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Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The Barnstable County AmeriCorps Cape Cod program proposes to have 32 full-time, residential AmeriCorps members who will respond to the critical environmental, disaster and community needs within the 15 Towns of Barnstable County, MA (commonly known as Cape Cod). At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps Cape Cod (ACC) members will be responsible for disaster preparedness projects and regional sheltering planning and deployment to continue building and strengthening community disaster response infrastructure. Members will complete over 350 water and land natural resource management and wildfire mitigation projects, improving 400 acres of parks and public lands and improving and creating 50 miles of trails and waterways; and 40 community disaster education presentations educating 450 citizens to be better prepared when a local disaster strikes. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 600 community volunteers, who will be engaged in hands-on community service activities in the areas of natural resource management and disaster preparedness and response.

This program will focus on the CNCS focus areas of Environmental Stewardship and Disaster Services. The CNCS investment of \$425,600 will be matched with \$465,600 in cash and in-kind donations from the Barnstable County regional government including in-kind match from the National Park Service Cape Cod National Seashore.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

PROBLEM/NEED: Cape Cod's environment is its lifeblood. The region's history, economic opportunity and cultural heritage are connected to the quality of its beaches, dunes, estuaries, marshes, trails and conservation lands. A clean and balanced environment contributes to improved water quality and reduced wildfire risk, strengthens and sustains the economy, and invites regional research-based initiatives. Barnstable County's population has more than doubled in the last 30 years increasing from just above 97,000 to over 215,500 year-round residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2013), and it swells to over one million residents and visitors during peak summer months. Cape Cod's expanding population, aging community and continued development are placing unprecedented pressure on the environment and create a need to protect land and water resources and prepare for disasters with well-designed response strategies.

The coastal geography of Cape Cod also lends itself to many potential natural and man-made disasters including hurricane strikes, blizzards, severe storms, and oil spills, putting people and the environment at risk (Cape Cod Commission Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2010). Conservation of

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Cape Cod's land and water natural resources and preparation for disasters are critical to the health and well-being of residents and the long-term prosperity of the region.

Among Cape Cod's most fragile resources is the groundwater system, a sole source aquifer that is the only source of drinking water for the region. According to the 2012 Cape Cod Commission Regional Policy Plan, 82% of all homes on Cape Cod dispose of their wastewater through septic systems that leach directly into the groundwater. Consequently, the water supply is threatened by high nitrogen levels from septic waste. Traditional wastewater remediation efforts (for instance, installation of regional sewer infrastructure) could lessen negative effects on the environment and meet Environmental Protection Agency requirements. However, the total cost to sewer Cape Cod is estimated to be \$4.6-6.2 billion to residents and town governments according to the 2012 Cape Cod Commission Regional Wastewater Management Plan (CCRWMP). Shellfish propagation is one natural and less costly means to improve water quality due to the nitrogen fixation and filtering capacity of shellfish, like clams and oysters. Maintaining and propagating municipal stocks of shellfish is an important step in naturally lowering nitrogen levels in Cape Cod waters and promotes and sustains Cape Cod's economy.

Cape Cod is one of the most hazardous wildfire zones in the country according to the 2012 Barnstable County Wildfire Preparedness Plan. Cape Cod's pine and oak forests produce highly flammable needles and leaves that decompose slowly and pile up over time, creating a vast fuel reservoir that sits in wait for the right conditions. This "seasoned" raw material or wood will burn easily, placing Cape Cod at high risk for wildfires. A US Forest Service study found that Cape Cod, with its sandy soils, drying winds and fuel types is as wildfire prone as the fire-ravaged regions of southern California. According to the National Park Service, there are an average of 80-140 small wildfires that are suppressed each year on Cape Cod. Without mitigation efforts, these frequent wildfire events could easily escalate.

Cape Cod is comprised of 255,500 acres of land, including 107,824 acres of developed land, 73,279 acres of protected land, 33,903 acres of ponds, lakes and wetlands and 560 miles of shoreline. There has been an 80% increase in residential and commercial development since 1971 (Barnstable County GIS Data) and a subsequent decrease in woodlands, wetlands and open space. This heavy development created urban-wildland interfaces, areas where man-made structures and wildland vegetation coincide, putting Cape Cod at great risk of wildfire. Six Cape Cod towns were characterized as urban-wildland interface communities that are at high risk from wildfire in the most recent report by the US Department of Agriculture and Department of the Interior. The combination of high fire

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risk at the urban-wildland interface and a lack of public awareness are of critical concern to natural resource managers, planners and public safety officials. ACC members directly mitigate wildfire risk on Cape Cod through consistent fire fuel reduction activities including mechanical removal, controlled burns, education of local residents, and outreach to local fire departments.

Cape Cod is also home to the densest elderly population in Massachusetts, with 7 of Cape Cod's 15 towns ranked in the top 10 oldest towns, by median age, in the state (U.S. Census Bureau 2013). This population is particularly vulnerable to severe weather conditions and typically has less mobility or options to leave their homes, necessitating a strong regional sheltering system. In the event of a Nor'easter (severe coastal storm) or hurricane, evacuation orders may be issued; however, public safety agencies understand that a full-scale evacuation of the region is not feasible. The peninsular geography of Cape Cod with only two access bridges limits evacuation options for residents and visitors. The one central highway extending the length of Cape Cod is subject to flooding in the event of a hurricane. Additionally, the two bridges leaving Cape Cod must be closed when winds exceed 70 mph, forcing Cape Cod to operate as an island. For all individuals who cannot be evacuated, sheltering becomes the priority.

ACC disaster response activities have included response to the 2003 Buzzard's Bay oil spill, 2005 Hurricane Katrina evacuee relocation, 2010 flood, 2011 tornado, 2012 Hurricane Sandy, 2013 Superstorm Nemo, yearly marine mammal strandings, and numerous shelter openings. In many cases, regional sheltering operations would not have the capacity to staff and open shelters if it were not for ACC. To prepare the community for disaster, 457 community disaster preparedness education classes have been delivered to thousands of individuals and have participated in 22 regional disaster simulations and drills.

Barnstable County regional government has a responsibility to its residents and visitors to address the environmental and disaster service needs of the region. Annual feedback from community decision-makers including the Barnstable County Commissioners, Assembly of Delegates, Boards of Selectmen, Regional Emergency Preparedness Committee, the Cape Cod National Seashore and the AmeriCorps Cape Cod Advisory Board supports that these are the critical needs of the community. By building on the capacity and efforts of collaborators and responding to the needs of the environment and the community, ACC is committed to the conservation and protection of the region's residents, visitors and natural resources. Community leaders are aware of the challenges of protecting the environment and the community by maintaining the balance between managing natural resources, disasters and encouraging environmental health and economic progress.

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THEORY OF CHANGE/LOGIC MODEL: A typical ACC member schedule includes Group Service, hands-on, field-based member service on Mondays and Fridays. One day mid-week is Community Outreach and Development (COD) Day where members plan educational activities and signature community service events, and the final two days mid-week, members are assigned a long-term project at an Individual Placement (IP).

ACC proposes to train and deploy 32 full-time residential ACC members. Members will leverage at least 600 volunteers in partnership with all 15 Cape Cod towns plus over 150 regional, federal, state, local, and nonprofit stakeholders to effect lasting, measurable changes in community, environmental, and disaster preparedness focus areas. Strategic interventions in the Focus Areas of Environmental Stewardship and Disaster Services will be planned, implemented, and measured, and evidence of change will be documented and reported.

PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP INTERVENTIONS AND ROLES: ACC's Environmental Stewardship will consist of more than 350 water and land-focused natural resource management projects throughout Barnstable County. These projects will include interventions to improve 400 acres of parks in public and tribal lands, improve or create 50 miles of trails or waterways, restore herring runs and salt marshes, remove invasive species, and propagate millions of shellfish. In addition to providing need-based community services, these interventions will also result in improved water quality, reduced wildfire risk, and accessibility to public conservation lands.

The 32 ACC members will be oriented and trained to perform field-based natural resource management service activities by ACC staff, service partners, and stakeholders, including land management practices, water quality service activities, chainsaw operation, basic carpentry skills, shellfish propagation, environmental education, volunteer management, and civic engagement. The corps will perform service activities to complete the Environmental Stewardship field interventions. Member service activities will also include community education and outreach as well as engaging and supporting leveraged volunteers. ACC members will recruit, coordinate, and train 600 volunteers to complete planned interventions. Participation in service activities by leveraged volunteers improves community environmental awareness, strengthens community service ethic, bolsters public safety, and trains community leaders.

PROPOSED DISASTER SERVICES INTERVENTIONS AND ROLES: ACC members will also

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present at least 40 community disaster education programs to some 450 residents and visitors to better prepare them for disasters which might strike Cape Cod.

The 32 ACC members will be oriented and trained in disaster preparedness, response, and management by ACC staff, first responders, and disaster management agencies. Members will be ready and available to respond as needed to regional environmental disasters and emergencies. In the event of a disaster, members are on call and divided into shelter teams that are ready to open and manage regional emergency sheltering operations.

