff, performing historic preservation and cultural programming activities.

Recruitment:

Our current recruitment program is very effective, with a rate of three applications for each available position. This program will allow us to offer more positions to this candidate pool who demonstrate the potential to provide service and learn new skills.

In addition to our regular recruitment activities, including newspaper announcements, community center, college and high school notification, we have formed a partnership with the Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training and the Workforce Development Center. Applicants will be referred to our program, and they will also assist with program skills trainings and provide post-program placement resources.

Retention Success:

ENROLLMENT:

A longitudinal study of our program from our first award in 2002 through 2007 indicates an actual 101% slot fill rate. In the last program year of 2007, Delaware State Parks experienced a 105% fill rate; we were able to refill exiting member openings and convert slots to achieve a complete fill rate.

There are two errors that occurred in Wbrs that distort Wbrs reporting of slot fill rate and retention rates. In program year 2005-2006, we were incorrectly awarded nineteen Ed Award Only slots. Unfortunately, when the correction was made to give us our allotted fulltime Stipend and Ed Award Slots, the program officer was unable to remove the nineteen Ed Award Only slots, which skewed our actual slot fill percentages and our retention rates.

In Program Year 2006-2007, a new Program Director sought and received permission from the Commission and CNCS to reduce the number of slots from 38.25 to 32.50 (reducing from 55QT to 32

QT) However, this correction to the slots did not take place, though our budget was amended. These additional slots were also calculated in the Wbrs fill and retention rate, which creates an inaccurate reporting.

Partnerships:

RSVP & Delaware Department of Labor

In partnership with RSVP Sussex County and the Division of Employment and Training, members will receive the following three-part Job Skills Training program.

1. Resources for the unemployed
2. Skills Inventory
3. Resume Writing and Interview Skills
4. One-on-One Consultation and Mock Interview

Members will receive on-site training in all skill areas necessary to complete their service assignment. These trainings are conducted by Division staff members that are considered experts in their field. From handling power equipment to driving tractors, from office procedures to trail techniques the members will learn new skills and use their learning to the benefit of our communities. Additionally, members will receive First Aid/CPR training and Safety Training.

Delaware Department of Development -The Workforce Development Center

The Workforce Development Center works closely with Delaware companies and the Department of Labor to create sustainable jobs in Delaware and with the Workforce Investment Board to identify training needs of job seekers. We are partnering with this office to provide guidance, training assistance and in helping to inform members of job opportunities in Delaware.

Organizational Capability

Our program has demonstrated ability to manage the expanded program for 2009

Staff: The Volunteer Services Office is staffed by volunteer professionals: Chief of Volunteer Services, AmeriCorps Program Director, Field Volunteer Coordinator and Office Staff.

In addition, we will contract a staff member whose sole function will be to supervise the Recovery members and provide information on members' activities for separate reporting requirements.

Members will be supervised in daily activities by Park Superintendents or Program Managers, who are Parks and Recreation professional staff.

Fiscal Reporting:

Our fiscal procedures are implemented through our Division Accounting Office that is governed by State Accounting Code. An annual audit is conducted on all Division accounting activities. One staff member will be designated to process all fiscal activity and reporting requirements.

Reporting:

Volunteer Office Staff and Fiscal Office Staff will collect and prepare additional separate reports as required. Internally, this information will be used to monitor the program.

Track record:

1. In Program Year 2004-05, 05 -06, our program administered two separate AmeriCorps Grants- one formula and one competitive with a total of up to 120 members.
2. In the summers of 1989 and 1999, Delaware State Parks ran a Summer Youth Employment program in partnership with the Department of Labor that placed 25 youth, aged 14-17 in Job Skills Program positions.
3. We are an Award-winning AmeriCorps program since 2002
4. Annually administer more than \$9 million in federal grant monies

Cost Effectiveness:

The Division places the highest importance on the ability of these members to help the Division meet our mission: to provide accessible outdoor recreation and green spaces, especially important during this crisis. As a result, the Division will make provision, even with dwindling budgetary resources, to allocate appropriated special funds to cover program expenses. These funds are not from Federal grant sources, but are from internal funding sources such as camping and program fees.

The program is requesting additional \$500 per MSY. With a predicted \$750 million budget shortfall in the State of Delaware, funding is not available for the Division to contribute at the level we have in the past of nearly 50%. The additional monies will be used specifically to prepare and engage members in service: tools, gear, training and transportation to various work locations.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE:

Employment and Skills Training: Outcome 1 of 3 and 3 of 3

Non-profit Capacity and Volunteer Generation are also a part of this project.

Delaware State Parks							
Recovery Youth Conservation Corps 2009							
Section I. Program Operating Costs							
A. Personnel Expenses							
Position/Title/Description	Qty	Annual Salary	% Time	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Personnel Expenses							
Park Manager level Supervisors at 5%	3	46000	5.00%	11500.00	1,725	0	1,725
Staff Supervisors	3	28000	100.00%	7000.00	21,000		21,000
Chief of Operations @10%	1	52000	2.00%	13000.00	260		260
Chief of Volunteer Services	1	50000	10.00%	12500.00	1,250		1,250
Ac Program Director	1	38,000	20.00%	9500.00	1,900		1,900
Fiscal Administrator	1	45700	5.00%	11425.00	571		571
Accountant	1	30300	15.00%	7575.00	1,136		1,136
Program Manager	1	15000	100.00%	15000.00	15,000		15,000
				Total	42,843	0	42,843
B. Personnel Fringe Benefits							
Purpose/Description				Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Personnel Fringe X 15%				6,426	6,426	0	6,426
				Total	6,426	0	6,426
C.1 Staff Travel							
Purpose/Description				Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Travel							
Staff- PD	1	150	13.00		1,950	1,950	0
Corp Travel					2,000	2,000	0
				Total	3,950	3,950	0
C. 2 Member Travel							
Purpose/Description				Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Members: 6 vans X \$150/week X 12 weeks	5	150	12.00		9,000	9,000	0
				Total	9,000	9,000	0
D. Equipment							
				Total	0	0	0
E. Supplies							
Purpose/Description				Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Uniforms							
PT	40	40		1600.00	1,600	1,600	0
				Sub-Total	1,600	1,600	0
Tools							
Purpose/Description				Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Phones: 0X40/month	7	40	12.00	3,360	3,360	3,360	0
Tools, Safety Equipment & project support	40	40			1,600	500	1,100
				Sub-Total	4,960	3,860	1,100
RECRUITMENT							
Purpose/Description				Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share

Recruitment Flyers/Mailing: 6 ads X 250	6	250		1,500	1,500	0	1,500
				Sub-Total	1,500	0	1,500
E. Supplies Grand Total				Total	8,060	5,460	2,600
F. Contractual & Consultant Services				Total	0	0	0
G. 1 Staff Training							
Purpose				Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
4 Site Supervisor trainings X \$250 each	4	250		1,000	1,000	0	1,000
				Total	1,000	0	1,000
G. 2 Member Training							
Purpose				Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Manual X15	40	15			300	0	300
Summer Early Service: Meals 40 X 2days X \$10.00	40	7	2.00		560	560	0
Service Training Meal: 40X2daysX10	40	7	2.00		560	560	0
Jobs Training Monthly: 3 X\$10	40	8	3.00		960	960	0
Training Grand Total				Total	2,380	2,080	300
H Evaluation							
Purpose				Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Program Evaluation= 3 days X \$442	3	442		Total	1,326	0	1,326
Other Operating Costs				Total	0	0	0
					Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Subtotal SECTION I					74,985	20,490	54,495
J. Source of Match							
		Private	State/Local	Federal	Source		
In-Kind		0	0	0	State of Delaware		
Cash		0	54,495	0	Appropriated Special		
TOTAL			54,495	0			
SECTION II MEMBER COSTS							
A. Living Allowance							
Item	# Mbrs	Allowance Rate	# w/o Allowance	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Fulltime	0	11400	0.00	0	0	0	0
Half-time members	5	5700	0.00	28,500	28,500	24,225	4,275
Quarter Time members	35	3087.5	0.00	108,063	108,063	91,853	16,209
	40		TOTALS	136,563	136,563	116,078	20,484
B. Member Support Costs							
Purpose	# Mbrs	Daily Rate	# months	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share

FICA Total X .0765				10,447	10,447	8,880	1567
Workers Comp				920	920	773	147
Health Insurance	0.00	145.00	11.00	0	0	0	0
			TOTAL	11,367	11,367	9,653	1714
					11,367		
SUB TOTAL SECTION II TOTAL					Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
					147,930	125,731	22,199
				Share %	100%	85%	15%
					\$147,930		
SUBTOTAL SECTION I + II					Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
				Total	222,914	146,221	76,694
				Share %	100%	66%	34%
					222914		
J. Source of Match							
	Private		State/Local		Federal	Source	
In-Kind		0		0	0		
Cash		0		22,199	0	Appropriated Special	
TOTAL				22,199	0		
SECTION III Administrative/ Indirect Cost							
A. Corporation Fixed Percentage Method							
Purpose				Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Subgrantee Share				22,291	22,291		22,291
Corporation share				7,691	7,691	7,691	
TOTAL				29,983	29,983	7,691	22,291
Total Sections I, II, & III							
					Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
					252,897	153,912	98,985
				Share %	100%	61%	39%
Cost per MSY							
					Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Cost per MSY				TOTAL	21,503	13,087	8,416
FTE:	0.000	1.000		0.000			
Reduced 1/2 time 1700/675hrs	5.000	0.500		2.500			
Quarter	35.000	0.2646		9.261			
	40.000			11.761			