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Executive Summary

Burlington Housing Authority (BHA) is the Sponsoring Agency for Alamance County RSVP. Formed in 1967, BHA's mission is to provide safe, decent and sanitary housing for persons of low income, including families and elderly, handicapped and/or disabled persons. The goals of the agency are to assist in the development, financing or operation of low-income housing and providing supportive services necessary for persons to enjoy academic, economic, and quality of life success.

We propose to recruit 100 unduplicated, RSVP volunteers: 70 under the Primary Focus Area of Education, serving as tutors and mentors for at-risk children and youth at 15 volunteer stations including schools and community-based after-school programs; and 30 under Healthy Futures, providing respite for 30 plus caregivers of the elderly and/or disabled in their homes.

Tutoring programs will work in partnership with the Alamance-Burlington School System and community after-school programs to address literacy, ESL and math. We will strive for an 85% success rate in End of Grade testing success each year.

Mentoring programs will target at-risk youth, encouraging them to attend school and avoid gang activity. Our partners will be the Department of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention division, local schools and law enforcement. Our goals are to reduce gang involvement and increase school attendance by 75%.

Caregiver respite programs will enable the elderly and/or disabled, including veterans, to remain living at home by providing respite for their primary caregivers. Relieving caregiver stress has been proven to prevent institutionalization of loved ones. Our partners will be: ElderCare, the provider of caregiver services through Community Block grant funding; for-profit Care services; senior services providers and our regional Caregiver Specialist.

The CNCS federal investment of \$77166.00 for this RSVP program will be supplemented by \$33628.00 (30.4% match) from BHA.

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Strengthening Communities

Alamance County, located in North Carolina, was formed in early 1849 and is centrally located in the Piedmont region. According to legend, the word "Alamance" was a local Native American word used to describe the blue mud that was found at the bottom of the creeks. Alamance County is located between two metropolitan areas, the Research Triangle to the east and the Piedmont Triad to the west. It is 150 miles east of the Appalachian Mountains, 200 miles west of the Atlantic Ocean, 30 miles south of the Virginia border, and 130 miles north of the South Carolina border. It has a land area of 429.99 sq miles, with approximately 351 Persons per square mile.

Alamance County borders Guilford, Rockingham and Randolph counties to the West. To the north, the County is bordered by Caswell County, to the east by Orange County, and to the southeast by Chatham County. Alamance County consists of nine municipalities. Burlington is the most populated city in the County, and Graham is the County seat. Alamance County shares two towns with neighboring counties. Gibsonville is shared with Guilford County to the west and Mebane is shared with Orange County to the east.

The County is easily accessed by Interstates 85 and 40 as well as US Highway 70, which bisect the county almost equally into northern and southern portions. Interstate 40 provides residents with access to the Piedmont Triad International Airport, located 35 minutes west in Greensboro, and the Raleigh/Durham International Airport, located 45 minutes to the east. The county is served by Norfolk Southern Railway, and is a major stop on the Amtrak Passenger Railway System. Bus lines offering passenger services are Carolina Trailways and Greyhound.

The population for 2010 was 151,131. Of that number, Caucasian persons made up 71.1%, African

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American persons - 18.8%, Asian - 1.2% American Indian and Alaska Native - 0.7%. Persons reporting two or more races - 2.1%, persons of Hispanic or Latino origin - 11.0%, and White Persons not Hispanic - 67.3%. High school graduates, age 25+ in 2000 equaled just 81.1%. Bachelor's degree or higher, age 25+ in 2000 equaled 21.0%

The unemployment rate for Alamance County in August 2012 was 9.7%; the same as the State rate. There were over 7000 persons listed as unemployed. According to the 2011 Alamance County Community Needs Assessment 15.4% of the population in Alamance County lives in poverty (2009 U. S. Census data). Additionally, some families earn more than the federal poverty level yet still struggles to meet basic needs. The North Carolina Justice Center (2011) reports that an Alamance County family with two adults and two children must earn \$47,162 annually to cover basic costs such as housing, food, child care, health care and transportation.

The age distribution of Alamance County differs from the state average age distribution. Alamance County has a smaller proportion of adults of working age and slightly larger population of retired adults than the state average. The median age in Alamance County is 36.7 years. The median age for the State is 36.2 years. 24.4% of county residents are under age 18 and 14.1% over age 65. There are 57,865 households in the county averaging 2.43 persons per household.

The public school system, Alamance Burlington School System (ABSS) is the 16th largest school district in the State of North Carolina. Based on the 2011-12 End of Grade (EOG) tests scores, many students - particularly minorities (African American and Hispanic) scored below grade level in Reading and Math compared to the State.

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Of the 22,500 students enrolled at ABSS, 52% are eligible for Free/Reduced Meals. Many of these students attend a "Title 1" school. "Title 1" indicates that a school is a high poverty school. Research continues to link lower Socio-Economic Status (SES) to lower academic achievement and slower rates of academic progress as compared with higher SES communities. Children from low-SES environments acquire language skills more slowly, exhibit delayed letter recognition and phonological awareness, and are at risk for reading difficulties (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008).

Children with higher SES backgrounds were more likely to be proficient on tasks of addition, subtraction, ordinal sequencing, and math word problems than children with lower SES backgrounds (Coley, 2002). Families from (SES) communities are less likely to have the financial resources or time availability to provide children with academic support. Children's initial reading competence is correlated with the home literacy environment, number of books owned, and parent distress (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008).

However, parents from low-SES communities may be unable to afford resources such as books, computers, or tutors to create this positive literacy environment (Orr, 2003). In a nationwide study of American kindergarten children, 36% of parents in the lowest-income quintile read to their children on a daily basis, compared with 62% of parents from the highest-income quintile (Coley, 2002).

In addition, East Burlington is a federally designated Weed and Seed area. Weed and Seed is a multi-agency strategy to "weed out" violent crime, gang activity, drug use and drug trafficking in specific neighborhoods and then "seed" the area by restoring these neighborhoods through social and economic revitalization. Over 65% of the City's total criminal activity takes place in East Burlington.

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BHA currently serves approximately 160 ABSS students annually, at in-school, after-school, and summer enrichment youth programs, who either live in East Burlington and/or attend a Title 1 School. We will continue through our three-time, national award winning programs to provide after school academic tutorials, mentoring and youth development activities, including parental involvement. Our RSVP project will continue to help students improve their academic performance through the Primary Focus Area of Education.

We will continue to recruit 70% of our unduplicated volunteers as tutors and mentors, in the Primary Focus Area of Education, to address the discrepancies in EOG test scores. We will utilize tutors and mentors in Title 1 schools and "Weed and Seed" areas of the city to support our students, parents and teachers in increasing the level of Literacy and Math skills. We will encourage school attendance and success among our most vulnerable populations. One-on-one and group tutoring has been making a huge difference in the success of our students and we hope to build on that momentum with this second phase of our RSVP program.

Recruitment and Development

Recruitment for volunteers is conducted through a variety of mailings, printed and mass media, presentations, community events, volunteer websites, social media, word-of-mouth and referrals from other organizations. We have recently revamped our website to allow volunteers to access information about specific RSVP volunteer opportunities on-line.

RSVP staff recruit volunteers, especially those not already volunteering, assist in retention of the ones we have and recognize the good work they are doing through newsletters, letters of appreciation, memos from staff and notes from parents and children.

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A volunteer who feels rewarded and appreciated is more likely to stay involved. We will reward early and often, recognizing, documenting and publicizing outstanding RSVP volunteers' achievements. Certificates of appreciation, small gifts such as pins, note pads, etc. will be given.

Informal recognition is ongoing, such as listening to and acting upon recommendations by RSVP volunteers, offering praise, and providing assignments that are increasingly satisfying to them. RSVP Volunteers are also included in an annual recognition banquet/event, along with their volunteer station representative.

Volunteers come from area citizens, including but not limited to: retired professionals, managers, teachers, or administrators who would find such assignments challenging. Persons of all races and ethnic backgrounds are encouraged to apply as well as Veterans and the disabled, including those with age-related disabilities.

By adding an additional work plan under Healthy Futures, we will be able to interest more volunteers with a wider range of opportunities. We will also continue to refer persons to other community opportunities if they are not currently able to find an interest within one of ours.

Enrollment of volunteers is based on application forms and referrals. Volunteers must be willing to accept instruction and supervision as required, participate in training, and pass a criminal background check. After expressing an interest in volunteering and completing an application, interviews are scheduled with project staff.

The initial interview is private and confidential, giving adequate time for discussion. At this time staff

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become acquainted with, and establish a friendly supportive relationship with the prospective volunteer. The interview process includes a discussion of project goals and the volunteer's background, experience, hobbies and special interests. A description of the volunteer stations and specific types of assignments is made available. Volunteer benefits and responsibilities are explained. The applicant's confidence in their ability to perform available assignments is addressed. RSVP program handbooks containing program policy and regulations have been prepared and are given to each RSVP volunteer.

Volunteers are assigned to the volunteer station of their choice whenever possible, carefully matching their unique abilities/ experiences with referred students. Specific policy/procedures and training materials for each volunteer station are provided to the volunteers by the station coordinator.

An orientation program, including an introduction to the sponsor, other RSVP volunteers and volunteer station supervisors is conducted. On-going service learning programs provide volunteers with information pertinent to their volunteer position and to volunteering in general. Volunteers are encouraged to share their volunteer experiences and any issues at these meetings.

Program Management

Before placing volunteers, RVSP program staff obtains a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the volunteer station and written assignment descriptions. RSVP program handbooks, containing program policy and regulations, have been prepared and are given to each RSVP volunteer and station coordinator. This document also includes grievance policies for all. Specific policy/procedures and training materials for each volunteer station are provided to the volunteers by the station coordinator.

Outside of the Primary Focus Area of Education, we are also recruiting for Caregiver Respite providers under Healthy Futures. We plan to recruit them under the same policies and procedures as we recruit

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our other volunteers. Managing stations will be slightly different, as we will have a lead referring agency, such as Eldercare, and the person's home to address. Specific training will be provided to the volunteer in cooperation with the Station and based on the home owner/client's needs.

As our program started three years ago, we have no stations to graduate or volunteers to reassign. Under our current Work Plan requirements, we do not foresee having to do this in the future. Unfortunately there will always be more children to tutor and mentor than we have volunteers and there will definitely be no shortage of caregivers needing respite as our populations continues to age.

However, if this situation were to arise, we would responsibly contact stations that needed to be graduated in a timely manner, explaining the reasons for the necessary changes and offering other volunteer opportunities for those volunteers wishing to remain with RSVP, including capacity building assignments for the program, such as public speaking, event planning, etc.

National Performance Measure outcomes and outputs will be measured and collected with a variety of surveys, logs and databases to accurately capture all necessary information for reporting. These will include attendance logs, satisfaction surveys, teacher/parent reports, pre/post test scores and EOG results based on the work plan requirements.

The results will be shared with the Project Advisory Group, who evaluates and monitors this project at quarterly scheduled meetings and makes timely review and necessary programmatic changes. Written data of activity participation and outcomes will be closely scrutinized to measure output and target achievement. The Group will also serve as evaluator of the RSVP program and will perform an annual assessment of project accomplishments and the impact on the community.

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BHA will manage project resources, both financial and in-kind, to ensure accountability and efficient and effective use of available resources. Policies and procedures are in place to track and monitor resources. Internal controls: Request for funds for expenditures are made according to the approved project budget. The Project Director submits requests to the Deputy Director for initial approval and forwarded to the Executive Director for final approval.

The finance department checks for accounting errors. All checks require dual signatures. Deposits are made by someone other than the check signers and made daily. In-kind donations are accounted for and tracked on a separate report. The Project Director receives a monthly report of expenditures and reconciles this with her records and the Finance Department.

Our audit is reported under Government Auditing Standards and is in compliance with OMB Circular A-133 Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-profit Organizations. Burlington Housing Authority, a HUD recognized A-rated high performance agency has not had an audit finding in the last ten (10) years, if ever.

Burlington Housing Authority successfully manages funds of over \$4 million dollars from several sources without incurring compliance or audit concerns.

Our Finance department staff has over twenty-five years experience in accounting and financial management, including timely submission of financial reporting to funding sources. Our grant writing team will continue to seek funding to support the RSVP project. Fundraising activities will also be held if needed. Additional partners will continue to be sought, to contribute cash and/or in-kind services to sustain and expand the project.

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Organizational Capability

BHA will manage project resources, both financial and in-kind, to ensure accountability and efficient and effective use of available resources. Robust policies and procedures are in place to track and monitor resources.

In addition to providing housing, BHA has implemented several programs that provide supportive services to its residents and others in the community (youth and adults) that help to improve their quality of life. These programs, implemented with the support of community partners, receive funding or in-kind services through donations, federal, state and private grants. Some of these programs include:

1. After-School/Summer Enrichment Program-National Award winning Tutoring/mentoring program.
2. Whiz Kids (Kindergarten - 5th grade) (Tutor/mentor youth)
3. Dream Girls (middle to high school females) and Training for Manhood (middle to high school males) - National Award winning Tutoring/Mentoring programs
4. Graves, Reid and Sangal Performance Scholarship Program (G.R.A.S.P.S.) This program is funded and operated exclusively by donations from community partners and the private sector.
5. A Coordinated Community Response Program (2010 National Award Winner) - This gang prevention, intervention and suppression program was implemented in 2007 with two-year grant funding received from the North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission (NCGCC). This program addresses the need for prevention and intervention for youth potentially at-risk of, or already identified with, gang involvement.
6. Public Housing Authority State Athletic Conference (PHASAC) "Hoops for Hope" program -- In

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partnership with the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquent Prevention (NCDJJDP) and the local Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC), this drug-free program addresses youth at-risk of juvenile delinquency and potential gang involvement. The program participants are involved in academic tutorials, mentoring, life skills training, team building and sports (basketball recreation). Parental involvement is also a requirement.

Because of its accomplishments and program successes, Burlington Housing Authority has received national recognition, in the form of "Awards of Merit", since 2004 from the "National Association of Housing Redevelopment Officials" (NAHRO). This prestigious award recognizes outstanding achievement in housing and community development programs throughout the nation.

Some of the Awards of Merit received from 2004-2011 are as follows:

1. After School and Summer Enrichment Program (Program Innovation/Resident and Client Services) - 2004
2. Community Service Work/Economic Self-Sufficiency (Program Innovation/Resident and Client Services) - 2005
3. Graves, Reid And Sangal Performance Scholarship (G.R.A.S.P.S.) (Program Innovation/ Resident and Client Services) - 2006
4. Manhood Youth Program (Program Innovation/Resident and Client Services) - 2006
5. Dream Girls Program (Program Innovation/Resident and Client Services) - 2009
6. Pate Homes Pantry (Program Innovation/Resident and Client Services) - 2010
7. Hope and Steps Homeless Program - (Program Innovation/Resident and Client Services - 2010
8. Families on the Move Program - (Program Innovation/Resident and Client Services) - 2010
9. Gang: A Coordinated Community Response (Program Innovation/Resident Client Services) - 2010

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10. Entrepreneurship Training Program (Community Response/Resident Client Services)

Burlington Housing Authority also received an "Award of Excellence" from the South East Regional Council-NAHRO in 2011 for its Entrepreneurship Training Program.

In addition, Burlington Housing Authority received the Public Housing Authority State Athletic Conference (PHASAC) Academic Team Award - 2011 which recognized the team with the highest grade point average for the season. Burlington was one of eight (8) cities and five (5) counties represented.

Burlington Housing Authority has the capacity to manage the proposed project. BHA successfully maintained sponsorship of an AmeriCorps*VISTA program for approximately nine years. We were also approved for an AmeriCorps*VISTA Summer Associates program for three consecutive years and an RSVP program for the last three years. We are committed to serving our youth and in order to do so, we will adhere to the stipulations of the proposed grant.

Burlington Housing Authority commits to in-kind resources of adequate facilities-office space, training space; equipment, telephone access, copying and computer usage. We have a travel reimbursement policy in place for volunteers that will adhere to the regulations of the program. Volunteers will be made aware of the stipulations for this.

Roles of staff and administrators are clearly defined; internal policies are written and clearly defined. The RSVP Project Director reports to the Deputy Director; the RSVP clerical assistant reports to the RSVP Project Director. Each supervisor must approve the subordinate's bi-weekly time sheet. The time

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for both of these positions is allocated 100% to the RSVP Program.

Purchasing procedures are clearly stated and understood by those who will be involved in the purchasing of any materials necessary to carry out this project.

Materials and supplies for training will be available to persons who need them to carry out the proposed project.

The RSVP Advisory Goup will evaluate and monitor this project at quarterly scheduled meetings and make timely review and necessary programmatic changes. Written data of activity participation and outcomes will be closely scrutinized to measure output and target achievement. The Group will also serve as evaluator of the program and will perform an annual assessment of project accomplishments and the impact on the community.

Ms. Connie Morse, RSVP Project Director, was hired October 18, 2010. Ms. Morse has a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, with a concentration in Gerontology, and Associate degrees in Business Administration, Accounting and Computer Systems Technology. Ms. Morse has had several years of supervisory experience and served as Executive Director of a Council on Aging/Senior Center. She has two years of experience working with diverse multicultural populations in an International setting. In addition, Ms. Morse has three years of prior experience with the Corporation for National and Community Service, serving as an AmeriCorps*VISTA/VISTA Leader. During her years with VISTA, she facilitated a United Way Volunteer Center's accreditation with the NC Volunteer Center Association and the National Points of Light Foundation and spearheaded completion of a local Senior Center's North Carolina Senior Center of Merit certification. Ms. Morse is a member of the North

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Carolina Association of Volunteer Administrators and is currently working toward her North Carolina Volunteer Administrator certification.

Mrs. Wanda Fowler, part-time RSVP Clerical Assistant, began working with the project November 10, 2010. Mrs. Fowler has a Bachelor's degree in Sociology, with a minor in Public Health and an Associate's degree in Medical Office Administration. She has several years of clerical experience in the Health Care field and is currently working towards a Master's in Public Health. She is an active volunteer in her community, working with the local school system as a testing proctor.

Ms. Morse attended New Director Training with the State Office, in Raleigh; with CNCS in Washington, DC and at the National Conference on Volunteering and Service in New Orleans. She has attended additional trainings with the North Carolina Association of Volunteer Administrators and at the Education Summit in Burlington. She attended the National Conference on Volunteering and Service in Chicago in 2012.

Mrs. Fowler received training on the use of Volunteer Reporter, the rules and regulations for the RSVP project and attended a North Carolina Association of Volunteer Administrators training in 2011.

Both Ms. Morse and Mrs. Fowler attended the Annual North Carolina Association of Volunteer Administrators Conference in May 2012.

The background and experience of the RSVP staff has a positive impact on the human and social needs in the project area. The staff members are aware of the rules and regulations of the implemented project and will adhere to these practices to incorporate the fullness of the program.

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They collaborate successfully with other community organizations to assess the needs of the community and respond to those needs using the resources of the RSVP volunteers.

Since 1967, Burlington Housing Authority has been involved in the development and implementation of program activities designed to assist low-income families to move toward self sufficiency. Through various national award-winning programs involved in academic improvement, employment and personal development, we have been very successful.

Our primary beneficiaries are residents of low-income housing, especially at-risk youth, their families and other low-income families living in adjacent communities. Not only do the constituents benefit from our programs but also those who are recruited gain personal gratification through volunteerism. Our organization has a dedicated interest and involvement in efforts to resolve community problems, especially for at-risk youth by improving their academic and social skills. We place special emphasis on literacy and EOG testing; therefore all of Alamance County benefits from the programs addressed by our organization.

Our after-school/summer enrichment program uses volunteers youth, 6-12 and 13-18 years of age. With this program, Burlington Housing Authority has collaborated with different organizations and volunteers have provided over 8,000 hours of volunteer service. This demonstrates that volunteerism has been an instrumental part in the success of this program.

The after-school/summer enrichment programs have won awards for their accomplishments. On average, 97% of the youth enrolled in this program have passed their EOG tests and have drastically improved their academic skills. With the 13-18 age groups (Training for Manhood and Dream Girls),

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many volunteers have been used to assist in mentoring and tutoring for these teens.

Volunteer speakers and instructors have presented programs to encourage them to stay in school. The youth have improved academically and socially and volunteered for projects in the community to assist the senior population. Burlington Housing Authority has successfully used students from Elon University to tutor youth in our after-school/summer enrichment program.

Our involvement of seniors in the tutoring program has also increased the test scores of our children. We currently have senior volunteers in the tutorial program. A retired educator serves as remedial instructor in BHA's after-school and summer enrichment programs. The students receive tutoring based on their needs. They also participate in remedial activities twice a week during the summer months in order to bridge the educational gap during the summer break.

The after-school/summer enrichment program has impact-based programming and has received numerous awards for the structure of the program and how it has improved the progress of the students who are involved in this program. Students have improved academically, socially and culturally which enhances their lives and makes for a better person.

Through the continuation of the RVSP project, we will continue to expand the program throughout the Alamance-Burlington School System, enhancing the lives of many students that we are not able to reach through our existing programs. Volunteers placed in the different stations are able to provide mentoring and tutoring to additional students in order to help improve their academic abilities and social skills, which they need to become successful students.

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BHA currently administers an RSVP federal grant, among other Federal grants and all financial systems are in place. We will continue to adhere to the rules and regulations and follow the guidelines for dispensing the funds for operation of the RSVP program. A budget has been adopted and will be followed to facilitate the program as stated.

BHA has many years of experience managing federal grant funds as well as state and local funding including:

Federal - HUD American Reinvestment & Recovery - \$875,000.00

Federal - HUD Capital Fund Program - \$688,177.00-Public housing renovations

Federal - HUD Family Self-Sufficiency - \$58,483.00

Federal - HUD ROSS Homeownership & Family - \$209,388.00

Federal - HUD Transitional Housing - \$501,604.00

Federal - HUD Emergency Safety & Security Grant - \$231,335.00

VISTA Program - \$238,182.00 grant

After-school/Summer Enrichment Program: \$150,000 in funds (HUD & contributions).

"A Coordinated Community Response":a two year grant of \$170,000.00 from the Governor's Crime Commission to involve seven (7) law enforcement agencies in our County and various local agencies to institute prevention, intervention and suppression activities.

North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (NCDJJDP) Grant: \$96,500.00 provided supplies, training, travel to college tours and educational and cultural field trips, meals, educational software and other supplies for PHASAC. It was also used to expand the program

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to bring on a second team thus doubling program participant size.

United Way of Alamance grant: \$12,004.00 provided funds for youth program supplies and equipment needed for programs.

Burlington Development Corporation (BDC): \$25,000-Wal-Mart Foundation grant to implement the after school expansion program at Pleasant Grove Elementary (PGE) School. PGE serves as one of the RSVP project stations.

Our grant writing team will continue to seek funding to support the RSVP project. Fundraising activities will also be held if needed. Additional partners will continue to be sought, to contribute cash and/or in-kind services to sustain and expand the project.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A