Out of the 32 member corps, 6 members serve as a specialized Corps who receive advanced training in wildland fuel reduction and wildfire mitigation to reduce risk of wildfire. ACC's Disaster Services align with the National Park Service Cape Cod National Seashore Management Plan and the Cooperative Extension Wildfire Preparedness Plan, which are designed to mitigate the severe risk for wildfires on Cape Cod. Overall, ACC's Disaster Services are a comprehensive emergency response and management strategy mandated by local, state, and federal standards.

Members will prepare for and respond to environmental disasters such as severe weather events, marine mammal strandings, or water quality issues causing a catastrophic shellfish kill. It is impossible to project the nature or frequency of disaster-related responses during the service year, however, given Cape Cod's fragile environment, seacoast location, and history, disaster readiness and response must be considered a high priority.

ACC's weekly member schedule -- Group Service, Individual Placement, and COD Day - ensures that each member has the time and opportunity to prepare and contribute meaningfully to the implementation of planned Environmental Stewardship and Disaster Services intervention activities, and coincidentally, this opportunity also offers a high level of member accountability. Two days each week, members work in the field on Group Service projects. Members have an Individual Placement with an environmental or disaster preparedness organization and are given a long-term project within program focus areas based on community need. One day a week members participate in a "Community Outreach Day" (COD) during which they serve in a professional office setting, initiate and execute an educational program, interact with community volunteers, and participate with service partners and stakeholders in relevant field service activities. COD days provide dedicated opportunities to complete interventions and achieve anticipated outcomes. COD days also give members hundreds of hours to teach and work with leveraged volunteers in community-based settings.

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Weekly house dinners and scheduled weekly meetings also offer regular opportunities for members to plan, resolve challenges, and collect feedback to keep community-based interventions focused and on-schedule. Live-in supervisors oversee daily services, in-house operations, and facilitate weekly schedules and house dinner and meeting. Supervisors conduct site visits and check-ins with all service partners to monitor member activities and leveraged volunteers. Supervisors provide orientation, training, direction, and feedback, and thus create a culture that supports and recognizes ACC member achievements and contributions toward change.

EVIDENCE BASE: There is Strong Evidence that ACC's program model has had meaningful impact in its efforts to promote environmental stewardship and foster improved community response to disaster situations. Recognizing that change is incremental and can be measured from several perspectives, ACC's evidence of change is drawn from several evidentiary documents: 1) The 2014 National Climate Assessment by the U.S. Global Change Research Program and Federal Advisory Committee 2) 2012 Barnstable County Wildfire Preparedness Plan and 3) Suffolk University's 2013 ACC External Evaluation.

The 2014 National Climate Assessment (NCA) acknowledges the need for disaster preparedness and response, land and water resource management. The report highlights the community challenges precipitated by man-made, natural, and environmental disasters and stresses the importance of preparedness and collaboration at the community level.

The NCA highlights the following as effective interventions for land resource management: wildfire mitigation, habitat restoration, invasive species removal, native species protection, increased accessibility to public lands, and community engagement.

The NCA highlights the following as effective interventions for water resource management: habitat restoration (including salt marsh restoration), wastewater and stormwater management, shellfish propagation, erosion control, education, and community collaboration and engagement.

A specialized water resource management activity critical to the Cape Cod region is shellfish propagation. Shellfish are an imperative natural solution to attenuate and filter damaging excess nitrogen from the watershed. Bivalve shellfish, including commercially important oysters and quahogs, live in coastal water bodies and derive their nutrition by filter feeding on available algae or phytoplankton in the water column. An adult oyster can filter up to 50 gallons of water per day which can have a significant effect on nutrients present in the water column.

The Barnstable County Wildfire Preparedness Plan (BCWPP) highlights the following as effective

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interventions for wildfire mitigation: prescribed burning, creation of fire safety buffer zones, and the mechanical removal of fuels to reduce fire risk. Cape Cod, with its sandy soils, drying winds and flammable fuel types is as wildfire prone as the fire-ravaged regions of southern California. The BCWPP found that 42.3% of Barnstable County is within a high to extreme risk of wildfire. The combination of high fire risk at the urban-wildland interface and a lack of public awareness are of critical concern to natural resource managers, planners and public safety officials. Member service activities, as a solution, directly align with recommendations from the BCWPP both through fieldwork and community education programs like Firewise which educates homeowners to keep homes and neighborhoods safe from wildfire.

NOTICE OF PRIORITY: The ACC program is focused on 2015 funding priority areas including environmental stewardship and disaster preparedness and response. Service activities conducted by AmeriCorps members are critical to public safety and a stable economy on Cape Cod. ACC has chosen to utilize performance measures D1 (Community Disaster Education) EN4/4.1 and EN5/5.1 (Environmental Stewardship). ACC provides support to increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters and improves community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation. In the area of environmental stewardship, ACC improves at-risk ecosystems, water quality, and leads ecosystem improvements in the community. ACC is researching the potential to become a 21st Century Corps Member Organization in the future.

MEMBER TRAINING: Member training begins with an intensive orientation period and a complete overview of the ACC program, the community and service activities. Training topics include the Member Handbook and Contract, AmeriCorps prohibited service activities, a review of the program's mission statement, the member position description, service and residential expectations and standards, the member living stipend and education award information, workers compensation and health insurance plans, policies regarding member uniforms, attendance and disciplinary actions and a discussion of the significance and impact of National Service.

Members are given CPR, first aid and disaster service trainings by the American Heart Association and the American Red Cross, guaranteeing members will be trained and capable of opening and managing emergency shelters including a focused training for handling elderly shelter occupants. Additional trainings include chainsaw certification, land management practices, municipal shellfish propagation techniques, environmental education curriculum, sustainability practices, public

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speaking, environmental and disaster preparedness puppet show training, Federal Emergency Management Agency National Incidence Management System modules, volunteer recruitment and management, civic engagement, mental health first aid, and leadership. Resource Development Office staff conducts resource development training for members.

At Individual Placements (IP), Service Partners are responsible for providing members with the training they need to complete their individual projects. ACC and IP Service Partners will occasionally send members to external trainings and workshops to enhance member development. ACC brings the corps together regularly for trainings such as a Life After AmeriCorps training, civic engagement and reflection, leadership, and others as needed. Trainers are a combination of Service Partners, Advisory Board members, ACC staff, disaster specialists, natural resource experts and local elected officials who ensure all members are fully prepared with the necessary skills to complete their service successfully.

MEMBER SUPERVISION: Qualified staff is essential to providing adequate safety and supervision of members. A well-trained staff is required to manage three residences and the multifaceted service activities of the corps. All staff are directly supervised by the Program Coordinator, paid by Barnstable County, manages the program and day-to-day operations, trains staff and ensures program compliance. The Program Coordinator, two Program Specialists, and three Residential Program Supervisors supervise members and manage all aspects of the program.

Two Program Specialists are responsible for the oversight of the specialized service components of the program. One Program Specialist oversees all outreach projects and education initiatives, media relations and member training. This Program Specialist will supervise members directly on COD (Community Outreach) Days, providing guidance during planning of volunteer projects. The second Program Specialist oversees the Individual Placements (IP), performing site visits to ensure Service Partner compliance, providing support and training to IP Service Partners to ensure effective supervision of members at IP service sites and acting as a liaison between the Service Partners and members.

Three Residential Program Supervisors are live-in staff at the program residences, providing leadership during service and non-service hours, and subsequently having the most frequent interactions with members. Additionally, they schedule and provide supervision and oversight in the field on Group Service projects. Weekly house meetings run by three Program Supervisors ensure regular communication between members and staff. Issues that surface at the weekly meetings are brought to the attention of the senior staff and resolved quickly. Program Supervisors regularly

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perform informal one on one check-ins with each member and hold formal member evaluations twice in the service year to gauge the members' experiences, provide feedback and mitigate any residential, service or programmatic issues. Members have a strong support system from all staff and understand that their needs and concerns can be communicated and addressed.

MEMBER EXPERIENCE: AmeriCorps Cape Cod's unique residential structure is the foundation that provides stability for members to take initiative in their service activities and everyday lives. The residences immerse members in the AmeriCorps brand and program history through AmeriCorps signage, house journals, alumni legacy, corps house photos, which create connections and inspire a stronger ethic of service. Members develop meaningful relationships and gain the benefit of a strong community network by living and serving together. It fosters the member identity, teamwork, communication, an "Esprit de Corps," sharing of resources, immersion in and connection to their new community and a stable home base empowering members to focus on service. Weekly house dinners and meetings offer structured opportunities to reflect on service, promote cultural and idea exchange, resolve service and interpersonal challenges as a group, review logistics of upcoming service projects and provide staff an opportunity to collect feedback from members.

On the first day of service members put on the uniform that will identify them as AmeriCorps members throughout the service year. New members are welcomed to the community through introductions to the Advisory Board, staff and Service Partners, and a Pledge Ceremony hosted by the County Commissioners and covered by local media. As part of their orientation period, members participate in a 3-day retreat complete with team building activities and personal and programmatic goal-setting. This period of bonding and self-reflection provides a solid framework for members to develop as a team and as individuals. Members attend 2 additional full-corps retreats throughout the year: a mid-year retreat allows for recharge and additional civic engagement trainings; a year-end retreat to celebrate their accomplishments and reflect on their service.

The ACC Advisory Board provides an additional support network through a mentoring program. Members are trained to be ambassadors of ACC and National Service in the field and community. To gain a broader view of AmeriCorps service, ACC members participate in the Massachusetts Service Alliance's annual "Opening Day" event with over 1,000 members from across the state to celebrate National Service. AmeriCorps Cape Cod also partners with other AmeriCorps programs throughout the state on collaborative service projects including community volunteer events. Through participation in several civic engagement trainings, a State House tour in Boston and immersion in

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the local County government, members build an ethic of civic responsibility that transcends their year of service.

Members are recognized frequently throughout the program year through Service Partner newsletters, special event promotion, the ACC website, member newsletter "The Waypoint," media coverage, and "AmeriCorps Serves Here" placards at service sites. The community extends a final thanks to the members for their service contributions through awards, proclamations and recognition at a yearly graduation ceremony.

Efforts are made to recruit local candidates into the ACC program via presentations to Cape Cod Community College students, visibility on the Cape Cod Volunteers website, presence at volunteer fairs, advertisements in local papers and flyers, and ACC signature service events. Program alumni and service partners are also essential to recruiting local candidates. Local recruitment efforts have been highlighted by local media as productive and positive efforts towards keeping young professionals on Cape Cod.

Member commitment to National Service and AmeriCorps is proven beyond their year of service: valuable skills gained during their year of service has resulted in 113 out of 400 alumni going on to serve a second term of service, become a service partner, work in the Cape Cod community or on staff of ACC, the County or other local organizations. Members develop an ethic of service and practical work skills that are transferred to their future work environments. An ACC Alumni Association, with over 150 active participants, was formed in 2011 to allow alumni to stay connected to the program, service opportunities and each other.

COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION: During their first day of training members learn firsthand what it means to become an AmeriCorps member. On their first day, members receive AmeriCorps t-shirts, sweatshirts, polos, gear bags, softshells, hats, raincoats, etc. branded with AmeriCorps, MSA, and other required logos that will be worn daily. During the first week, members receive a gear training at which they are introduced to uniform specifications for each service activity, and program staff enforces dress code provisions. Service Partners are trained by ACC staff about branding, member uniforms, and signage compliance. Program staff inspects and monitors service sites and Service Partner websites to ensure inclusion of AmeriCorps logo and branding. Members practice articulating their AmeriCorps experience in the community at a program-provided, public-speaking training.

Organizational Capability

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ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING

Barnstable County's long-standing, successful internal structure assures financial accountability and programmatic oversight to AmeriCorps Cape Cod (ACC). The Resource Development Office (RDO), a County department, has been responsible for the fiscal and administrative management of local, state and federal grants for Barnstable County departments since 1994. With its mission of advancing grant programs to benefit the people, municipalities and environment of Barnstable County through grant development and management, outreach and education, the RDO has been responsible for the supervision, administration, and operation of the ACC program since 1999. The RDO is dedicated to grant-writing and regularly seeks additional funding to support the ACC program. The Barnstable County Commissioners and Assembly of Delegates have reviewed and appropriated funds to meet the required match.

The ACC Program Director/Manager of the Barnstable County RDO brings more than 25 years of experience in writing, designing, and operating grant and residential programs. This position is fully funded by Barnstable County. The Program Coordinator, 2 Program Specialists, and 3 Residential Program Supervisors supervise members and manage all aspects of the program. The Program Coordinator manages the staff and day-to-day operations, trains staff, oversees recruitment, and ensures program compliance.

The 2 Program Specialists provide oversight and technical assistance to specialized components of the program to allow for continuous improvement, to ensure for adequate supervision and to maximize member utilization. One Program Specialist oversees all outreach projects, education initiatives, media relations, Community Outreach and Development (COD) Days, and the planning of volunteer projects. The second Program Specialist oversees the Individual Placements (IP), performing site visits to guarantee Service Partner compliance, providing support and training to IP Service Partners, and acting as a liaison between the Service Partners and the program.

Three live-in Residential Program Supervisors ensure program compliance during group service activities and including non-service hours in the program residences. Since 1999, the ACC staff team has been composed of 95% ACC alumni as ACC promotes staff and former members into all levels of the program.

The RDO and County Finance Department have a demonstrated record of sound programmatic and fiscal compliance. For the last three year grant cycle, ACC was in compliance with County, state, and federal fiscal and programmatic audits.

In 2014, an external program evaluation was conducted by Suffolk University in collaboration

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with ACC's 15 member Advisory Board to strengthen program operations. Feedback was gathered on all aspects of the program from ACC partners including alumni, community decision makers, service partners, and the Advisory Board. Planning and implementation feedback was compiled to make recommendations to improve efficacy of ACC interventions in the areas of environmental stewardship and disaster preparedness and response.

COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

ACC follows CNCS, Massachusetts Service Alliance and Barnstable County provisions, policies, and procedures. ACC has crafted detailed management systems to ensure compliance and accountability. The full ACC staff also participates in the Massachusetts's Service Alliance's annual "Kick-Off" event so that they become familiar with provisions and expectations set by CNCS to better ensure compliance.

The ACC staff facilitates a required orientation for AmeriCorps members and Service Partners where handbooks are presented detailing new provisions, policies, procedures, prohibited activities, program structure, program contacts, and residential expectations. Upon completion of the orientation, all members and Service Partners must sign a contract agreeing to comply with all program mandates. The program is designed to monitor for compliance throughout the program year through site visits, formal member evaluations, staff evaluations, and weekly house meetings. ACC staff members are required to attend weekly staff meetings, monthly department meetings and quarterly Planning and Visioning sessions designed to review all program aspects for early problem detection. Service Partners, staff and members are held accountable and responsible through regular compliance monitoring and evaluation. High risk, noncompliant and prohibited activities will result in strong and swift disciplinary action as outlined in the handbook.

PAST PERFORMANCE

The program enrolled 100% of its slots in the last grant year. Successful enrollment management requires coordination of all functions and initiatives that affect the recruitment, admission and retention of all AmeriCorps Cape Cod members serving in this program. AmeriCorps Cape Cod is proud to report an enrollment rate of 100% was maintained over the past grant cycle.

During ACC's 2013-2014 grant year it had a retention rate of 97%; one member left the program to accept an offer of full time employment. During the 2014-2015 members' orientation period, the program addressed the importance of members fulfilling their full yearlong commitment to the program and the organizations with which they serve.

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The program has also achieved 100% of performance measure targets over the past 3 years of operation. The ACC program, focused on environmental stewardship and disaster preparedness and response, has consistently exceeded programmatic standards of performance.

As a result of the ACC response to Hurricane Sandy, program staff identified an increased need for comprehensive disaster training. AmeriCorps Cape Cod's disaster training was overhauled and is now a targeted and responsive emergency preparedness training, coinciding with local, state and federal standards. In 2013, a high volume of disaster response needs presented a challenge to our corps. In 2014, our program implemented an on-call schedule which ensures members availability throughout the service year. Enhanced training and an on-call schedule not only ensures member availability to the local community, but also provides a higher level of member accountability in the event of a disaster. This corrective action has facilitated an improved disaster preparedness and response and recovery strategy for Barnstable County.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

COST EFFECTIVENESS: Barnstable County Resource Development Office (RDO) is requesting level CNCS funding of \$13,300 per MSY for 32 MSYs totaling \$425,600 annually. Barnstable County RDO has developed a sound programmatic budget adequately combining funds and in-kind contributions that minimize costs while maximizing output. ACC staff frequently conducts research on current market expenses regarding housing, staffing, equipment, training and provisions. Member expenses are calculated to reflect the cost of living on Cape Cod. The budget will sufficiently support the program design and service activities, supplemented by value added housing and several in-kind contributions. The program budget and performance measures are reviewed and voted on annually by Barnstable County governing officials to ensure goals, objectives and outputs are achieved.

AmeriCorps Cape Cod is a sub-program of the Barnstable County RDO. The RDO has sustained a process to build an adequate plan to provide full future financial support for the program. Each year special events have been funded from diverse sources such as the Massachusetts Service Alliance, Shaw's Supermarket, N-Star, Covanta, the American Legion, Home Depot and local banks, and match funded by Barnstable County. In the past 3-year grant cycle the program secured over \$30,000 in grants to fund projects that benefited the environment and residents of the region. The Resource Development Office will continue to execute a strategic resource development plan that includes seeking contributions from the local business community, and other development opportunities including grants from public and private funding sources.

The conservative, level funding request supports an increased minimum member living allowance

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cost, proposed state administrative cost increases, and rising cost of living. The amount requested from CNCS, and match funded by Barnstable County, will support staff, member stipends, fringe benefits and other activities over the next three years, effectively supporting future program impact on the region's critical needs.

BUDGET ADEQUACY

Barnstable County will be providing an increased 52% match in non-CNCS support for the operation of this program for the next 3 program years totaling \$465,600 annually through cash-match and in-kind funding from Barnstable County, Cape Cod National Seashore, and local agencies.

Since 1999, Barnstable County commissioners and the Assembly of Delegates continues to approve their portion of the ACC program including a \$152,170 cash match to the grant. This cash match is used to offer additional member benefits including utilities and internet access for the houses, a travel stipend, AmeriCorps logo clothing, service gear, health fairs, professional development, immunizations and other support services. The three member residences are an in-kind match valued at \$188,160 annually, of which \$111,720 is provided by Cape Cod National Seashore and \$76,440 by Barnstable County. The value of this additional member benefit package exceeds the required minimum member living allowance.

Member in-kind training valued at \$10,000 annually is provided by Cape Cod National Seashore, Barnstable County, and other local agencies. Throughout the year, Service Partners also provide expertise, project tools, equipment and resources to ensure the program's success.

Additionally, Barnstable County pays the salary and benefits of the ACC Program Coordinator as in-kind match. The Barnstable County Resource Development Office is responsible for the overall grant administration, technical assistance, and management of the AmeriCorps Cape Cod program.

Though environmental degradation and disasters persist, the AmeriCorps Cape Cod program continues to provide service as a solution in Barnstable County by fostering a community of residents and visitors who are dedicated to maintaining a healthier and safer environment. The benefits of an educated public, a healthy environment, a safe community, and a new generation of service-oriented visitors and residents will leave lasting impacts on Barnstable County now and into the future.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

The AmeriCorps Cape Cod (ACC) program is regularly reviewed and evaluated throughout the service year to ensure effective and efficient operations. The goal of the evaluation report is to identify the program strengths and areas needing improvement and key effective practices. The strengths and

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weaknesses highlighted in the internal evaluation report are reviewed and used for continuous improvement of the program.

Theory of Change:

ACC proposes to train and deploy 32 full-time residential ACC members. Members will leverage at least 600 volunteers in partnership with all 15 Cape Cod towns plus over 150 regional, federal, state, local, and nonprofit stakeholders to effect lasting, measurable changes in community, environmental, and disaster preparedness focus areas. Strategic interventions in the Focus Areas of Environmental Stewardship and Disaster Services will be planned, implemented, and measured, and evidence of change will be documented and reported. These interventions are based on best practices of land and water resource management agencies and on effective interventions documented in studies conducted in the areas of environmental stewardship and disaster preparedness.

Clear and Measurable Outcomes:

ACC's Environmental Stewardship will consist of more than 350 water and land-focused natural resource management projects throughout Barnstable County. These projects will include interventions to improve 400 acres of parks in public and tribal lands, improve or create 50 miles of trails or waterways, restore herring runs and salt marshes, remove invasive species, and propagate millions of shellfish.

ACC members will also present at least 40 community disaster education programs to some 450 residents and visitors to better prepare them for disasters which might strike Cape Cod.

Concrete Research Questions:

The following questions will be used to evaluate the program:

Are resources adequate to accomplish program goals?

Are there components of the program that aren't working well?

Is the program continuing to meet the needs of the community?

Proposed Research Design:

An internal evaluation featuring stakeholder inclusion and implementation of a significant range of evaluation tools, both qualitative and quantitative will be primary objectives. A comprehensive document analysis will be completed and an evaluation working group will be convened. Ultimately

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these tools will provide substantial background information and perspective on ACC.

An internal needs assessment has been conducted by the RDO, a department established in 1994 and responsible for grant administration and management of the ACC program each year since the program began.

Evaluator Qualifications:

The RDO has a long and established history of conducting internal programmatic evaluations and will be conducting the internal evaluation of the AmeriCorps Cape Cod program. RDO will involve staff, alumni, service partners, and other stakeholders in the process, utilizing a wide variety of evaluation tools in the data collection process.

Estimated Budget:

An internal evaluation will be conducted by the Barnstable County Resource Development Office (RDO) at no cost to the ACC program.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

RE: Barnstable County, AmeriCorps Cape Cod Program, 15AC169923

4/14/15, 8:00am

Darlene Johnson-Morris, Amanda Howe, Christin Marshall

Clarification Items

This application is under consideration for a grant in the amount of \$425,600, 32.00 Member Service Years (MSYs), 32 slots, at \$13,300.00 per MSY.

A. Programmatic clarification items:

(No items to clarify.)

B. Budget Clarification

Please respond to the clarification items in the 'Budget Narrative' section of the application unless otherwise indicated. Funding is extremely competitive and limited this year. Having a low Cost Per

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Member Service year (MSY) is a competitive advantage. Applicants submitting with a low cost per MSY will receive higher priority for funding. Please consider decreasing the application's proposed cost per MSY by revising the CNCS share of the program budget, or provide a compelling explanation for why the cost/MSY cannot be decreased. CNCS will review both the individual program cost per MSY and the aggregate cost per MSY after the clarification period and may elect to make further decreases in cost per MSY and/or may be only able to partially fund applicants.

Program Response:

Barnstable County AmeriCorps Cape Cod originally submitted a budget requesting an MSY of \$13,300. Upon further review, seeking cost reduction to the program budget, ACC decreased the budget request to \$13,285 per MSY resulting in a revised total request of \$425,120.00 to CNCS.

To operate the program as proposed, this is the reduction we can afford without compromising quality of service and meeting the critical need of the community through member service activities. Further reduction to the budget would impact the ability of the program to effectively perform service functions as proposed and meet all performance measure goals. The originally-submitted budget was conservative and included increased staff fringe benefits and health insurance costs, member living allowances, State Commission share percentage, and utility costs for the 3 program-provided residences.

Therefore, the justification for this budget reduction is based upon decreasing the estimated cost of insurance for 3 residential supervisors by \$156.66/person. This real and reasonable cost reduction is based on a pay period with a reduced staff insurance cost due to staff program year transitions.

C. Performance Measure Clarification

Please make the following changes in the Performance Measures screens in eGrants or in the 'Clarification Summary' field, as appropriate.

(No items to clarify)

D. Strategic Engagement Slots

1. What percentage of your slots will be targeted to recruiting members with disabilities? What is your program's plan, if any, for outreach and recruitment of members of the disability community?

Narratives

Program Response:

Recruitment efforts include consultation with leaders in the disability community as well as a targeted broadcast of all 32 open slots to the regional disability network on Cape Cod. Essential functions of the Barnstable County AmeriCorps Cape Cod program include physical labor, heavy lifting, living in program-provided housing, driving to regional service locations, and performing remote field service on uneven terrain, sometimes in stressful environments and adverse weather conditions.

2. In order to increase the number of individuals with disabilities serving as AmeriCorps members, CNCS is offering applicants the opportunity to request additional MSYs to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities. The additional MSYs would be funded at the clarification cost per MSY level. Applicants must describe their intent to recruit, engage and retain additional members with disabilities and provide a detailed outreach plan for how these members will be recruited and supported (e.g. established recruitment partners or strategies.)

In addition, programs receiving these additional member positions will be required to report specific details on the success of the recruitment, supervision and retention of AmeriCorps members with disabilities in semi-annual progress reports. If you would like to request additional MSYs to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities, please describe your intent as requested above. Also indicate how many MSYs your program would like to request, the number of slots by slot type, and where the additional members will serve. Add these additional MSYs to your budget. Also adjust your performance measure targets, MSY allocations, and executive summary to reflect these additional members.

Program Response:

The Barnstable County AmeriCorps Cape Cod program is not requesting additional, strategic engagement slots.

E. MSY with No Program Funds Attached Clarification:

Applicants may request No-Cost MSYs. These additional No-Cost MSYs are national service positions in which no grant funds will be awarded. In other words, grantees could receive additional AmeriCorps positions but no additional grant funds. Programs will be responsible for using their own or other resources to pay program costs, member support costs and other operating expenses.

Narratives

Program Response:

The Barnstable County AmeriCorps Cape Cod program is not requesting no-cost MSYs.

Barnstable County AmeriCorps Cape Cod Disaster Preparedness and Response Capability:

In the event of an environmental or man-made disaster or other emergency situation, members of the residential AmeriCorps Cape Cod program are trained and ready to be called into action to assist with disaster response. Responses to environmental and man-made disasters are described in detail in our proposal, and ACC offers assistance outside of the program service area in critical times of need. While the program's first priority is meeting the critical emergency needs of Barnstable County, we have many years of service experience responding to disasters in our home state of Massachusetts as well as other areas of need in the country. Examples of past responses include tornado response to Western Massachusetts and Hurricane Sandy response in New York.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics