

# PART I - FACE SHEET

## APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to confirm to the Corporation's eGrants System)

1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION:

Application  Non-Construction

2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS):	3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE:  08-DEC-11	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:
2b. APPLICATION ID:  12AC133639	4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER:  12ACHNM0010004

**5. APPLICATION INFORMATION**

LEGAL NAME: Rocky Mountain Youth Corps  DUNS NUMBER: 111765293	NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Carl J. Colonius  TELEPHONE NUMBER: (505) 751-1420 22 FAX NUMBER: (505) 751-1136 INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: colonius@youthcorps.org
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): RMYC AmeriCorps Program P.O. Box 1960 Ranchos de Taos NM 87557 - 1960 County: Taos	

6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN):  850404817	7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Non-Profit 7b. Community-Based Organization
---	---

8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box). <input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE <input type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> AMENDMENT If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es): <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>  A. AUGMENTATION            B. BUDGET REVISION  C. NO COST EXTENSION    D. OTHER (specify below):	
---	--

	9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: <b>Corporation for National and Community Service</b>
--	---

10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: 94.006 10b. TITLE: AmeriCorps State	11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: Rocky Mountain Youth Corps AmeriCorps
--	--

12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): Taos Mora	11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):
---	---

13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 09/01/12    END DATE: 08/31/13	14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF:    a.Applicant <input type="text" value="NM 003"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="NM 003"/>
--	---

15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: <input type="text" value="1"/> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 5px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">a. FEDERAL</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">\$</td> <td style="width: 60%;">453,381.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. APPLICANT</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> <td>603,464.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c. STATE</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> <td>0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d. LOCAL</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> <td>0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e. OTHER</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> <td>0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f. PROGRAM INCOME</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> <td>0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g. TOTAL</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> <td>1,056,845.00</td> </tr> </table>	a. FEDERAL		\$	453,381.00	b. APPLICANT		\$	603,464.00	c. STATE		\$	0.00	d. LOCAL		\$	0.00	e. OTHER		\$	0.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME		\$	0.00	g. TOTAL		\$	1,056,845.00	16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE:  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372
a. FEDERAL		\$	453,381.00																										
b. APPLICANT		\$	603,464.00																										
c. STATE		\$	0.00																										
d. LOCAL		\$	0.00																										
e. OTHER		\$	0.00																										
f. PROGRAM INCOME		\$	0.00																										
g. TOTAL		\$	1,056,845.00																										
	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO																												

18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.

a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Carl J. Colonius	b. TITLE: Executive Director	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (505) 751-1420 22
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 06/20/12

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

121 RMYC AmeriCorps members, local youth ages 16-25, will improve their economic opportunities through National Service. Members reach this goal across northern New Mexico through successful completion of projects in environmental restoration, wildfire disaster mitigation, and educational mentoring. At the end of the project, 90% of the RMYC AmeriCorps Members will transition into employment or enroll in post-secondary education and will have earned college credits leading to stronger employability. CNCS' investment of \$ 453,486 is matched with \$ 603,359 and meets CNCS's priorities of disaster mitigation, environmental stewardship, education and economic opportunity.

## Rationale and Approach

### a. Need

New Mexico has 5% of frontier lands found in the U.S., ranking behind only Alaska, Texas and Montana. Frontier communities are defined by a matrix of density, distance in miles and length of travel time. The economic opportunity challenges of these frontier areas include workforce shortages, lack of support services, and lack of opportunities for youth. Rocky Mountain Youth Corps AmeriCorps is a strategy to bring economic opportunity to disadvantaged and at-risk youth in northern New Mexico between the ages of 16-25.

The population across the region is 55% Hispanic, 37% Anglo, 7% Native American and 1% other (2010 Census), and most communities in the region are quite small with populations of less than 1,000 people. Counties in northern New Mexico have unemployment ranging from 9.5% to a shocking 13.6% while 29.1% of youth live in poverty in New Mexico compared to the national average of 18%. Taos County's youth in poverty percentage is even higher at 33%. Nearly 22% of New Mexico youth ages 18 to 24 are not working, not in school and have no degree beyond high school. Taos County has a 43% high school dropout rate and only 17% of youth in New Mexico have college degrees (Kids Count 2010).

For youth living in these areas, the challenges of poverty and unemployment are reflected in substance abuse, binge drinking, and educational failure. Isolated and living below the poverty level, unemployed youth in northern New Mexico communities find few opportunities to develop meaningful work skills, improve their academic performance, or consider post-secondary education options. Rocky Mountain Youth Corps AmeriCorps provides economic opportunity for disadvantaged New Mexico youth through structured service opportunities and improved educational levels.

Our communities have additional critical needs beyond the needs of our youth. In a region which is

## Narratives

68% public land, catastrophic wildfires are looming natural disasters. New Mexico State Forestry has identified 20 wildland urban interface zones at risk of catastrophic forest fires in the state, 11 of which are located in Taos County. Northern New Mexico spent much of the fire season of 2011 in Stage 3 Fire Closures, and suffered half a dozen major fires that destroyed residences, displaced families and businesses, impacted air quality and devastated watersheds. The 2011 Las Conchas Fire was the largest fire in the history of New Mexico, burning over 150,000 acres, threatening Los Alamos National Laboratories and Bandelier National Monument and forcing many local residents to flee the region due to poor air quality. Northern New Mexico has a limited industrial base and depends heavily on recreation and tourism. Visitors are here for the recreational activities found in the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests, the Wild and Scenic Rivers of the BLM, and the cultural and historic treasures such as World Heritage Site and National Historic Landmark Taos Pueblo. These resources are currently threatened by wildfire risk.

RMYC AmeriCorps mobilizes local youth to prevent wildfires, develop and maintain recreational trails and camping infrastructure, often leading toward ongoing jobs across the southwest for youth in land management careers.

The community's educational need which can be addressed successfully through national service occurs in education. Every Taos public school failed to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) leaving our schools in corrective action with the NM Public Education Department (NMPED 10-11). In addition, the district is significantly economically disadvantaged with 100% of schools within district qualifying for free or reduced lunches. RMYC AmeriCorps provides local schools after school mentoring for elementary children to reach higher school performance, increased attendance and reduced risky behaviors

### b. Value Added: Member Roles and Responsibilities

RMYC proposes to engage 121 disadvantaged youth into varying service terms. The total MSY requested is 34.95. RMYC AmeriCorps program is an effective means to address our community needs and creates exceptional training and work experience opportunities for youth. RMYC AmeriCorps is a virtual on-ramp for local youth, re-engaging disenfranchised young people and providing work experience, academic value, college credit for service, access to educational awards and preparation for next steps. Without these experiences, employment or college access can be out of reach for many youth living in poverty.

