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Executive Summary

The Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (WTCAC) intends to use this planning grant to develop a Tribal AmeriCorps Program to serve our 11 Federally Recognized member Tribes in Wisconsin in the Focus Areas of "Healthy Futures" and "Environmental Stewardship". WTCAC will engage AmeriCorps members to implement an initiative to bring healthy, traditional foods back to our Tribal Communities in the form of Tribal Community Aquaponics Gardens to combat adult and childhood obesity and diabetes. In addition WTCAC, by working with Federal land management agencies such as the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, will restore the traditional Tribal gathering areas within the Ceded Territories so that our people may once again have access to the natural healthy foods that Mother Earth intended us to have. WTCAC will work with the Forest Service and other Public Lands Agencies to implement conservation and environmental best management practices such as stream restoration, invasive species control, habitat restoration, and brush removal to restore the waters and lands of our ancestors.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

Food Sovereignty is a desire of many Tribal Nations as they work to reduce the dependence on Federal commodities that have led to illness and return instead to the natural healthy food of their ancestors. The WTCAC Tribal AmeriCorps Program will work with the 11 Federally recognized Tribes of Wisconsin to develop Tribal Community Gardens that will trade produce throughout the State. The WTCAC Tribal AmeriCorps Program will partner with the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) to encourage Wisconsin Tribal participation in their new "Mobile Farmers Market" to distribute Native Foods between Tribes of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The goal of these two programs is to bring natural healthy Tribal produced foods to the Tribal members, thus reducing the epidemic of diabetes and obesity that dominate the Tribal Nations.

The AmeriCorps Members will be used to work with the Tribal schools and other community organizations to set up and manage Tribal Community Aquaponics Gardens. The AmeriCorps Members will work within the local schools to teach the children about aquaponics gardening, and will hold public meetings and training sessions for interested Tribal members. The long term ultimate goal is to establish a number of privately owned aquaponics gardens that will qualify Tribal members as farmers, thus qualifying them for USDA grants and financial assistance to produce food for their Tribal communities.

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The AmeriCorps Members will also be used to do Environmental Stewardship work to improve at-risk ecosystems on the Tribal Nations as well as on USDA Forest Service land adjacent to the Tribal Nations. The Ojibwa Tribes have hunting, fishing and gathering Treaty Rights on all public lands, and these lands are in desperate need of environmental stewardship work to address water quality issues, soil erosion, fire prevention and the restoration of Traditional Tribal Gathering Areas. The USDA Forest Service has a "Stewardship Contracting Program" whereby they could enter into contractual agreements with WTCAC, or the Tribes, to do this restoration work, and the funds could be used as the required "match" for potentially the next 10 years.

This WTCAC Tribal AmeriCorps Program would work with the Tribal Nations of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, the Forest County Potawatomi Community, the Ho-Chunk Nation, the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, the Lac Du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin, the Mole Lake Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, the Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, the St Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin, and the Stockbridge-Munsee Indian Community.

This Planning Grant will be used to accomplish the following "planning processes".

- * Work with the USDA Forest Service to establish a 10 year "Stewardship Contracting Program" to provide the avenue for "match" funds to the WTCAC Tribal AmeriCorps Program.
- * Work with the 11 Tribal EPA GAP Managers to identify additional "match" funds for the WTCAC Tribal AmeriCorps Program.
- * Work with other Federal agencies such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) to identify other potential funding and project opportunities for the WTCAC Tribal AmeriCorps Program.
- * Work with the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point to identify potential AmeriCorps members who are pursuing aquaponics courses offered at UWSP.
- * Send WTCAC staff to the International Aquaponics Conference at UWSP to learn about aquaponics systems, and register WTCAC staff for the Masters Aquaponics Training from Nelson & Pade.
- * Build the capacity of the WTCAC Program Manger to manage the personnel issues of the AmeriCorps program, or research and find an entity to do this task.

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- * Accept the offer of the Spooner/Shell Lake Community Gardens AmeriCorps Program to educate WTCAC staff about developing and managing a Tribal AmeriCorps Community Garden program.
- * Meet with Tribal Councils and Tribal Managers to garner support of the Tribes for the WTCAC Tribal AmeriCorps Program.
- * Meet with Tribal Councils and Tribal Managers to identify proper sites, and community entities, for the establishment of Tribal Community Aquaponics Gardens.

Organizational Capability

The Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (WTCAC), formed in 2001, provides a forum for the 11 Native American Tribes in Wisconsin to identify and solve natural resource issues on Tribal lands. The Council gives a strong voice to Tribes on conservation issues at the state and national level. Tribal Conservation Advisory Councils were authorized in the 1995 Farm Bill as advisory bodies to NRCS and all of USDA on Tribal issues. WTCAC was the first such Tribal Conservation Advisory Council formed in the country. The Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council received the USDA Secretary's Honor Award in 2010. The 11-member Tribal organization was recognized for exemplary service and achievement during the 62nd annual Honor Awards ceremony in Washington, DC, in August, 2010. The Secretary's Annual Honor Awards are USDA's most prestigious awards. The Honor Awards recognize USDA employees at all grade levels and private citizens who have made outstanding contributions supporting USDA's mission.

WTCAC has strengthened partnerships with many of the USDA Agencies, including the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Rural Development (RD), the Forest Service (FS) and Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). In addition to USDA partners, WTCAC has also established a strong working relationship with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

With \$940,000 in grant funds the last three years from the USDA Office of Advocacy and Outreach, WTCAC developed an USDA Outreach training program to teach federal and state recognized Tribes how to organize Tribal Conservation Advisory Councils (TCAC's) and work with USDA Agencies. Over these last three years WTCAC has coordinated these Outreach efforts with the Indian Nations Conservation Alliance (INCA) and the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) providing USDA program training to Tribes in 25 states across the Nation.

In 2009 WTCAC established the Native American Student Summer Internship Program for students

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pursuing degrees in Natural Resources, Biological Sciences, Agriculture, Agricultural Business, Forestry, Civil Engineering and Animal Health and Husbandry. This program exposes Tribal students to potential career opportunities within USDA, with the hope that someday they will become employees of USDA who will work with the farmers, ranchers and communities of our country's 566 Tribal Nations. It is WTCAC's belief that for USDA to have fully successful programs on Tribal Nations, USDA needs to have Tribal employees working on those Tribal Nations, who understand the customs, beliefs, and needs of the people. Every year the Internship program continues to grow, and in 2013 14 internship positions were identified in Wisconsin and Michigan with several agencies that included NRCS, FS, and APHIS. This program has been accepted into the USDA Pathways Student Employment Opportunities (SEOs) - USDA Third Party Contractors (Internship) Program. Student work performed under this WTCAC Third Party Contractors (Internship) program will count towards Federal work experience conversion upon acceptance into a Pathways internship. The WTCAC Internship Program is the only one of its kind in the nation for Native American students.

WTCAC currently also has a two year grant from EPA in the amount of \$399,978 for the implementation of an Invasive Species Control Program on 7 of the 11 Member Tribal Nations, and was just notified of an \$100,000 award from the Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to develop a Train-the-Trainer Program to teach Tribes about the various APHIS programs.

The WTCAC staff are all retired USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) personnel, each with over 30 years of Federal experience and the majority of that experience working with Tribes. The WTCAC Program Manager and the WTCAC Engineer will be the two staff members working on this Planning Grant.

Jerry L. Thompson, Program Manager

Jerry has served as the Program Manager for the Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (WTCAC) since October 2010, after retiring from 30 years of Federal service with the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

A native of Elmwood, Wisconsin, Jerry spent three years with the Army Security Agency before

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attending college at the University of Wisconsin River Falls. Jerry graduated from UWRF in 1983 with Bachelor of Science degrees in Scientific Land Management and Wildlife Biology. He worked as a Soil Conservationist in two Field Offices in Wisconsin before transferring to the Hawaiian Island of Molokai' in 1990 as the District Conservationist for the Molokai'- Lanai' Soil and Water Conservation District.

In 1993 he moved to Window Rock, Arizona to serve as the USDA NRCS Tribal Liaison to the Navajo Nation. He led the planning efforts for the Asaayi Lake Watershed, which was the first PL-566 Small Watershed Project for an Indian Nation, and assisted the Navajo Nation RC&D Council in establishing the first Native American Resource Conservation and Development Area.

In 1998 the Wisconsin Natural Resources Conservation Service hired Jerry as the State Tribal Liaison where he assisted State Conservationist Patricia Leavenworth to organize the first Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (TCAC) in the Nation (WTCAC).

In 2002 he became the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations in Northwest Wisconsin where he supervised 50+ staff in 16 Field Offices and two RC&D Area's, delivering conservation financial and technical assistance to a diverse population of agricultural producers and Tribal Nations. From October 2006 through February 2007 he also served as the NRCS Acting National Tribal Liaison in Washington, DC where he re-wrote the current "General Manual Title 410 Rural Development Part 405 - Tribal Government Policy" in use by NRCS today, and negotiated on behalf of NRCS the recently expired "MOU Among BIA, NRCS and FSA Relative To Planning and Implementing Department of Agriculture Conservation Programs On Indian Lands". Jerry retired from NRCS in January 2009.

Keith W. Sengbusch, WTCAC Engineer

Keith is a graduate of Fox Valley Technical College with a degree in Conservation Engineering Technology. He was employed by the Soil Conservation Service/Natural Resources Conservation Service for 31 years as a Soil Conservation Technician, Civil Engineering Technician and the Wisconsin Tribal Civil Engineering Technician. Keith provided technical and program assistance to

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the Wisconsin Eleven Federally Recognized Tribes during his tenure with SCS/NRCS.

Keith has been integral in the development of new engineering Standards and Construction Specifications, modification of existing Standards and creation of Cost Share Scenarios to include flat rate payment schedules. Keith provides technical expertise in the planning, design and construction of complex engineering projects for the Tribal Governments of Wisconsin. He also provides training for outreach activities to promote conservation application in Indian Country.

WTCAC Board of Directors

Each member Tribe of the Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (WTCAC) appointed in writing representatives to serve on the Board of Directors of WTCAC. Such people represent the member Tribe's interests within WTCAC; attends meetings and vote on behalf of the member Tribe, and serves as a point of contact between WTCAC and the member Tribe. Each member Tribe grants decision-making authority to its appointees with respect to matters which may come before WTCAC.

To the fullest extent possible, each WTCAC Director keeps their Tribal citizens abreast of WTCAC's accomplishments; anticipate and respond to changes in timing, scheduling, workloads, and difficulties which may arise; provide meaningful participation at WTCAC meetings; work cooperatively with other members to ensure the fulfillment of the WTCAC's purposes; establish annual plans in coordination with the member Tribes; and work collaboratively with the Natural Resource Conservation Service and other agencies to achieve common goals.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

This planning grant will allow WTCAC to meet with Federal Agencies and Tribal Departments to discuss collaboration in the development of a WTCAC Tribal AmeriCorps Program. Preliminary discussions have already taken place with the USDA Forest Service about their "Stewardship Contracting Program" whereby they could enter into a 10 year contractual agreement with WTCAC for the Tribes to do restoration work, and the funds could be used as the required "match" for potentially the next 10 years. Preliminary discussions also have begun with the 11 Tribal EPA GAP Managers to identify additional "match" funds for the WTCAC Tribal AmeriCorps Program.

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WTCAC was not aware of the availability of this Planning Grant until just recently, thus did not have adequate time to solicit for matching funds. WTCAC has applied for a waiver of match for this planning grant. If the planning grant waiver is not approved, then WTCAC will not proceed any further in the development of a Tribal AmeriCorps Program for the Wisconsin Tribes.

The WTCAC Program Manager will be responsible for the overall coordination of the planning process to include the negotiations for match funds, the development of an AmeriCorps management plan, the search for adequate AmeriCorps staff members and the fiscal accountability. The WTCAC Engineer will be responsible for meeting with all the various Tribal Departments to assess the potential for Community Gardens; to identify potential locations of Tribal Community Aquaponics Gardens; to research the potential of local AmeriCorps member staff; to assess training needs of Tribal Departments in aquaponics; to develop preliminary Tribal Community Aquaponics Garden engineering plans; and to coordinate aquaponics information exchange between WTCAC, the Tribes and the aquaponics contractor Nelson & Pade.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A

Clarification Summary

The letter that I received from Joseph Gunter said that I was to make the changes below (though Section I) "directly in the application budget and budget narrative in eGrants". But neither I or the Help Desk could find where in the budget section I would be able to do so. So Joseph said just to put everything from the letter under the Clarification Summary.

The following are all of the CLARIFICATION ITEMS:

* As a potential new grantee to the Corporation, you are required to complete three (3) pre-award documents and an on-line financial certification prior to the award of your grant. The Office of Grants Management will send you a separate e-mail regarding the completion and submission of the following documents: Direct Deposit Sign-Up Form (SF-1199A); Recipient Contact Form; the Financial Management Survey Form (FMS); and the certification you have taken the on-line course 'Key Concepts of Financial Management for Federal Grantees.' These documents must be completed and returned to the Office of Grants Management as quickly as possible to ensure a timely Notice of

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Grant Award.

** Documents have arrived. We have done this before. Not a problem.

* Authorized Rep and PD listed on application = Jerry Thompson. After reviewing Excluded Parties List, there are several Jerry Thompson's that appear on the list. Applicant must confirm that the Authorized Rep/PD does not appear on the EPLS.

**There are 5 Jerry Thompson's on the SAM Excluded Parties List.

*Jerry Thompson & Associates in Silver Spring, MD is not me.

*Jerry W. Thompson in Loyalton, CA is not me.

*Jerry E. Thompson, Sr. (listed twice) in Philadelphia, PA is not me.

*Jerry Johnny Thompson in Nashville, GA is not me.

*I have never lived in any of those States.

*I am Jerry Lorenz Thompson and have NEVER been excluded on any list.

*Section A - Please provide a brief description regarding the role of the Engineer.

**The Engineer is responsible for working directly with the Tribes in promoting the Aquaponics Community Gardens to get Tribal buy-in for AmeriCorps participation; researching and determining appropriate locations for siting of the Aquaponics Community Gardens; the designs of the Aquaponics Community Gardens either as standalone units or in conjunction with existing Aquaculture facilities, and the cost estimates of the construction of the Aquaponics Community Gardens.

*Section C - Please verify the calculation for the program manager travel.

**The calculations for travel are based upon GSA per diem rates as currently established. I've double checked the figures for the Program Manager and they appear to still be correct.

*Section I - Please explain how criminal history checks will be handled for all staff on the grant

**WTCAC will conduct National Service Criminal History Checks as outlined in the 45 C.F.R. § 2540.201 final rule dated October 5, 2012, through the Wisconsin Department of Justice as recommended on the Corporation for National and Community Service website and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) website.

Programmatic Clarification Items:

Please make the following changes in the eGrants narrative field labeled "Clarification Summary."

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*Please provide supporting evidence that food sovereignty is a community need.

**"Food Sovereignty" is a "Community Need" because it symbolizes a Sovereign Tribal Nation's ability to feed its own people with healthy traditionally produced local foods to combat the diabetes, obesity and other diseases in Native Americans brought on by the Western Culture food supplies.

**The Wisconsin Department of Health Services Minority Health Report 2001-2005 states "American Indians in Wisconsin have higher rates of death and hospitalization from diabetes, compared to the total Wisconsin population. In 2001-2005, the age-adjusted mortality rate from diabetes was 70 deaths per 100,000 population among American Indians, compared to 22 per 100,000 in the total Wisconsin population." "American Indians had an age-adjusted rate of death from diabetes that was 3.3 times the rate in the white population."

**Dr. Harriet V. Kuhnlein, Professor of Human Nutrition and Director of the Centre for Nutrition and the Environment of Indigenous Peoples (CINE) at McGill University, researched tribal members in the Mille Lacs and Lac Courte Oreilles reservations, and submitted her findings in an expert witness report to the Federal Court in the Mille Lacs v. Minnesota litigation, that "several successful programs to improve health status of Indigenous Peoples for diet-related diseases have been implemented with traditional lifestyle practices and traditional food". The six Chippewa tribal governments in Wisconsin that were parties to this legal case included Red Cliff, Bad River, Lac Courte Oreilles, Lac du Flambeau, St. Croix and Sokaogon.

**The Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa 2006-2016 Integrated Resource Management Plan (IRMP) identifies "Improved awareness of diet and health", "Positive health effects from eating locally grown food", and "Improved awareness of community gardens" as a priority for "Education of proper health and diet to all" to combat this epidemic of diabetes and obesity. This IRMP was developed from a survey submitted to all residents of the Red Cliff Reservation.

**The St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin Head Start Program has identified lack of activity and poor nutrition as the primary causes of early onset diabetes in their young children. They have petitioned the St. Croix Chippewa Tribal Government for a Community Garden to be established at the Head Start facility as a means to begin alleviating both of these issues.

**The United States Department of Agriculture, through the People's Garden Grant Program, has recognized that community gardens are important for "supporting local and regional food systems, as well as educating people through education programs about malnutrition-related issues--such as food insecurity, obesity, diabetes and heart disease". USDA has been holding Food Sovereignty Summits, in

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conjunction with the First Nations Development Institute and the Intertribal Agriculture Council, to educate Tribal Communities in becoming self-sustainable and producing the healthy foods needed for their people. We hosted a Food Sovereignty Summit this past April on the Oneida Nation, with over 250 Tribal members from all over the country in attendance.

*The application implies an aspect of economic opportunity for developing long-term business ventures for traditional farmers. If this is the case please check the economic opportunities box in the focus areas portion of the application.

**This "Planning Grant" application won't allow that. I had that focus area checked initially but it generated numerous errors further on in the application that I couldn't correct in order to submit the application. So I had to call the CNCS Help Desk and the young man assisting me had to go back through the application and he had to remove all the focus areas that I had selected. He said for this Planning Grant there is only one focus area -- Planning. He said that when we actually apply for an AmeriCorps grant then we would select all the other Focus Areas that we would be addressing.

*Note: Providing a direct benefit to a business organized for profit is prohibited under the code federal of regulations 2520.65(8)(i). AmeriCorps members are, however, allowed to conduct economic opportunity trainings of financial literacy, financial knowledge and skill development as long as it does not benefit a for profit entity. When developing your program please be sure to avoid any prohibited activities, including providing a direct benefit to a business organized for profit.

**That was not my intent. I just didn't want to exclude any Tribal Member who may want to participate in the Aquaponics training offered by the AmeriCorps member, who then might consider setting up their own garden.

*Please provide a timeline detailing the unique tasks of the individuals and when those tasks will be accomplished.

First Quarter:

*Engineer will meet with the Tribes who currently have Aquaculture Facilities (5 of them) to discuss the potential to establish an Aquaponics Community Garden in conjunction with the existing facility. He will assess site conditions and work with those Tribes to determine the department or entity who will be responsible for hosting the AmeriCorps member. Will begin preliminary surveys and designs of the systems.

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*Program Manager will research local school districts and communities who may already have an AmeriCorps program for Community Gardens. He will reach out to them for education on how they run their AmeriCorps program and identify any issues or concerns they have with AmeriCorps, as well as any successes they have with the program. He will look to establish partnerships with current successful AmeriCorps programs.

Second Quarter:

*Engineer will meet with the Tribes who currently do NOT have Aquaculture Facilities (6 of them) to discuss the potential to establish an Aquaponics Community Garden with the Tribe. He will assess site conditions and work with those Tribes to determine the department or entity who will be responsible for hosting the AmeriCorps member. Will begin preliminary surveys and designs of the systems.

*Program Manager will continue to learn the ins & outs of managing a Tribal AmeriCorps Program and will begin to research management companies that are proficient in the hiring practices mandated by AmeriCorps. He will research the possibilities of contracting out the payroll management responsibilities. He will begin preliminary discussion with the USDA Forest Service about using their Stewardship Program as potential match for an actual AmeriCorps application.

Third Quarter:

*Engineer will continue to work on the Aquaponics Community Gardens designs and complete as many as he can. He will then establish construction cost estimates for building the systems. He will begin researching for grants and other funding sources to help pay for the systems in an attempt to alleviate some of the Tribes financial burdens thus ensuring their by in. He will provide this funding source information to the Program Manager.

*Program Manager will continue to work with the USDA Forest Service to identify environmental restoration projects that can be done under their Stewardship Program thus providing the needed match for a Tribal AmeriCorps application. He will also begin meeting with each Tribes EPA GAP Manager to assess the possibility of establishing additional match. He will submit grant applications to any entities identified as potential funding sources for Aquaponics Community Gardens.

Fourth Quarter:

*Engineer will finish the designs and cost estimates of the Aquaponics Community Gardens and submit the information to the appropriate Tribal Department. He will present all of his information to the WTCAC Board of Directors for their consideration to proceed with an AmeriCorps application. If they so move, he will meet with these Tribal Departments, and with the Tribal Councils if necessary, to discuss Tribal responsibilities in hosting an AmeriCorps member and the construction of the

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facilities.

*Program Manager will continue to work with agencies to identify match. He will continue to submit grant applications to any identified sources for funding to build the Aquaponics Community Gardens. He will present all of his information to the WTCAC Board of Directors for their consideration to proceed with an AmeriCorps application. If they so move, he will work with AmeriCorps to establish hiring procedures for AmeriCorps Members; establish a budget for a Tribal AmeriCorps Program; and submit an application.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics

- AmeriCorps Member Population - Communities of Color
- AmeriCorps Member Population - Low -income Individuals
- AmeriCorps Member Population - Native Americans
- AmeriCorps Member Population - New Americans
- AmeriCorps Member Population - Older Americans
- AmeriCorps Member Population - People with Disabilities
- AmeriCorps Member Population - Rural Residents
- AmeriCorps Member Population - Veterans, Active Military, or their Families
- AmeriCorps Member Population - economically disadvantaged young adults/opportunity youth
- AmeriCorps Member Population - None of the above
- Geographic Focus - Rural
- Geographic Focus - Urban
- Encore Program
- Community Based Organizations
- Faith Based Organizations
- Governor/Mayor Initiative
- SIG/Priority School