Presently, demographics show that average age of RMYC Members is 18.5 years old. With regard to gender, RMYC engages slightly more males; 55% males to 45% females. In a community which is

## Narratives

predominately Hispanic, Members reflect the diversity of the community: Hispanic 83%, Native American 8% and Anglo 9%. Only 26% of Members have graduated from high school and 12% have previous justice system involvement. Almost 90% of RMYC AmeriCorps Members have active military members in their immediate family.

RMYC is requesting: 27- 900 hour terms, 7-675 hour terms, 7- 450 terms, and 80-300 hour Education Award Only terms. The terms are tailored to best meet the seasonal nature of work and the population we serve. These varying service terms will be used in both school and field based service crews to reach national performance measures in economic opportunity as well as education and disaster mitigation.

RMYC AmeriCorps participants divide into crews based on the type of community projects addressed; the RMYC Field program or the RMYC Education program. In the Field Program, RMYC will utilize 21- 900 hour service terms, 7 -675 hour service terms, 7-450 hour service terms and 56-300 Education Award Only terms of service. In August 2012, seven- 675 hour service term Members will begin their term of service completing 675 hours by December 2012. This crew (Environmental Stewardship) will reduce the risk of wildfire, build trails and improve community infrastructure. Their 675 term of service will be completed before winter arrives. This end date also allows for transition to second semester post-secondary schools or the start of new employment opportunities.

RMYC's next AmeriCorps field based crews are recruited to begin in March 2013. These AmeriCorps participants are divided onto three crews of seven members serving 900 hour service terms, and one crew of seven serving a 450 hour term of service. The 900 hour crews span six months from March to August 2013, providing Members the largest term possible within the contract period, and also aligning with a transition into higher education in the Fall Semester. The three 900 hour crews scheduled from March to August 2013 include an Environmental Stewardship Crew, Green Crew, and Community Improvement Crew. The Environmental Stewardship Crew focuses on watershed restoration and wildfire prevention, creating a more natural forest regime to prevent catastrophic wildfire. This crew also completes community outreach to local communities and individuals on fire prevention activities that can be adopted by homeowners using a FIREWISE curriculum. The Community Improvement Crew will improve and enhance community infrastructure and recreational opportunities including maintenance and construction of trails. Their trail work will include a number of partners, including the national forest, BLM and National Parks as well as local communities. The Green Crew is focused on weatherization, will develop economic opportunity for its national service participants through the technical and employment skills they obtain in the

## Narratives

alternative energy field through energy efficiency and weatherization tasks on low income homes across northern New Mexico.

An additional group of seven 450 hours term of service will be recruited in March 2013 but complete their term of service in June 2013. Similar to the Community Improvement Crew mentioned above, the 450 hour crew (CIC II) will complete necessary community trail and recreational projects. This abbreviated schedule supports Members' transitions into summer career opportunities in environmental stewardship positions such as firefighting, trail building, and crew leadership within other environmental groups and public land management organizations.

The remaining field crews enroll are in 300 hour service terms. During June through August 2013, 56 youth from across northern New Mexico including Taos (pop. 5,000), Questa (pop. 1,877), Peñasco (pop. 2,320), Raton (pop. 7,582), Mora (pop. 3,902) and Abiquiu area (pop. 635) will complete important community improvement projects including a new community park trail, trail extensions, playground installation, and other community facility improvements during RMYC's summer Youth Conservation Corps program. Seven crews of eight youth ages 16 to 25 years old under the direction of an experienced Crew Supervisor will be formed. These RMYC Summer YCC Field Crews (10 weeks) provide meaningful service opportunities to youth who might otherwise have no summer employment options. Traditionally, these slots give college and high school youth the opportunity to experience community service and to earn an education award before returning to a school setting or securing full time employment. The AmeriCorps Education Awards are vital to youth living in areas where poverty exceeds national levels and economic opportunity is limited. The AmeriCorps award is provided without a living stipend as wages are provided by a New Mexico Youth Conservation Corps grant.

RMYC's Education Program will enroll six-900 hour AmeriCorps members and 24 -300 hour Education Award Only members in August 2012. The six- 900 hour slots provide academic support to a challenged educational system and offer economic opportunity to local youth. These six-900 hour members ages 18 to 25 serve as mentors for three local elementary schools in Taos County from September 2012 to May 2013. Using 900 hour service term satisfies the community need for safe, secure and consistent after school mentoring for elementary children following the school calendar from September through May. AmeriCorps Members are paired and placed at local elementary schools under direction of a Crew Supervisor. The after school mentors make school re-engagement a priority by assisting K-5 children in homework assistance, educational activities and service learning. When children find academic success in school, they have better attendance and less discipline issues.

## Narratives

Each after-school mentoring site works with 20-30 students in grades K-5. The after school schedule is Monday through Friday from 3:00 to 6:00 pm in two 16-week session. Each three hour session includes thirty minutes of physical activities with healthy snack, one hour of homework assistance, and ninety minutes of service learning project and enrichment activities. The twenty-four Education Award Only slots will be used in the after school program to allow for additional service opportunities for high school and college youth. These EAO Members bolster the Mentors at the after school sites, and offer additional individualized attention for the elementary students. The 300 hour term provides flexibility to participate in national service as well as participate in high school extra-curricular activities for high school youth.

### c. Evidenced Based

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps AmeriCorps provides unique solutions not available in the communities served. As AmeriCorps members, local youth will have the opportunity to develop new life, employment and personal skills while addressing weighty community needs. Historically, crew-based service like RMYC AmeriCorps has successfully addressed community needs. The Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's organized unemployed young men into crews which improved millions of acres of federal land, built 97,000 miles of fire roads and planted nearly a billion trees. Following the Great Depression, when the job market picked up, businessmen indicated a preference for hiring a man who had been in the CCC, and the reason was simple. Employers believed that anyone who had been in the CCC would know what a full day's work meant, and how to carry out instructions in a disciplined way.

Today, youth corps organizational model has documented success. RMYC Members participated National Evaluation of Youth Corps funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service and conducted by Abt Associates, Inc from 2006 through 2009. RMYC's customized report indicated that at 18 and 30 months after service RMYC participants earned \$11.13 per hour while control members earned less at \$9.60 per hour. In addition, 90.5% of RMYC respondents worked in a regular job in the last 12 months compared to the national Members' respondent pool of 78.1%.

### d. Member Experience

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps has a long history of service through northern New Mexico. As a result, the organization has constructed a program with strong planning components, long term buy-in from the community and intentionally designed experiences which allow our members to develop personally and professionally while meeting community needs through service.

RMYC employs various mechanisms for Members to reflect on their service. The most informal

## Narratives

system used is the daily Members check-in each morning. This process prepares for the service day, reviewing project goals, crew objectives, tools and supply needs. At end of day, Crew Supervisors lead a debrief to reflect on what went well and summarize the challenges of the day. The reflection allows Members to process as a group and consistently improve crew performance. A more formal reflection occurs during quarterly Member evaluation. Crew Supervisors complete a written evaluation based on each Member's growth in various competencies, including general employability skills and project specific skills. During these evaluations, the national service participant has the opportunity to outline and reflect on other civic engagement activities which they have participated during the period.

Emphasizing civic responsibility is one of RMYC's primary objectives. We strive to support Members in becoming responsible and engaged citizens, and have a number of organizational structures to involve Members in civic activities. Beyond our day-to-day service ethic, RMYC provides a minimum of four Service Days over the course of a season. The first service day occurs during the statewide AmeriCorps Launch in October. In this event, Members assume a passive role as participants rather than planners and implementers. Through coaching and deliberate trainings on planning, presentation skills and timelines by RMYC staff, Members take a significantly larger role in planning a second event, MLK Day. By the final months of service, our Members are mobilizing and informing the community regarding local issues and needs. Events around Make a Difference Day, MLK Day, Earth Day, National Youth Service Day, or National Trails Day provide hands-on experience for our AmeriCorps Members in civic engagement, volunteer recruitment and project management. Ultimately, it is important for our youth to buy in to the ethic of service, because RMYC is developing strong leaders in our community. Member leadership in Service Day development also encourages Members to engage their friends and families and additional volunteer participation is significant. As our Members reflect on their year of service, 95.8 percent reported satisfaction with experience in terms of helping others and a desire to continue performing community service (Abt, June 2011).

At RMYC, uniforms play an importance role in establishing an AmeriCorps identity. All RMYC Members wear service gear which carries the AmeriCorps logo, and all partner/ project work sites have AmeriCorps signage as do RMYC vehicles. Furthermore, connection to the overall AmeriCorps experience is fostered through attendance of the AmeriCorps members at the New Mexico AmeriCorps Statewide Launch in October and the Spotlight on Volunteerism conference in April. At the Launch, Members have the opportunity to repeat the pledge as a statewide group. This pledge has served as a powerful reminder of their commitment to service. While the Spotlight allows members to reaffirm

## Narratives

that volunteerism can occur their across life span. Our State Commission also develops trainings which emphasize projects skill development and sharing between AmeriCorps programs engaged in like activities i.e. RMYC mentors meeting and training with other mentors across New Mexico.

### e. Overall Picture

Rural northern New Mexico offers local youth limited work experiences which can lead to improved opportunity to attend college or learn employment skills. Simultaneously, our communities are at risk of catastrophic wildfire, and public lands are under-resourced, leaving trails and recreational facilities are in disrepair. Rural schools are not meeting annual yearly progress academically, and suffer from close to 50% attrition. Service in AmeriCorps ensures that vital community needs are met and young people have opportunities to develop professional and personal skills and engage in valuable experiences. RMYC AmeriCorps supports 121 Members in preventing wildfire, building trails and operating after school programs. In turn, these Members have increased economic opportunities developed through skills and certifications, academic credit and scholarships achieved. RMYC expects that 250 households will be protected from catastrophic wildfire, 50 miles of trail will be restored and 120 children will be mentored to successful reach grade level completion. AmeriCorps participants benefit from a service experience, develop positive work habits, and transition from their term of service into full time employment or post-secondary enrollment accessing their education award. RMYC AmeriCorps program is extremely effective demonstrating results and offering targeted support for youth through RMYC. In northern New Mexico, there are few other choices.

### f. Member Selection, Training and Supervision

RMYC recruits members throughout the calendar year. Recruitment begins in August to select Members for the 900 hour Mentoring Crew, the 300 hour EAO Mentoring Volunteers, and the 675 hour Environmental Stewardship Crew. Recruitment is initiated again in late January for 900 hour and 450 hour Field crews. The summer Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crews that span northern New Mexico communities in Rio Arriba, Taos, Colfax and Mora Counties are recruited in early May. Our recruitment cycles focus first on local youth and includes posting for national applicants. Approximately 10% of our members come from outside our community. A written list of member benefits as well as position descriptions are available on our website, newsletter and in handouts. We focus recruitment in WIA one-stop centers, GED programs and word of mouth within supportive housing and low income neighborhoods. Recruitment themes found in our advertising include national service, challenging oneself, personal discovery and employability skill development. The recruitment efforts in our satellite communities where summer programs occur are primarily

## Narratives

managed by Local Advisory Boards made up of community members. Local Advisory Boards are configured to make selection decisions based upon a set of common criteria as well as criteria set for the community.

RMYC's Member diversity is intentional, yet occurs naturally as we recruit from communities which are ethnically diverse and historically low income. Due to RMYC's longevity in the region, the organization has a reputation for inclusivity, and serving disenfranchised youth. Typically, RMYC receives three applications for each position available.

All Member applicants submit an application requesting residency information, past work experience, educational status, history of adjudication, two professional references and a brief essay responding to three questions: why do you want to participate in national service, what do you hope to gain from your service, and how do you think the program will help you?

Once an applicant's materials are complete, an interview is scheduled. Member interviews are conducted by a panel that typically includes staff members, partners, current Members and as available, an alumni. The interview script describes the specific service duties, weekly schedule and program benefits. Following this introduction, staff proceeds with set interview questions to guarantee consistency with each applicant regardless of the makeup of the panel. The questions indicate candidate's level of interest in national service, what they expect to gain from the program as well as add to the program and community.

The final component of our selection process is a volunteer service day; candidates are invited to participate in a training day to demonstrate their enthusiasm, capacity to follow instructions, work ethic and ability to work with others. Crew Supervisors and program staff are present at the training day and observe potential Members in a real work environment. Upon completion of the training day, Members are selected for all crew slots. Applicants that are not selected are encouraged to reapply and their applications are kept on file for future crew opportunities. RMYC strives to be fair and consistent with our interview process in order to find the best fit with Members and our programs' objectives. New crews are assembled to reflect the gender and ethnic diversity of the community and creates a balance of experience levels. Mixing these characteristics fosters opportunities for peer to peer learning and sharing of new ideas.

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps places great emphasis on member orientation, training, supervision, and overall Member development. RMYC's Training Department coordinates orientation, on-going training and a positive transition from the program upon completion of the term of service. RMYC training staff is dedicated to serving the professional and personal development needs of the

## Narratives

AmeriCorps Members that commit to a term of service with our organization. The Training Department provides Members scheduled trainings, coordinates UNM-Taos curriculum implementation /dual credit, facilitates workforce development activities and promotes civic engagement.

Due to the staggered Crew initiation, orientations occur throughout the program year and are tailored to each crew and program. The first week of orientation creates a common understanding across all crews, regardless of their project assignments. New Crew orientation topics include history of National Service, AmeriCorps regulations and performance measures, prohibited activities discussions, organizational introduction, review of the Corpsmember Handbook, conflict resolution, understanding diversity, First Aid/CPR and Crew teambuilding experience on RMYC's Challenge Course, a high element ropes course. The second week of orientation includes partner and project specific trainings, for instance, the Environmental Stewardship crews have specific trainings in Chainsaw use and safety (S-212), emergency response protocols (IS100/IS700 National Incident Command Structure Training), wilderness orienteering, forest ecology, forest monitoring techniques and Wilderness First Aid trainings. Community Improvement Crews will receive many of the same first aid and emergency response trainings but then will focus on construction techniques, equipment operation and tools trainings. The Green Crew also receives the first aid and emergency response trainings supplemented with green trade technologies, and specialized equipment usage specific to weatherization such as the blower door and heat emissions sensor. The Mentoring Crew receives trainings in classroom management, tutoring techniques, lesson plan development, positive play activities and ultimately, how to build fun, innovative, and academically enriching activities that engage students, extend their knowledge in new ways, and support academic achievement.

After the initial orientation, RMYC structured trainings occur weekly. The cornerstone of our corpsmember development is the Individual Development Plan (IDP). The IDP is a written rubric for establishing and measuring progress in a Member's professional and personal goals. Five competency areas - competence, confidence, character, connection and compassion are addressed through the IDP, and provide structure to chart and monitor progress toward goals to insure continuous learning. IDP's are initiated during corpsmember orientation and are facilitated by each Member's Crew Supervisor. Thereafter, the IDP is re-visited periodically by the corpsmember, Crew Supervisor and Training staff to monitor progress.

Member development units and curriculum are designed to meet specific objectives of RMYC programming and emphasize critical reflection on individual and group progress. Units are connected

## Narratives

to overall learning goals set out in Members' Individual Development Plans, and create a unique and personalized learning environment for the crews. Trainings move from creating a cohesive crew through team development to position specific trainings. All trainings have an underpinning of workforce skill development and transition to further education or employment. These weekly trainings provide opportunity to recheck Members' understanding of prohibited activities. Anticipated weekly training topics for school-based Members include brain development, effective communication, multiple intelligences and behavior management. Field crews will have ongoing trainings on the ecology of fire, Leave No Trace, additional tools or equipment depending upon projects and map and compass skills.

Member training is also not limited to crew based and project topics but also is targeted to personal development. Significant tools used by program staff to assist the participant toward economic opportunity include the IDP, Education Blocks, Dual Credit, GED instruction and Transition planning.

All national service participants who lack a high school diploma receive GED instruction through our community's adult basic education program. Our Training Department provides GED instruction to Members when field projects require out of town travel.

Education Block provide an opportunity for Members to work towards meeting their professional goals. Week-long Ed Blocks consist of concentrated instructional periods including workshops that teach Members how to write or improve their resumes, how to write a cover letter, engage in mock interviews, practice public speaking skills and discuss professional goals with community members. An Ed Block schedule allows for concentrated teaching opportunities which extend beyond a day as well as offer opportunities for special speakers and field trips. All Members will participate in at least one Education Block during their term of service.

To further support our Members, RMYC has a co-enrollment program with the University of New Mexico - Taos (UNM-Taos). Through the co-enrollment program, Members earn college credit towards an associate's degree. These credits are available in Life skills (A&S 198) for all Members, then specific to each crews' training, such as Elementary Education Mentoring (Ed293), Introduction to Land Management (Bio 225) and Introduction to Weatherization and Construction (Cnst 290). Receiving college credit during their term of service often encourages Members to pursue higher education upon completion of their AmeriCorps term of service. As RMYC AmeriCorps Members graduate from our program, they have the opportunity to utilize an AmeriCorps education award, and have earned three or more hours of college credit, and received certifications and trainings that

## Narratives

lead to greater employability.

As Members move into their last months of service, the Training Department implements transition strategies program (Life After AmeriCorps) which assists the Members to transition successfully to full time employment, college/vocational programs or a combination of both. Resume writing, professional and business dress, reference development, FAFSA, and other topics are discussed weekly in trainings. Placement into mini-internships lasting two to three weeks are also developed with local businesses and social service agencies. Members are supported as they develop their portfolio of job skills and related certificates and /or certifications.

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps has developed a tiered system of support and supervision for Members. Members' immediate supervisor is the crew supervisor, who is supported by a Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator reports to and is mentored by the Program Director.

Crew Supervisors are hired in the same process as all staff and Members: review of job description, formal application and panel interview. Crew Supervisors manage all aspects of a crew's daily assignments. Tools, member timesheets, project plans, transportation, and job skills are taught and reinforced by the Crew Supervisor. RMYC crews have six to eight Members; this ratio allows for individualized support and guidance from their Crew Supervisor.

While we aim to have returning Crew Supervisor, RMYC does hire some new Crew Supervisors each year. Job qualifications include experience working with young adults, forest worker safety certification, teaching experience and other job specific skills ie construction, or trail building. Crew Supervisors are hired up to one month prior to a crew orientation. During this time, Crew Supervisors learn about RMYC policies, learn our disciplinary progression, conduct potential corpsmember interviews and develop plans for his or her crew's orientation. Ongoing training occurs throughout program year and features attendance at annual Corps Rendezvous. The event is an informal, annual meeting of program level staff from across nation to reflect on best practices in the field.

The Crew Supervisor always has support from the coordinator or director. The Program Coordinators review project impact forms submitted by Crew Supervisor, make project site visits and assist in material and partner site logistics. The final tier is the Program Director. The Program Director is responsible for both members and projects to RMYC administration. The Director must manage stipend hours, training hours, and the AmeriCorps experience meeting community needs. Weekly, formal meetings between Crew Supervisors, Coordinator, and Program Director allows for trouble-shooting project issues, reviewing member needs, and monitoring supervision of members.

g. Outcome: Performance Measure

## Narratives

At the end of a three year cycle, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps will expect to see local youth living in remote rural northern New Mexico securing meaningful employment after national service or attending college using credits secured as a result of national service.

RMYC's proposed Annual Performance Measures: 25% of AmeriCorps members finding employment (O 12/O 15) and 47% earning college credit (O 14/O 17), 120 elementary student served (ED 5/ED 27) and 80% of those students will demonstrate improved school engagement , 50 miles of trail (EN 5), and 250 homeowners receiving disaster mitigation services (D 4).

RMYC has developed or adapted reporting tools for complete tracking and measurement of outputs and intermediate outcomes. The following list outlines the tools and procedures that will be used in RMYC's evaluation: Parent Questionnaires provide information on tutor/mentor effectiveness with regards to school engagement and mentor relationships with the children. Teacher Questionnaires offer the school perspective on a child's progress in attendance, classroom behavior and homework completion. Field Program crews complete Project Impact Forms weekly to document field projects activities and outputs. Partner Surveys track feedback from partners and collaborators with regard to completion rate, AmeriCorps Member relationships, skills and points for learning. All Members complete a Quarterly Corpsmember Evaluation to review progress toward achieving IDP specific goals. Crew Supervisors and RMYC staff participate in weekly Project Side meetings to monitor teachable moments, changes in program plans and implementation, challenges and successes. Enrollment and exit forms provide evaluation of Members transitions to employment and education while alumni survey seek to track long term employment and educational attainment.

As a past CNCS grantee, RMYC has successfully achieved significant outcomes for our community and youth. It is from past outcomes and discussion with present partners that we have developed our outcome targets for the three year project. RMYC mentoring program has served over a thousand K-8 children with more than 72% of teachers reporting improved behavior and school participation by enrolled children, 69% of children enrolled improved their reading and math scores and an overwhelming majority of parents citing the program quality as "excellent". In the last three years, RMYC has completed wildfire prevention on over 230 acres of public lands, given FIREWISE presentations to hundreds of community members, and donated over 90 cords of wood removed from public lands to low income elderly community residents. The AmeriCorps Green Crew has provided 138 energy audits and weatherization for low income homes, and saved low income residents of public housing units literally thousands of dollars in utility costs.

RMYC AmeriCorps substantially increases economic opportunity for youth, with 59% of RMYC's

## Narratives

program participants returning to high school or college, 21% finding employment and in the past year, 4% choosing to continue in a national service program. The CNCS/Abt study reports that 90.4% of RMYC Members report “satisfied to very satisfied” with the skills they learn toward employment and 89.1% of those looking for employment were successful in finding a job after national service.

### h. Volunteer Generation

The ethic of service is important to Rocky Mountain Youth Corps. RMYC AmeriCorps hosts Service Days and recruits community volunteers to join our Members and staff regularly to honor the National Service calendar. Members are mentored by the Training Staff and learn to host and implement service days. The modeling of how to plan and execute events occurs from simply participating in Make a Difference Day events to planning an event during the last months of their service term. RMYC staff has a diminishing role in planning volunteer events, recruitment of volunteers and maintenance of a volunteer data base as the project year progresses and corpsmember skills increase. As Members recruit community volunteers for RMYC service days, they are learning important work skills such as project management, supervision of others, public speaking and media development. These professional skills can be transferred to future employment opportunities. Taos County has no centralized volunteer management system. Therefore, this data base of volunteers is often requested by local government agencies and other service organizations and provides the only comprehensive list of volunteers available in our community. It is our hope that these recruited community volunteers begin to embrace a long term spirit of civic engagement. Community volunteers bolster the efforts of the AmeriCorps members, combining to reach significant outcomes only attainable through full community inclusion. For example of the significant impact volunteer can show was seen in 2011 Town of Taos Community Clean up. The event had 115 volunteers in addition to RMYC AmeriCorps Members and staff, and on the day collected 1.83 tons of trash, 95 bags of recycles and fill 2 roll-off dumpsters.

## Organizational Capability

### a. Organizational Background

Since 1995, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC) inspires young adults to make a difference in themselves and their communities. Through training and team service, RMYC is the stepping stone to new opportunities. Primary contact for this application is Carl Colonius. Carl is the co-founder and Executive Director of RMYC. Mary Passaglia, RMYC’s Deputy Director, is the secondary contact for this application.

RMYC has been an AmeriCorps recipient for 14 years, receiving our first AmeriCorps grant in 1998.

## Narratives

Since this time, our RMYC AmeriCorps Members have served over 300,000 hours in their communities. We are very familiar with the AmeriCorps provisions and have a strong relationship with the NM Commission for Community Volunteerism and other AmeriCorps programs in the region. Our organization has undergone multiple AmeriCorps, State of New Mexico and A-133 audits and has no significant findings in our history. Our youth corps model is fundamentally the same since our inception; however we are flexible in our program design to meet the changing needs of the communities we serve.

RMYC's present AmeriCorps grant is a state competitive grant for \$405,869. This represents approximately 21% of the organizational budget. RMYC's Deputy Director is experienced in fundraising and responsible for diversification of revenue streams through major donor campaign, project development and grant writing. Present, revenue streams include the following sources: other federal (8%), state (15%), fee for service (24%), foundation support (28%), and individual contributions (2%).

RMYC has a strong management plan. The RMYC Board of Directors is made up of 10 individuals that serve 2 year terms. Our board is made up of a diverse group of community leaders, business people, RMYC alumni, and concerned citizens from Taos County. The board meets bi-monthly. The Board plans and executes annual fund raising campaign as well as a signature annual event. The following is a list of RMYC Management Team members and their roles in the organization's program. All of the organization falls under the auspices of AmeriCorps:

Executive Director, Carl Colonius is the Co-founder and Executive Director of Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, and has been working in the youth corps movement for over 20 years. Carl is a recognized leader in the field serving as Chair of the Board of Directors of The Corps Network, an active member of Save Service and Voices for National Service and testified before Congress on the value of AmeriCorps Programs and the national service movement. He is presently a member of New Mexico Strategic Leadership Institute, a leadership program for non-profit advocates and leaders. Carl has a Bachelor's of Arts in English Literature from Carleton College.

Deputy Director, Mary Passaglia, holds a Master of Science in Education from University of Dayton and license in social work. She has 18 years' experience in both direct services and nonprofit management. She is responsible for RMYC's Education Program, directly supporting the Educational Coordinator.

Field Program Director, Ben Thomas received a Bachelor's of Science in Recreation Management from the College of Forestry and Conservation at the University of Montana in Missoula. Ben started

## Narratives

with RMYC in 2005 as a Sustainable Forestry AmeriCorps member. Since that time, he has progressed up RMYC's staff pattern as Corpsmember Development Coordinator, Field Program Coordinator and current Field Program Director.

Training Director Jamie Radenbaugh, has 10 years of experience working with youth and providing positive development opportunities for youth across the state of New Mexico. She is an AmeriCorps alumni of the Public Allies Program at Eagle Rock School. Jamie is responsible for managing Members and staff development activities and trainings for our organization.

Finance Director Andrea Delling has over 20 years of experience in business and as an auditor. She is the previous finance director for State of New Mexico Motor Vehicles Department, directed the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act accounting within the New Mexico governor's office, and has run her own business.

Management team meets weekly and full staff meeting occurs monthly. Topics include programmatic and fiscal issues within AmeriCorps, communication from State Commission's Monthly Conference Call and national attendance at AmeriCorps and other conferences.

### b. Sustainability

RMYC has worked to develop multiple revenue streams and focuses on earned income or fee for service programming. Presently, AmeriCorps represents only approximately one quarter of RMYC's annual budget. RMYC exceeds the required AmeriCorps match, committing to more than 56% match.

The community supports our programs with both financial and in-kind support. These partners play a significant role in maintaining programming beyond federal support.

RMYC collaborates and plans implementation with the support many agencies and organizations. Land management agencies such as Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service, local businesses, and governments assist in project identification and execution. These groups along with other nonprofits and individuals support our AmeriCorps Member development objectives and training. Local schools provide space and snacks during after school hours. These community partnerships are independent of federal funding and will support implementation after AmeriCorps.

### c. Compliance & Accountability

We maintain no sub grantees nor have multiple service site locations. This allows the organization to easily monitor activities of Members to ensure compliance with prohibited activities. Compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations is addressed with staff at all new staff orientations. The staff also receives monthly staff trainings as necessary to address provision changes or shortfalls in provision adherence. Project sites are regularly visited to review compliance and alignment with project impact

## Narratives

forms. For Members, compliance with prohibited activities and AmeriCorps provisions are introduced during orientation and reviewed through program year. All Members are given a handbook outlining provisions as well as page by page review during orientation. These provisions are again reviewed at the October AmeriCorps NM Statewide Launch meeting. Careful attention is paid to prohibited activities and the member agreement which is reviewed before signing.

If compliance issues arise for either staff or members, documentation is placed in the individual's file as incident report. Further breach of provisions is cause for dismissal.

### e. Enrollment and Retention

In the remote, rural communities of northern New Mexico, there is no industrial base, no light manufacturing and limited service sector positions. Jobs are often low paying and scarce or occupations which require advanced degrees, job training and an educational foundation. Youth apply for national service positions at RMYC in order to develop these job skills, serve their community and make a difference. We have three applicants for every position. This community condition results in our enrollment rate of 100%.

We also recognize past performance challenges around AmeriCorps Member retention. RMYC staff has analyzed AmeriCorps Member retention as part of our program planning. From our data analysis, we know that RMYC AmeriCorps members perform best in the half-time, quarter-time and minimum time slots. In this proposal, we have designed a program to offer a variety of service opportunities that focus on the highest retention rates.

While RMYC continues to work towards 100% retention, realistically, there are a few factors that affect our retention rate, some of which can be addressed while others are inherent in our corps model. RMYC serves youth that come from a wide range of backgrounds. Our retention challenge is connected to our mission of engaging hard to serve youth, many of whom have not completed high school and are looking for an opportunity to develop jobs skills, secure skill certification, or earn education awards in order to make a better life for themselves and their families. Our mission and the history of the youth corps organizational model focuses on supporting diverse individuals with a wide range of skills and experiences to become self-accountable, moving toward civic engagement and community membership. Note our retention rates are improving annually. In 2009, average retention rate was 94%; in 2010, retention rate was 97.6% and presently, we anticipate completing 2011 with a rate of 99%. The organization continues to review new service term patterns, program changes and additional services for Members who are struggling to complete their service term.

### f. Performance Targets and Demonstrated Compliance

## Narratives

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps has consistently met or exceeded its performance targets. The following targets were established in the AmeriCorps 2009-2012 proposal: 100 elementary students would receive after school services, 50 acres of forest would be thinned, 25 miles of trail would be restored or constructed, and 75% of national service participants would transition to employment or educational opportunities. Each target has been exceeded as follows: 126 elementary children participated in the after school program with 100% grade level completion; 82.5 acres of forest were thinned and restored to more natural fire regime, 57 miles of trail were constructed and 80% of national service participants transitioned to employment or further education. RMYC has received numerous site visits from contractors with State of New Mexico State Commission, State Commissioners and Commission staff as well as CNCS AmeriCorps staff. The organization has never had a compliance issue.

### **Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy**

#### a. Cost Effectiveness

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps is extremely entrepreneurial in the development of our National Service programming. We secure resources, support and funding from a multitude of sources and weave them into program support to maximize impact on our members and the communities we serve. We focus on providing the highest-quality and most effective program and the best possible Member experience. RMYC has time and time again been referred to as a model AmeriCorps program in New Mexico and nationally, a role we take seriously. We are able to leverage our AmeriCorps funding extensively, increasing the impact of National Service in northern New Mexico by securing over \$600,000 in local match.

#### b. Cost per MSY

Due to RMYC's ability to develop fee-for-service and leveraged funds, RMYC will provide 57.1% match to CNCS funds, exceeding the required minimum. RMYC AmeriCorps cost per Member is less than the maximum allowed at \$12,975 per Member. The design of RMYC AmeriCorps grant enables leveraged funds to be secured from multiple project partners, and our current budget is based on diverse funding sources that include state, private, local municipal, tribal, individual and community. RMYC receives support from more than 40 private, local, state and federal funding sources. While RMYC has significant sources of non-federal support, our strategies are to further diversify the organization's revenue streams. This plan includes greater emphasis on earned revenue, development of strategic partnerships and fee for service opportunities and a much stronger individual and major donor campaign.

## Narratives

### c. Budget Adequacy

RMYC operates efficiently, and a combination of revenue streams provides a strong, consistent and diverse funding base to support our programming. This proposal supports a diverse and essential range of RMYC's crew models. We have created efficiencies in our crew pattern and Members assignments based upon maximizing impacts and member experiences. RMYC is able to exceed required levels of match in each section of the grant with private foundation grants, state and local contracts for services, in-kind donations and fee for service revenue, and we are able to maximize the value of our AmeriCorps grant through effective leveraging and collaboration.

This program design meets multiple community needs, and continues the tradition of excellence in program execution. RMYC is proud to offer a cost effective means of providing dramatic change with youth as a resource. We have been able to maintain a total match of 57.1% and design a program that includes cost per Member below maximum amount allowable. We look forward to continuing as part of the National Service movement and hosting a premier AmeriCorps program in northern New Mexico.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

#### IV. Evaluation Plan

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps completes an internal evaluation as a national grantee receiving less than \$500,000. We believe this evaluation is integral to the monitoring of process and outcomes. In 2012, NMCCV will conduct an independent evaluation of programs. All AmeriCorps programs in New Mexico are required to participate in this evaluation. This state wide evaluation effort will meet the Corporation's evaluation requirements for individual New Mexico programs.

### **Amendment Justification**

not applicable

### **Clarification Summary**

Budget Clarification Items:

Field Program Coordinator Michael Webster has been working with corps programs for ten years. He is an expert trail designer and builder, and has run conservation corps crews in New Mexico, Colorado and Oregon since he graduated from University of Colorado, Boulder. He is certified in Wilderness

## Narratives

First Aid, CPR and Defensive Driving and is a B level Sawyer. As Field Program Coordinator, Webster is responsible for project logistics, tools and materials, and direct support of Crew Supervisors.

Education Program Coordinator Vivian Martinez has been with RMYC since 1999, when she started as a summer Crew Supervisor. In her time at RMYC, Vivian has run crews, supported crew supervisors, developed curriculum, and been the direct liaison with schools in the after school program. Vivian is a native Taosena, and spent 20 years living and working in Peru where she raised her family.

Training Coordinator Rosie Williams is a well-versed experiential educator. Born and raised in Santa Fe, Rosie is directly responsible for facilitating training sessions for all crews. She supports the implementation of GED programming, plans and facilitates orientations, prepares in the field trainings and supports all members in their Individual Development Plans. Rosie has a degree in Experiential Education from Prescott College.

RMYC's Reporting and Office Manager Ariana Delmerico has a BS in Education from the University of New Mexico, and experience as a classroom teacher. Her education background provides a solid foundation for youth development theory and the need for comprehensive and accurate data collection for outcome documentation. Ari comes from an extensive Taos family, and is deeply committed to her community.

In Section I.A. Personnel Expenses should read "Community Improvement Crew Supervisor - Crew 5" This is a supervisor role.

Crew 4 will be supervised by Education Program Coordinator.

Section I. C.

The 2-day in-state Member training is a required by the New Mexico Commission for Community Volunteerism, and is referred to as the New Mexico State AmeriCorps Launch. RMYC AmeriCorps sends representatives of each AmeriCorps crew active at the time of the conference, which has traditionally been scheduled close to "Make a Difference Day."

## Narratives

### Section I.E.

Weatherization Supplies \$3500 (55 water heater blankets @ \$23 each, 30 CFL light bulbs 10 packs @ \$65 each, 10 window sheeting rolls @ \$16.49 each, 5 weatherization strip packs @ \$24 each)

Camping Supplies \$12,459 (32 sleeping bags @ \$110 each, 32 sleeping pads @ \$11 each, 32 backpacks @ \$160, 32 headlamps @ \$19 each, 12 sleeping tarps @ \$250, 6 cooksets @ \$24 each, 6 large food coolers @ \$160 each, 6 med food coolers @ \$60 each)

Safety Equipment \$2,041 (24 harnesses @ \$85 each)

Chainsaw \$1000 (10 20" chain @ \$17.99 each, 10 24" chain @ \$18.99 each, 5 20" bars @\$50 each, 24 2 cycle oil @ \$4, 26 bar oil @ \$11)

All RMYC uniform items contain the AmeriCorps logo.

The supplemental food in the school mentoring program complement the USDA food support provided to schools with healthy fresh snacks.

### Section I.G

\$707 - In state Travel for Conference and Training was moved to Section C, as requested.

\$415 per day rate - Staff Retreat (16 staff) is comprised of: facility rental @ \$200 per day, food @ \$125 per day, mileage @ \$36 per day (2 vans x 62 miles roundtrip x 12 miles/gallon x \$3.45/ gallon cost of gas) and training supplies @ \$54 per day. Food and supplies costs were moved to Section I. E. and transportation/mileage was moved to Section I. C. under the header "Staff Retreat".

\$13,500 Member Orientation in Member Training includes S-212 chainsaw certification, NM Forest Workers Safety Training and Wilderness and Remote First Aid for 42 Members. These certifications are provided by outside entities to allow for formal certifications that lead to employability and

## Narratives

transferability.

Section II.K.

FICA and Workers Compensation for the 56 300 hour EAO NM Youth Conservation Corps Members are paid in full by the State of New Mexico. These items were subtracted from the total wage base in calculating FICA and Workers Compensation for the remaining members.

Section I.I

The budget correctly reflects background checks for all members and staff.

RMYC conducts fee for service projects and services in a large geographical area locally and statewide. 30750 total miles in Transportation are based on van movement of crews into the field. RMYC multiplies the miles per day x number of days x applicable number of operating weeks by crew to ascertain total mileage. The total mileage expense is comprised of: 30750 total miles x 12 miles per van x \$3.45 per gallon gas. This item was moved from Section I to Section C, as requested.

\$1296 Advertising in the Education Program represents: 6 placements totaling \$700 for supervisors and 5 totaling \$596 for members. \$1844 Advertising in Field Crews are comprised of: 12 placements totaling \$1124 for supervisors and 8 totaling \$720 for members.

Program support costs: Rent, maintenance/repairs and utilities are allocated on the basis of square footage assigned to specific program/staff while square footage for common spaces are allocated across all programs. Other program support costs, such as copies, postage, computer maintenance, telecommunications, office supplies, are allocated as a percentage of wages. Excluding the Executive Director, indirect costs cover the Deputy Director and Finance Coordinator. These are not costs included in Section III. A. Administrative/Indirect Costs.

Spike vehicles are used to access off-road projects. The rough road terrain results in greater wear and tear on a vehicle and, in turn, higher maintenance costs.

## Narratives

Section III.

Fee for service revenue is tracked by project number and allotted to the corresponding crew performing the work/service. Fee for service does not fully cover the cost of the projects, services and operations. Foundation and contribution revenue is applied to specific programs, if designated. If undesignated, foundation and contribution revenue are used to supplement match for all programs.

Programmatic Clarification:

RMYC decided not to opt into the Veterans performance measurement as our services are primarily provided to individuals not directly involved in the MILITARY. In November, 2011 a survey of our current Members did indicate that 90% of our members had 'family members' that were Veterans, yet since our target population themselves were not Veterans we did not want to include this performance measure into our proposal.

Our schedule for crew activities is determined by the 20% training expectation. Each slot type is aligned with this expectation, and although RMYC AmeriCorps does prioritize training and development opportunities for Members, our program schedules allow adherence to the 80/20 expectation. When developing our crew schedule, for example, a typical crew week will include four full days in the field in direct service, and one 4-hour day in training. In review of RMYC's last complete program year, AmeriCorps Members did not exceed the 20% training target, and were actually closer to 16% on average.

RMYC's program leadership is keenly aware of 'allowable AmeriCorps activities' and works with partnering organizations to confirm ALL activities fulfill these criteria before a contract would be initiated. RMYC partner organizations have also worked with our AmeriCorps crews extensively, and have solid understanding of what services an RMYC AmeriCorps crew can and cannot provide. For example, RMYC works with Taos Soil and Water Conservation District to complete projects related to forest restoration, streambed stabilization, and other environmental projects. Priorities might change depending upon natural occurrences, such as the fires from last summer. This is a good example of

## Narratives

RMYC AmeriCorps being able to respond to changing community needs, and provide slope stabilization to avoid stream siltation due to vegetative loss post-fire. In addition, RMYC's contract with all organizations includes a statement confirming that 'no staff will be displaced or duplicated' due to this agreement.

RMYC has cultivated partnerships with other organizations and agencies that provide RMYC with fee-for-service match to our AmeriCorps crews. These arrangements are specific to each organization and include one of three types: (1) a longstanding agreement lasting upwards of 5 years, using a Participating or Cooperative Agreement (2) a project specific contract lasting the just life of the project, such as a weatherization contract, or (3) a grant award, such as the New Mexico Youth Conservation Commission awards.

For example, RMYC has participating agreements with both the Town of Taos and Bureau of Land Management. These agreements allow for RMYC to be contracted through an amendment with any department of these local government agencies without having to go out to bid each time a task is identified. Typical activities include trail construction/maintenance, weatherization, fuels reduction, park restoration, and recreation facility maintenance.

Alternatively, RMYC has multiple project specific contracts with New Mexico State Parks, University of New Mexico, Holy Cross Hospital, City of Raton, Village of Cimarron, Town of Angel Fire, Village of Wagon Mound, New Mexico Association of Counties, and the New Mexico State Land Office that allow crews to work on very specific projects with timelines, production goals, and reporting requirements. These contracts are terminated upon completion of the project and new one is developed for additional projects. Typical activities include wildland urban interface (WUI) efforts, community education around FireWise curriculum, trail construction/maintenance, streambed stabilization and river health work, recreation facility upgrades (trail bridge construction, trailhead improvements, kiosk development, etc.) and road/trail obliteration.

Finally, RMYC is consistently responding to 'Request for Proposals' (RFP) from various organizations that provide a strong base of fee-for-service revenue. Since RMYC's first crew in 1995, we have successfully written and received grant funding each year from New Mexico Youth Conservation Commission. This award is in the form of an annual contract initiated by the New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department and is reviewed and approved by a designated YCC State Commission. Typically this contract will support multiple crews for one project/season and RMYC will compete for these funds every year. Contract activities include trail construction, major

## Narratives

trail re-routes, community park installations, forest monitoring, landscaping, and city bike-routes.

All fee for service revenue associated with all these agreements is tracked by RMYC's Finance Department, and coded as revenue associated with specific crews. Funds are tracked by crew and by project and program revenue is applied to that program.

Evaluations are administered to all crews and the number of evaluations is dependent on the length of each member's term. Please refer to the table below for specifics:

Member's Term # of Evaluations in term

900 hour term 4

675 hour term 4

450 hour term 2

300 hour term 2

Volunteers are recruited for a variety of projects in a variety of ways. Community service days are just one opportunity volunteers have to support RMYC. Volunteer generation specific to community service days is accomplished through public advertising such as newspaper and radio ads, as well as email blasts, facebook networks, public meeting, and personal contacts. In addition to the community service days, RMYC recruits volunteers for specific projects. For example, while working on trail projects in Santa Fe National Forest, RMYC will work with Forest Service Volunteer Coordinators to access known trail volunteers and partner with recreation-based industries, such as REI, to access additional volunteers. Finally, on RMYC's website we have a volunteer application available for anyone interested in supporting our efforts. Historically, through the above methods, we have been able to recruit upwards of 400 volunteers per year.

RMYC's after school program has been provided to local communities for eighteen years, and has been associated with RMYC AmeriCorps since RMYC's first AmeriCorps grant. The after school crews have traditionally had Crew Supervisors, although the program design has changed in this proposal to address the challenge of match for a school based program. The curriculum has been developed using best practices from the Afterschool Alliance and follows a positive youth development where AmeriCorps Members mentor elementary school students in non-competitive play, homework completion and enrichment activities. As our Members on these crews have historically been high

## Narratives

school students we have not labeled them as tutors, and thus do not prioritize academic achievement as an outcome, but improved school engagement measured by teacher and parent surveys. A primary strategy is to connect elementary school students to positive high school age students, as this mentoring relationship attributes to the 'resiliency' of both groups.

FireWise curriculum is a national recognized program that 'encourages local solutions for wildfire safety by involving homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, firefighters, and others in the effort to protect people and property from wildfire risks.' RMYC takes the concepts associated with this curriculum, trains our members to share them with homeowners, and attends community events and meeting to present the information to our audience. Because our members are involved in fuels reduction, wildland urban interface initiatives, and thinning practices they are well equipped to 'train' community members, land owners, neighbors, and even school students what can be done at their homes to prepare and prevent wildfires.

RMYC's internship experiences, or mini-internships would be better defined as job-shadowing opportunities. As such, they are not providing substantial benefits to for-profit entities. The internships allow for a one to two day exposure to work environments of interest to the Members. As one component used by RMYC to meet our goals of providing our members with economic opportunities post program, providing support with successful transitions, job-shadowing provides one-on-one coaching from community members/organizations to RMYC members. This better prepares Members for their next steps after the Corps. The relationship with these community organizations is based around member training and is not seen by either party as a benefit to the organization but rather an opportunity for the member learn, grow, network, and explore.

RMYC AmeriCorps Members get selected for the co-enrollment program through self-selection. All members receive the training and education that is accredited through the college. Tuition is paid for those Members that identify the need and desire for the official credit in their transcripts. The number of Members included in the proposal reflects previous enrollment rates. Our partner, UNM Taos, adopts our training curriculum into various academic disciplines, and reviews and acknowledges RMYC staff as adjunct professors for the courses. For instance, crews provided training in wildfire prevention or watershed restoration would receive credits in Natural Resource Management; crews receiving credit in after school mentoring would be able to receive credit in Early Childhood

## **Narratives**

Development, etc. All Members are exposed to the information, and those Members interested in the credits co-enroll in UNM-Taos.

### **Continuation Changes**

not applicable



















## Required Documents

**Document Name**

**Status**

Evaluation

Not Applicable

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable