Narratives

Executive Summary

Conservation Legacy proposes to engage 338 AmeriCorps Members in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Tennessee who will create more resilient communities and a more resilient natural environment by reducing the risk of wildfire, saving water resources by removing non-native plant species, enhancing and reducing the impact of recreation on public lands, restoring riparian areas to reduce impacts from floods, protecting wildlife habitat, and completing technical projects providing monitoring and analysis data for land and water managers. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps Members will be responsible for improving 448 miles of trails or waterways and 1,683 acres of public land. In addition, the AmeriCorps Members will leverage an additional 550 volunteers who will be engaged in one-day service projects such as Earth Day and MLK Day. Conservation Legacy's programs are recognized by CNCS as 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) programs and the AmeriCorps program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Environment -- 21CSC. Conservation Legacy will match the Corporation investment of $629,955 with approximately $3.8M in non-Corporation funds.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

PROBLEM/NEED

Changes in the climate are having significant impact on the environment and on communities. On January 16, 2015 Bloomberg reported that 2014 was the hottest year on record and that 13 of the 14 hottest years on record have occurred since 2000. Regardless of the causes of these changes, the effects are being felt on the financial well-being of communities across the country due to costly natural disasters, the effects of drought and invasive species, and risks to the outdoor recreation economy.

The magnitude and cost of natural disasters in recent years has been devastating. The President's State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force On Climate Preparedness And Resilience published its report in November 2014 ("Recommendations to the President") stating that, "In 2012 alone, the cost of weather disasters exceeded $110 billion in the United States, and climate change will only increase the frequency and intensity of these events." The Washington Post reported on October 17, 2013 (Report: Western wildfires growing more intense, insurers deeply concerned) that the three-year period between 2011 and 2013 alone saw, "the largest fire in Arizona's history (2011's Wallow Fire); both the largest and most destructive fires in New Mexico's history (2012's Whitewater-Baldy Complex and Little Bear Fires, respectively); and, the first and second most destructive fires in

Colorado's history (2013's Black Forest and 2012's Waldo Canyon Fires, respectively)." Furthermore, the National Climatic Data Center reports that in 2013, there were nine weather/climate disaster events with losses exceeding $1 billion each across the US.

The US Drought Monitor shows that over 44% of the continental US is currently considered in a drought (http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/MapsAndData/DataTables.aspx); the National Drought Mitigation Center reports that drought affects the economic prospects of farmers, ranchers, and hydropower utilities while also increasing the risk of wildfire (http://drought.unl.edu/droughtforkids/howdoesdroughtaffectourlives/typesofdroughtimpacts.aspx). Further economic risk comes from invasive plant species; the Ecological Economics reported in 2005 that, "invading alien species in the United States cause major environmental damages and losses adding up to almost $120 billion per year" (http://www.plantright.org/pdfs/Pimentel-et-al2005.pdf).

According to the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA), outdoor recreation economy supports 6.1 million direct American jobs, accounts for $646 billion in direct consumer spending each year, and contributes $79.6 billion in federal, state and local taxes annually (http://outdoorindustry.org/advocacy/recreation/economy.html). This same OIA report shows that in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Tennessee -- the primary states served by Conservation Legacy's AmeriCorps program -- the outdoor recreation economy supports 379,800 jobs and accounts for $38.1 billion in consumer spending. These jobs are at risk due to climate changes; Resources for the Future reports that climate change is impacting outdoor recreation by: reducing snowpack affecting winter sports like skiing; altering stream runoff affecting water sports such as kayaking; reducing wetlands affecting hunting and fishing; and, reducing tree cover from wildfires and disease affecting hiking, camping and picnicking (http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-BCK-ORRG_ClimateChange.pdf).

At the same time that climate change is affecting our economy, our nation's young people are entering adulthood in a challenging employment environment. Even with job creation seeing improvement, the unemployment rate for youth aged 18-24 is twice that of most sectors (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 11/2014). This is surprising given that employers are actively hiring, but when the National Association of Colleges and Employers surveyed hiring managers asking what skills they prioritize, the most important qualities they listed as absent in youthful applicants were basic teamwork, problem-solving and the ability to plan and prioritize--and this applies to both college graduates and non-graduates (http://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2013/10/11/the-10-skills-employers-most-want-in-20-something-employees/). Many young people need a reliable vehicle for

acquiring the key competencies and positive social attributes that will enable them to be successful.

THEORY OF CHANGE AND LOGIC MODEL

Intended Outcomes. Communities are resilient to climatic changes and related environmental stressors, mitigating impacts to economic health and well-being. Young people are able to obtain meaningful jobs leading to careers and are serving as the next generation of environmental stewards. The following conditions must be in place in order to reach the Intended Outcomes: 1) Forests are appropriately thinned (through tree thinning and/or prescribed burning) so that forest fires are less likely to occur and, when they do occur, are easier to contain at a small scale; 2) Invasive species are inventoried and eradicated, preserving precious water resources and mitigating the effect of drought; 3) Trails are appropriately maintained, mitigating the impact on associated natural areas and enhancing outdoor recreation activities; 4) Riparian areas are restored, allowing water to percolate better which saves water resources and decreases flood levels and the corresponding impact of floods; 5) Wildlife habitat is protected through installation of wildlife friendly fencing that minimizes damage from livestock on public lands and promotes biodiversity and hunting; 6) Land and water managers have the data, studies and analyses necessary to better prepare for changes and ensure that the areas they manage are resilient to current and future conditions; and, 7) Young people have the training and personal skills (e.g. communication, problem solving, grit, etc.) to be prepared for careers and to serve as the next generation of environmental stewards.

Specific Intervention. Conservation Legacy will mobilize AmeriCorps members through four of its signature programs to complete service projects that contribute directly to establishing the pre-conditions listed above on a community-by-community and landscape-by-landscape basis. Programs involved include the Arizona Conservation Corps (offices in Flagstaff, Tucson and Lakeside, AZ), Southeast Conservation Corps (based in Chattanooga, TN), Southwest Conservation Corps (offices in Durango and Salida, CO and Gallup and Pueblo of Acoma, NM), and Environmental Stewards (based in Durango, CO). The first three programs organize AmeriCorps members in crews along with professional crew supervisors while the fourth places AmeriCorps members as individual placements with project partners.

Every Conservation Legacy project involves a partnership with a land management agency and follows an explicit and well-researched land and water management plan to ensure the project is meeting a high priority need. These land and water management plans are developed in consultation with community members, scientists and other stake-holders to identify the most critical needs and the most effective local interventions to address those needs and build long term resiliency. Land and

water management agencies select projects for Conservation Legacy that meet these clearly defined needs, are appropriate to the skill level and capacity of AmeriCorps members, and are worth the match funding that the land management agency invests in the project to support Conservation Legacy's costs. Specific projects vary by region and agency but generally fall into six broad categories: 1) Reduction of forest fuels to cut down on forest overgrowth and reduce the risk of forest fires; 2) Removal of non-native invasive species such as tamarisk, Russian olive and buffelgrass through chainsaw work, hand pulling and/or applying herbicide to preserve precious water resources and mitigate the effect of drought; 3) Sustainable trail development and maintenance in both urban and wilderness areas to mitigate the impact on associated natural areas and promote outdoor recreation activities; 4) Riparian restoration to improve percolation, thereby reducing flood levels and flood impact; 5) Installation of wildlife habitat fencing to minimize damage from livestock and promote biodiversity and hunting; and, 6) Completion of studies, inventories, GIS analyses, environmental monitoring and other technical projects to provide managers the data they need to build local resilience in the lands and waters they manage.

AmeriCorps members will serve in various terms of service appropriate to their service activities and geographic base. For instance, spike camping crews typically operate for 300 hour or 450 hour terms due to both the short weather window for field work and the intensive nature of a camping-based program. Mixed crews that involve some camping and some non-residential service typically serve 675 or 900 hour terms. AmeriCorps members serving individually in land and water management agencies or non-profit organizations have terms ranging from 300 hour summer positions to 1700 hour year-round positions. All Conservation Legacy AmeriCorps members will serve full time within their term of service. In addition, the AmeriCorps Members will leverage an additional 500 volunteers per year who will be engaged in one-day service projects such as Earth Day and MLK Day.

The "Conservation Corps" model, which Conservation Legacy has been working to perfect for 17 years, engages young people, typically aged 18-25, as AmeriCorps Members and is particularly effective in meeting the stated environmental needs because: 1) Young people are a largely untapped resource and are actively looking for service opportunities and a chance to improve their future employability. Once engaged in meaningful service work, they are eager to learn, exuberant and dedicated; 2) Young people are often mobile without family or financial commitments--able to spike/camp for long periods, often in remote areas. They are able to respond quickly where needed, including disasters; 3) Completing environmental service in most cases does not require a specific

degree or academic background, opening it to young people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Crews have remarkable diversity, and Members learn valuable lessons from serving with people from different backgrounds; and 4) Young people gain a sense of pride and commitment to project outcomes when serving in their own communities often leading to long-term stewardship values.

Conservation Legacy Staff works to ensure that all projects are completed on time and to the satisfaction of partners. Conservation Legacy will use its validated field records, surveys and evaluations from project partners to demonstrate the impact of its service projects towards meeting the specific objectives of each project, such as eradicating tamarisk and Russian olive from a stretch of the Dolores River or fixing a section of the Bright Angel Trail at the Grand Canyon or reducing the fire hazard of a 50 acre plot of land adjacent to the Forest Lakes subdivision. Staff will also aggregate evaluation data to report on overall project accomplishments such as miles of trails or waterways improved or acres of public lands improved. Evaluation will also show the impact of the service projects and associated member development activities on the AmeriCorps members themselves. Further evaluation, led by a multi-University evaluation team, will assess the long term impact of these projects in building towards the overall intended outcomes of resilient communities and a next generation of environmental stewards.

EVIDENCE BASE

Conservation Legacy will complete, as described above, conservation service projects that fit into six general categories of interventions, all leading to a common intended outcome. Each of these project types is backed by a distinct collection of peer-reviewed evaluation studies supporting the service intervention. Indeed, the public land agencies that direct the service activities and partner with Conservation Legacy AmeriCorps programs have hundreds of scientists on staff regularly reviewing and conducting research in an effort to ensure that service activities follow the latest and most impactful intervention strategies. Given the limitations of this proposal, Conservation Legacy will describe -- and attach -- a general literature review covering all six of these interventions as well as an experimental evaluation of one of its service activities (wildfire mitigation). Conservation Legacy will also describe and attach a university evaluation of the impact of conservation service activities on the Conservation Legacy AmeriCorps members who conduct them.

In 2014 Conservation Legacy commissioned professors from North Carolina State and Brigham Young Universities to conduct a comprehensive literature review of existing research (attached) to identify: "1) scientific evidence regarding the community and ecosystem impact of conservation efforts, and 2) commonly employed strategies and indicators used to assess community and ecosystem

impacts." Their research review found a link between a host of activities performed by conservation corps -- including the ones proposed herein by Conservation Legacy -- and a broad set of community impacts (such as increased tourism revenue, job creation, and reducing costs associated with various remediation such as fire suppression) and environmental impacts (such as successful control of invasive species and creation of new habitats for targeted species). For instance, the literature review identified studies showing: an invasive species removal project that led to farm-level benefits of at least $98 million; a national rail-trail network that provides $8.5 million annual economic impact; a water quality study showing that $5.24 is saved for every $1 invested in erosion control; and, a meta-analysis of 89 studies showing that restoration projects increase biodiversity by 44%.

It is worth looking in-depth at one of the service interventions proposed by Conservation Legacy, though unfortunately the proposal limitations do not allow for a similar examination of all six interventions. Scientists from Northern Arizona University studied the effectiveness of fuel reduction treatments on the 2011 Wallow Fire in Arizona and published their findings in the "Forest Ecology and Management" journal in August 2014 under the title, "Effectiveness of fuel reduction treatments: Assessing metrics of forest resiliency and wildfire severity after the Wallow Fire, AZ" (attached). The Wallow Fire was the largest fire in Arizona's history burning 841 square miles, nearly the size of Rhode Island. Within the fire perimeter were a number of areas that had been treated within the past 10 years using the same interventions that Conservation Legacy proposes here, namely thinning overgrown forests. The fire perimeter also included many areas that had never been treated, presenting an ideal experimental study of treated versus non-treated areas. The scientists compared burn severity in the treated areas versus the non-treated areas, noting that reducing burn severity would increase protection for adjacent human communities. In their attached evaluation the scientists concluded that, "Fire severity, as defined by overstory mortality and basal area loss, was significantly lower in treated units; on average, trees killed per hectare in untreated units was six times the number of trees killed in treated units. Fuel reduction treatments simultaneously reduced fire severity and enhanced short-term metrics of ecosystem resiliency to uncharacteristically severe fire." Hugh D. Safford, David A. Schmidt, and Chris H. Carlson conducted a similar study of the Angora Fire that burned 1,243 hectare in the Lake Tahoe Basin in 2007 and published the study in the August 2009 edition of Forest Ecology and Management. The Angora Fire destroyed 254 homes and cost $160 million making it at the time one of the ten costliest wildfires in US history. Within its burn perimeter were 194 hectare of treated areas that had been thinned using the same interventions that Conservation Legacy proposes of thinning overgrowth. The scientists evaluated the fire effects on

vegetation in treated and adjacent untreated areas both immediately after the fire and 12 months later. They measured fire severity by looking at tree mortality, height of bole char, crown scorch, crown torch, and percent crown scorch and torch. They also controlled for variation in topography and weather to ensure that the study was a true experimental design. Their final results, "show that fuel treatments generally performed as designed and substantially changed fire behavior and subsequent fire effects to forest vegetation."

Conservation Legacy, in partnership with nine other Conservation Corps, engaged Texas A&M University and then Brigham Young University and North Carolina State University to conduct evaluations of Conservation Corps' impact on Members' natural resource management education and career intentions, outdoor recreation participation intentions, and key targeted program outcomes (teamwork, leadership, grit, etc.). Initiated in the 2011 program year, the study continued three years building upon evaluation to capture a well-defined picture of the impact that corps participation has. Surveys were administered on-line and in hardcopy format to corps participants and to a general population comparison group. Results have consistently shown statistically significant impact on natural resource management education and career intentions, outdoor recreation participation intentions, and key targeted program outcomes of teamwork, leadership, self-responsibility, communication and grit (Attached).

NOTICE PRIORITY

Conservation Legacy's programming fits within the Environment--21st Century Conservation Service Corps priority area because it: 1) Puts Americans to Work through the service opportunities it provides to young people, opportunities that include valuable training and education; 2) Preserves, Protects, and Promotes America's Greatest Gifts by building resilience within the environment and communities, strengthening them to withstand the impacts of climate change and its associated stressors; and, 3) Builds America's Future through building the resilience of its youth and helping them to forge a future as competent citizens and dedicated environmental stewards. Conservation Legacy's four primary programs are all recognized by the US Forest Service as 21CSC member organizations. Conservation Legacy's CEO was instrumental in the development of 21CSC program, served as Chair of the 21CSC Federal Advisory Committee and currently C0-Chairs the Partnership for the 21CSC.

MEMBER TRAINING

Conservation Legacy understands the tremendous learning potential inherent in field-based work, and its conservation crew program model is highly successful in teaching a wide range of technical

and construction skills to insure that each Member is well-prepared to complete the tasks of a particular project. Service begins with an intensive orientation that covers AmeriCorps policies including prohibited service activities; corps mission and vision; community needs (including meeting key community stakeholders and partners); service commitments and expectations. After orientation, Members learn the basics of relevant skills such as camp set-up, hygiene, risk management, group dynamics, tool use and safety, etc. and practice new technical skills under the guidance of crew leader and/or mentors. Forestry crews receive formal training on chainsaw operation similar to the USFS S212 class. Members continue to build employment assets throughout their service term via formal and informal training provided by leaders, mentors and project partners.

Every Conservation Legacy Member participates in learning through the service activities as well as more formal education and training sessions around an evening campfire, during a break in the service day or in a classroom. On-going training is done through both a formal and experiential approach and includes the following: 1) AmeriCorps background, guidelines and prohibited activities; 2) technical skills such as chainsaw use, herbicide application, basic firefighting, basic first-aid/CPR, GIS/GPS technology use, etc.; 3) Foundation skills including team building, communications, conflict resolution, problem solving, grit and decision making; 4) Leadership skills including practicums where Members serve as "task leader"; 5) Post-service skills development including resume writing, job search and interviewing skills; and, 6) Civic responsibility and stewardship, developed through regular opportunities for reflection and discussion to gain an understanding of the community impacts of each project.

MEMBER SUPERVISION

Conservation Legacy typically employs a team-based model where each crew has six Members and one to two crew leaders who have experience with both technical conservation skills and leadership skills. Members have constant support and supervision at all times during their service. Conservation Legacy selects, through a competitive process, those crew leader applicants with the most demonstrated leadership and supervisory experience as well as those who reflect the diversity of the Members. Conservation Legacy conducts an intensive multi-week residential training for crew leaders prior to Members' start focused on technical, youth development and risk management skills. Many of the crew leaders are AmeriCorps alumni and have participated in the lengthy "crew leader development" process in which they were introduced incrementally to the responsibilities of leadership. Conservation Legacy's year-round staff at each office provide a network of support to both crew leaders and Members to ensure that all receive adequate guidance throughout their terms. Crew

leaders and staff conduct individual bi-weekly check-ins with Members to facilitate greater growth and learning. Crew Leaders complete mid-term and end-of-service member evaluations and Members complete self-evaluations to gauge progress towards goals.

Conservation Legacy places a number of members in individual placements to serve with a partner agency or non-profit organization. Staff from these agencies and organizations mentor and lead members and are required to go through an in-depth orientation with Conservation Legacy. Conservation Legacy staff check in with these mentors on a quarterly basis via a structured reporting process. Additionally, Conservation Legacy Staff continue logistical, supervisory and administrative support throughout the member's service term.

MEMBER EXPERIENCE

Corpsmember development is part of the core operating structure of Conservation Legacy, critical to decisions, planning, and dialog on all levels. Members build their after-service assets through continuous service-learning, team-building, and hands-on technical skills training. Promoting a lifelong ethic of service and civic responsibility is also a key tenant of the organization, and all periods of the day (service project, camp time, conversations with partners) provide occasions to reflect on and discuss the implications of service and the impacts their work will have on the community and the environment. Conservation Legacy staff are in the process of forming an AmeriCorps Alums group so Members have the opportunity to network with Members and alumni from other National Service programs.

Conservation Legacy recruits Members to serve primarily in the communities where they live and ensures that its Members reflect the diversity of the communities where it serves. For instance, its Ancestral Lands crews primarily consist of Native American young people while Phoenix urban crew has a mix of young people who represent the more heterogeneous metro area. In all cases Conservation Legacy works to purposely recruit diverse crews within all definitions of diversity -- social-economic, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, race, etc. -- to ensure that all Members learn from each other, appreciate and understand differences, and have positive experiences. Further, crews have many opportunities to interact with other crew Members when returning from a camping spike and, whenever possible, to serve with other local national service programs in the community or through disaster relief projects. These interactions build relationships and foster an ethic of service along with a wider understanding of the power of AmeriCorps service to transform communities. Conservation Legacy selects Members based upon applicant interest in program service objectives, assets brought toward meeting program outcomes, commitment to completing a service term, and

the degree to which individuals will benefit from participation.

COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION

Conservation Legacy provides each Member with uniform shirts as well as other personal gear embellished with the AmeriCorps and Conservation Legacy logos. They are required to wear the shirts when completing service and are asked to wear them respectfully and to represent AmeriCorps proudly. Many report that these emblems of service are "conversation starters" in and out of the field, allowing them opportunities to discuss their service, Conservation Legacy and AmeriCorps. Conservation Legacy also places AmeriCorps signage at its offices and, where feasible, at service project locations.

Organizational Capability

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING

Conservation Legacy is a national organization with a 17-year history of operating AmeriCorps programs and of supporting locally-based conservation service programs that empower individuals to positively impact their lives, their communities and the environment. The organization, formerly called Southwest Conservation Corps, undertook a name change and a restructuring in 2014 and currently runs five distinct AmeriCorps programs 1) Arizona Conservation Corps serving Arizona and southern New Mexico; 2) Southwest Conservation Corps serving southern Colorado and northwestern New Mexico; 3) Environmental Stewards providing individual placements to partners across America; 4) Southeast Conservation Corps serving Tennessee, North Carolina and Georgia; and 5) Conservation Legacy VISTA Program serving poverty-challenged communities across the country from offices in West Virginia. This new structure allows Conservation Legacy to better support its programs with shared resources while each develops its own identity and customized programming.

Conservation Legacy is managed by a professional staff accountable to a CEO and under the management of a national Board of Directors, which has ultimate fiduciary responsibility for all aspects of the organization. Each of the five programs operates as a division of the organization under the direction of an Executive Director who reports the Chief Operating Officer (COO). Senior staff, including the CEO, COO and Vice President, travel regularly to each office to ensure adherence to organizational and AmeriCorps requirements. The Executive Directors of each program are responsible for planning and implementing the AmeriCorps program and working with public lands managers to identify high needs projects. Program directors and coordinators work directly with crews, ensuring that: 1) Members have adequate training and education; 2) projects are meaningful and are completed to the specifications of partners in a timely way; and, 3) Members have sufficient

time and support to fulfill and adhere to AmeriCorps requirements.

Conservation Legacy has been an AmeriCorps program since its founding in 1998, first as a sub-grantee to other organizations such as The Corps Network (with whom it still runs an EAP program). Conservation Legacy initiated a VISTA program in 2009 that is now one of the largest with 125 VISTA members serving in over 30 states, and is in its sixth year of operating a National Direct AmeriCorps program. AmeriCorps programming is an integral part of organizational focus and is fully integrated into all aspects of operations and management. The majority of staff have many years of experience managing AmeriCorps programs, and more than three quarters of staff are themselves AmeriCorps alumni.

Conservation Legacy mailed, both electronically and manually, Initial Consultation Forms to the State Commissions of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Tennessee in mid-December. In early January Conservation Legacy made follow-up phone calls to each State Commission to discuss alignment and coordination with state programs. Conservation Legacy has existing relationships with the first three Commissions and has begun working with the Tennessee State Commission; Tennessee's Executive Director has expressed great enthusiasm for Conservation Legacy's existing programs in that state. Conservation Legacy will continue to participate in commission-directed needs assessments, training activities, development of state service plans and other events. Conservation Legacy will include the State Commissions in mailing lists and will invite them to trainings and development activities. Conservation Legacy does not, at this time, know where individual placement AmeriCorps positions will be assigned, but plans to initiate contact with involved state commissions once assignments are determined.

Conservation Legacy works closely with federal, state and local land management agencies, community groups, non-profit organizations, Native American governments and private foundations in each community where it operates. Partner agencies identify needs on public, tribal and private lands and waters and work with Conservation Legacy and community stakeholders to design and plan implementation strategies. The organization continually broadens this collaborative process by strengthening existing partnerships, engaging new partners and increasing community outreach and volunteerism.

COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Conservation Legacy annually undergoes an independent A-133 audit and has never had a material weakness. Additionally, a CNCS financial site visit indicated that Conservation Legacy's "overall financial management is solid" and a programmatic visit the same year (2011) noted "a

strong staff and system of oversight, review and accountability." Conservation Legacy's system of oversight is based on the concept of weekly opportunities for every staff member to review his activities, concerns and objectives with his immediate supervisor. These "check-ins" are elastic in that they may only take a few minutes or may expand in relation to the need for guidance; and unlike a yearly review, can detect and mend policy misunderstandings while they are benign.

AmeriCorps Members who serve on crews are under the direct supervision of Conservation Legacy Staff, and individual placements are trained and mentored by partner agency staff who have undergone orientation and who have submitted acceptable project plans. Conservation Legacy conducts routine self-audits to discover gaps in procedures followed or informational differences between regions. These periodic double-checks can uncover unintentional misunderstandings of procedures and address them in a timely manner. Any instances of unacceptable actions, if found, would be resolved immediately. Conservation Legacy staff participate in national AmeriCorps symposiums, monthly calls and regular check-ins with AmeriCorps staff to stay updated on the latest developments and changes. Bi-weekly reporting from the field crews and quarterly reporting from individual placement members insures that all potential compliance issues are flagged and addressed proactively. One key to successful AmeriCorps compliance is Conservation Legacy's newly centralized Admissions Department which oversees all AmeriCorps documentation and ensures timely enrollments/exits across the organization. Another major upgrade is an online system to ensure careful Member tracking throughout a term of service. Conservation Legacy has developed a comprehensive AmeriCorps manual which is frequently reviewed and updated to ensure that consistent and timely information is available across the organization. AmeriCorps prohibited activities are made clear to Members during orientation and are observed and reinforced throughout each Member's term. Strict adherence is mandated.

PAST PERFORMANCE

Conservation Legacy sets high goals and typically meets or exceeds performance objectives; in 2014 Conservation Legacy AmeriCorps Members built and/maintained 340 miles of trails and/or waterways and improved 1,098 acres on public lands. Conservation Legacy has enrolled 100% of allotted Members in each year of its National Direct Grant, and its retention rate for 2014 was 92%. While the ultimate goal is for each Member to complete their service term and to earn and use their education award, this is not always possible given the financial and family constraints that the targeted population faces. However, since Conservation Legacy is committed to serving those who stand to benefit most from the experience, it will strive to find strategies for them to succeed, including

spending additional time upfront to ensure applicants understand Conservation Legacy and AmeriCorps expectations and providing additional staff support during the program.

Always seeking innovative ways to improve performance, Conservation Legacy Staff have taken the lead in establishment of a new Environmental Stewardship Affinity Group to promote consistency across AmeriCorps programs in achieving high quality performance and to collaborate on National Service initiatives such as National Days of Service and Earth Day. Further, Conservation Legacy is a co-founder and co-chair of both the Partnership for the 21CSC and the Public Lands Service Coalition. Conservation Legacy is also an active participant in CNCS's Disaster Response Team and sent multiple AmeriCorps crews to respond to Superstorm Sandy and, more recently, flooding in Michigan.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

COST EFFECTIVENESS

Conservation Legacy's budgeted cost of $8,500 per MSY is lower than in its current AmeriCorps National Direct program through the efficiencies of engaging more Members. In fact, the organization's cost per MSY has decreased steadily over the life of its National Direct grant which now has one of the lowest -- or perhaps the lowest -- costs per MSY of any national direct program. The benefits of engaging AmeriCorps Members to accomplish environmental and community impact has been proven to be a cost-effective approach to real change with the added value of benefiting the Members themselves.

Conservation Legacy will raise approximately $3,500,000 from non-CNCS sources to match the CNCS investment, primarily through partnerships with public land management agencies. In 2014, Conservation Legacy raised over $7,500,000 from project partners for all of its programs. While most of these agencies do not finalize their 2016 budgets until much later in calendar year 2015, they have provided verbal commitments to Conservation Legacy to continue their partnerships, and Conservation Legacy will work with them -- as it has done in previous years -- to finalize funding commitments before the start of the AmeriCorps program year. What's more, many of the current projects have multi-year commitments that extend to 2018.

BUDGET ADEQUACY

Conservation Legacy conducted detailed budgeting and funding projections to develop a budget that requests just $8,500 per MSY from CNCS. Conservation Legacy employs an intensive crew-based model with an average leader/member ratio of 1:4, lower than many other AmeriCorps programs. Conservation Legacy regularly evaluates its costs against similar conservation corps to ensure that its costs are appropriate for its activities.

Narratives

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPROACH

The unique structure and targeted impacts of conservation corps programs (e.g., improvements to public lands and trails), requires the implementation of a rigorous, alternative evaluation approach. This request outlines the reasons necessitating an alternative approach.

Evaluation Constraints Faced by the Program

The scope of the proposed evaluation focuses on specific environmental impacts of corps efforts. While the evaluation design focused on performance measures EN4 and EN5 will incorporate a rigorous pre-test/post-test design and comparisons across sites will be possible using control variables, randomization and the development of control groups of sites is not feasible. Corps work is directed by the priorities and needs of land managers as opposed to corps administrators. The purposeful designation of work sites based on land management priorities prohibit the inclusion of a valid control sample in the evaluation design. Since external partners (e.g., Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, etc.) select the projects and sites where conservation corps programs conduct their work, randomization of work sites is not administratively possible. Additionally, comparison work sites would need to be matched to treatment sites based upon specific baseline physical and ecological conditions. Sites (e.g. land plots or trail segments) that have comparable conditions would likely receive similar priority for selection for improvement and timing of improvements. Thus, we would not be able to include a comparable site as a control.

Why the Proposed Approach is the Most Rigorous Option Feasible

The proposed evaluation approach employs a rigorous pre-test/post-test design and the development of rapid visual assessment tools to collect systematic observation data of ecosystem health and trail quality. This design has been proposed by leading experts in the assessment of natural resources impacts at North Carolina State University. The proposed evaluation design and tools will produce data appropriate for statistical analyses of change (e.g., ANOVA, linear mixed models) and accordingly rigorous assessments of the impact of conservation corps programs. This proposed innovative scientific approach would also result in the collection of baseline ecosystem health and trail quality data necessary to develop research in this area.

How the Proposed Alternative Approach Will Help Conservation Corps Programs Build Their Evidence

Narratives

Base

Once program evaluation protocols are implemented and established, this will not only provide relevant data for program design, but will allow future research projects that may be able to use randomization and comparisons, including the use of geo-visualization data collected at baseline. The development of the rapid visual assessment tools will also allow conservation corps programs to continue to collect their own objective impact data which will represent a significant advancement in current internal corps impact assessments.

B. Budget Clarification

Please respond to the clarification items in the 'Budget Narrative' section of the application unless otherwise indicated.

1. Funding is extremely competitive and limited this year. Having a low Cost Per 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.

With its request for no-cost MSY positions, Conservation Legacy will lower its cost per MSY to $6,148.72.

2. Fixed amount applicants should enter the total dollar amount of funds that are used to run the program, other than CNCS share, in the "Other Revenue Funds" field of the Funding/Demographics section of the application. Please update the Other Revenue field and match fields of the application.

Done

Evaluation Summary or Plan

Conservation Corps Evaluation Plan

Note: Conservation Legacy is requesting an alternative evaluation approach.

Changes in the climate are having significant impact on the environment and communities.

Narratives

Regardless of their causes, the effects are being felt on the financial well-being of communities nationally due to natural disasters, drought and invasive species, and risks to the outdoor recreation economy. In 2012 alone, the cost of weather disasters exceeded $110 billion in the US. Invasive plant species cause environmental damages and losses adding up to almost $120 billion per year. The outdoor recreation economy supports 6.1 million American jobs, many of which are threatened by climate impacts on outdoor recreation activities such as snowsports and hunting. Young people are entering adulthood in a challenging employment environment where the unemployment rate for youth aged 18-24 is twice that of most sectors.

PAST RESEARCH AND EXISTING EVIDENCE

Multiple studies exist on the impact of environmental corps programs on participants (e.g., Duerden, et al., 2013; Education Northwest, 2013). Each evaluation provided strong evidence for the impact of the corps experience on participants' community engagement, environmental engagement, teamwork, leadership, communication skills and grit. Emerging research demonstrates the efficacy of conservation work to provide broader social, health, and economic benefits. The primary relevant conservation activities conducted by corps are improvements to public lands and trail stewardship. Research suggests links between land improvement activities like those conducted by corps and many long-term community and ecosystem impacts. Improving public parks and habitats is associated with increased ecosystem services, improved biodiversity, and environmental health (Benayas et al., 2009; Suding, 2011). Controlling invasive species has major financial implications for many economic sectors (Pimentel, et al., 2005) and can also positively impact outdoor recreational activities (Eiswerth, et al., 2005; Julia, et al., 2007). Conservation activities can ensure that publicly accessible ecosystems remain healthy in light of high human contact (Alessa et al., 2003). Numerous studies have also indicated how poorly constructed trails negatively influence the quality of recreation experiences and decrease visitation (Roggenbuck, et al., 1993; Vaske, et al., 1993). When trails are built and maintained properly, they have the potential to produce direct economic benefits through visitor expenditures on equipment, food, transportation, and lodging (Moore, et al., 1994).

THEORY OF CHANGE, LOGIC MODEL & OUTCOMES

Relevant to the evaluation, there are two primary long-term impacts associated with corps activities. First, improving public parks and habitats promotes ecosystem health. Second, improving trail conditions increases the quality of trails, leading to higher accessibility and usage and enhanced visitor experiences. While measuring the long-term impact of these activities lies outside the scope of a

program evaluation, key antecedent mechanisms will be evaluated as program outputs and outcomes.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE EVALUATION

1. Do projects focused on improving, protecting, and restoring public parks and habitats improve visually assessed ecosystem health?

2. Do projects focused on improving or constructing trails improve the visually assessed quality of trails?

STUDY COMPONENTS

A standardized form will be used to document project outputs, including numbers of acres/miles improved and characteristics of improvements (Project Years 1-3). Improvements will also be photographed and geocoded. Using a quasi-experimental design, the following research questions will be addressed.

RQ1: Do projects focused on improving and restoring habitats improve visually assessed ecosystem health?

Working with corps staff, the evaluation team will develop a visual assessment tool informed by existing instruments (e.g., Rangeland Health Evaluation Summary Worksheet [Pyke et al., 2002]). Principles of engaged evaluation (e.g., CDC, 1999), suggest developing practical tools relevant to project goals can provide more accurate and useable information. Visual assessments provide systematic moment-in-time measures of observable indicators associated with ecosystem health. Measures will focus on assessing key indicators of ecosystem health including soil erosion, species composition and mortality, and presence of organic litter. Instruments will be developed in both paper and online (via mobile application) formats. Pilot testing will occur prior to implementation (Project Year 2).

Projects scheduled for treatment will be the population and a census approach will be used. The evaluation team will provide trainings on the use of assessment tools and protocols to establish reliable observations (Project Year 2). Trained observers will assess plots at scheduled projects at the beginning (Project Year 3) to determine baseline levels of habitat health and again at the end of the project to determine level of improvement. Follow up observations of all plots will be used to determine maintenance of improvements.

Assessment scores will be standardized and indexed to calculate a visual health score for each plot. Pre and Post scores will be compared using repeated measures analyses (e.g., ANOVA, linear mixed models) with relevant controls. Evaluating maintenance of improvements at baseline, project completion, and follow up will be conducted using linear growth models.

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RQ2: Do projects focused on improving or constructing trails improve the visual quality of trails, increase usage of trails, and increase visitor safety?

Working with corps staff, the evaluation team will develop a visual trail quality assessment tool informed by existing instruments (e.g., EAPRS [Saelens, 2006], Recreation Trail Scorecard [Wilkerson & Whitman, 2009]). Measures will focus on assessing key indicators of quality linked to visitor experience and ecosystem health (e.g., presence of social trails, erosion, water/mud, hazards, and barriers). Pilot testing will occur prior to implementation (Project Year 1).

Projects scheduled for treatment will be the population and a census approach will be used. The evaluation team will provide trainings on the use of assessment tools and protocols to establish reliable observations (Project Year 1). Trained observers will assess projects at the beginning to determine baseline levels of trail segment quality and again at the end of the project to determine level of improvement (Project Year 1). Follow up observations of all trail segments will be conducted to determine maintenance of improvements (Project Year 2).

Assessment scores will be standardized and indexed to calculate a visual quality score for each project area. Pre and Post scores will be compared using repeated measures with relevant controls. Evaluating the maintenance of improvements at baseline, project completion, and follow up will be conducted using linear growth models.

EVALUATION TEAM QUALIFICATIONS

Our evaluation team is led by co-investigators Dr. Michael Edwards of NC State University and Dr. Mat Duerden of Brigham Young University. Dr. Edwards currently serves on the evaluation team for a Community Transformation Project, funded by CDC and NC Dept. of Public Health. He is also leading a project co-funded by the CDC and National Park Service aimed at identifying metrics for the contribution of parks and trails to public health goals. Dr. Edwards has presented on evaluation methodologies at the American Evaluation Association national conference and published articles related to his evaluation work in the Journal of Adolescent Health, American Journal of Health Promotion, and Journal of School Health. Dr. Duerden has conducted evaluations for over 10 years with specific focus on youth serving agencies including non-profits and governmental organizations. He has published articles related to his evaluation work in the Journal of Environmental Psychology, Journal of Extension, Journal of Youth Development, Leisure Sciences, and Journal of Park and Recreation Administration. Drs. Edwards and Duerden have co-led multiple conservation program evaluations for the Public Lands Service Coalition, and the Corps Network since 2010.

ESTIMATED BUDGET

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The evaluation budget covers a three-year period. Costs are based on a collaborative evaluation approach that includes multiple conservation corps. Costs are shown in aggregate for implementing the full evaluation plan across all participating corps.

NC State faculty salaries are $14,000 and include time spent in evaluation design, supervising instrument development, creating and delivering training protocols, consulting with corps during data collection, data analysis, and reporting.

$54,000 is included for a three-year stipend for a doctoral level research assistant with expertise in natural resources management to manage this project, supervise pilot testing, and coordinate training, data collection, and analysis. Additionally, a total $18,279 is required for educational expenses for the GA for three years.

Fringe benefits (30% for faculty; 15% for GA) total $12,300 for the three-year period.

Research expenses, including costs to field test assessment tools, develop application software for assessment protocols, and creative time for training modules and materials is $15,000.

Travel is $12,000 and includes two trips to the Corps Network Conference for project PI and GA to meet with corps and report evaluation progress and field training travel expenses.

A sub-contract with Brigham Young University is calculated at $21,000 for three years. The sub-contract includes faculty time, student time, fringe benefits, and relevant travel.

Direct Costs: $146,579

Indirect Costs at 26%: $33,358

Total Evaluation Cost: $179,937

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

A. Programmatic clarification items:

1. The application describes six categories of member interventions but does not specify which interventions are carried out by crews and which are carried out by individual placement members. Please explain the extent to which individual placement members will or will not be engaged in the same service activities.

Individual placement members will be primarily engaged in one of the six categories of member

interventions: "completion of studies, inventories, GIS analyses, environmental monitoring and other technical projects to provide managers the data they need to build local resilience in the lands and waters they manage." In a few select cases individual placement members may be engaged in the removal of non-native species or the development of sustainable trails. However, the majority of individual placement members have advanced educational backgrounds and are involved in the more technical inventorying, GIS, monitoring and technical work described above.

2. Please indicate the proportion of MSY that are individual placement versus team-based.

Conservation Legacy plans that 17 of 338 members (5%) will be individual placements and that 321 members (95%) will be team-based.

3. Please indicate the extent to which the individual placement members perform service that contribute to the performance measure outcomes.

Individual placement members will complete a variety of direct service activities, some of which will be counted towards performance measure outcomes related to the improvement of trails and waterways. Other service activities will be focused on how to better improve trails and waterways in the future. Individual placement members who do not focus directly on EN4 and EN5 in their daily activities will be involved in EN4 and EN5 related projects through service days.

4. Please explain how the program will ensure that individual placement members will be adequately trained by partner agencies to perform service activities.

Each individual placement member will be supported, trained and supervised by a partner supervisor. Before any member begins service, the supervisor and placement site are required to submit an application and work plan that details how the supervisor plans to support the member. The supervisors then receive an orientation on all aspects of engaging an AmeriCorps member including supervision, mentorship expectations and prohibited activities. Supervisors and members also go through a quarterly evaluation process where the supervisor provides feedback to the member and the member is given an opportunity to discuss challenges and needs in a formal way with the supervisors. Conservation Legacy staff also interact with the partner supervisors on regular basis.

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5. How will the program decide where (state and service location) individual placement members will serve, and when will this decision be made?

Conservation Legacy determines the locations of the placements by needs in the field. Partners identify potential projects and work with Conservation Legacy to determine whether or not these projects fit within the scope of Conservation Legacy's program objectives, activities and performance goals. The decision to accept a service location is based on the quality of their application and the relevancy of the activities. Conservation Legacy fields requests and makes decisions year-round, typically at least three months in advance of the placement start date. Depending on the needs of the partner and community, the position may be a summer position or might start at different times of the year.

6. Please describe how individual placement members are in compliance with non-supplantation, non-duplication and non-displacement restrictions.

Conservation Legacy carefully reviews all placement applications before moving forward to ensure that the placement does not duplicate an existing position, supplant a staff member or otherwise fail to comply with Corporation policy. Conservation Legacy rejects applications from partners that include staff duties in the position description as well as when it appears that partners are proposing engaging an AmeriCorps member in lieu of hiring additional staff. Conservation Legacy also collects quarterly report to review all accomplishments and uses this document -- as well as regular communication with partners -- to monitor activities in the field to insure they are in compliance.

C. Performance Measure Clarification

1. EN4 and EN4.1: Per the National Performance Measure requirements for output EN4 and outcome EN4.1, programs should count each acre that is treated or improved only once during the program year and only count acres that are actually treated or improved. Please explain how the program will ensure unduplicated counts of each acre treated or improved.

All service work accomplishments are collected hitch-by-hitch (every two weeks) for crews and at

least quarterly for individual placements. For crews, these accomplishments are entered into a custom database by staff members after review with the crew leaders. This review prevents any multiple counting of acres. For individual placements, these accomplishments are also reviewed by staff when submitted for the same purpose. All crew leaders (who report crew accomplishments) and individual placements are instructed only to count acres treated and/or improved once.

2. EN4.1: Per the National Performance Measure Instructions for EN4.1, land may only be counted as improved if it has been improved to an acceptable level as defined by the sponsoring agency or land manager in accordance with their natural resource plan. Please revise the instrument description for EN4.1 and explain how the proposed survey will meet this requirement.

Every project partner receives an evaluation survey for each hitch of service work (or at the end of the project term for individual placements). Included in this survey is a question asking: "In your professional assessment, what was the outcome of the project work on the land/waterway/trail?" with response options of: Highly Improved, Improved, Slightly Improved, No Impact. The project partners then make their assessment in accordance with the standards of their land management unit, which are typically dictated by their natural resource plan.

3. EN5 and EN5.1: Per the National Performance Measure requirements for output EN5 and outcome EN5.1, programs should count each mile of trails and/or waterways that are treated or constructed or improved only once during the program year. Please explain how the program will ensure unduplicated counts of each mile of trails and/or waterways treated or improved.

All service work accomplishments are collected hitch-by-hitch (every two weeks) for crews and at least quarterly for individual placements. For crews, these accomplishments are entered into a custom database by staff members after review with the crew leaders. This review prevents any multiple counting of miles. For individual placements, these accomplishments are also reviewed by staff when submitted for the same purpose. All crew leaders (who report crew accomplishments) and individual placements are instructed only to count miles treated and/or improved once.

4. EN5.1: Per the National Performance Measure Instructions for EN4.1, miles of trail or waterways may only be counted as improved if it has been improved to an acceptable level as defined by the

sponsoring agency or land manager in accordance with their natural resource plan. Please revise the instrument description for EN5.1 and explain how the proposed survey will meet this requirement.

Every project partner receives an evaluation survey for each hitch of service work (or at the end of the project term for individual placements). Included in this survey is a question asking: "In your professional assessment, what was the outcome of the project work on the land/waterway/trail?" with response options of: Highly Improved, Improved, Slightly Improved, No Impact. The project partners then make their assessment in accordance with the standards of their land management unit, which are typically dictated by their natural resource plan.

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?

Conservation Legacy does not specifically target recruiting members with disabilities but insures that reasonable accommodation is made for all applicants and participants. In the past, Conservation Legacy has partnered with the Center for Technical Assistance and Training at Rocky Mountain Human Services in an effort to engage veterans with disabilities in partnership with the Corporation. That partnership still exists but funding for that initiative has ceased.

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.

Conservation Legacy does not request any additional MSY to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities.

E. MSY with No Program Funds Attached Clarification:

1. The number and type of slots requested. Please confirm that for the MSYs requested, the additional members will only engage in activities aligned with the proposed member activities outlined in the application narrative.

Conservation Legacy requests 28.383 additional MSY to complete activities described in its original application. Conservation Legacy requests a total of 102.453 MSY, to include the 74.07 MSY in its clarification letter and 28.383 additional MSY, in a breakdown of 151 minimum time, 79 quarter time, 58 reduced half time, 45 half time and 5 full time. All members will serve in a fulltime capacity.

2. A description of resources that will be provided to adequately support the additional members and how they are sufficient to; support the member support costs, management, oversight, program operations, and the program activities.

Conservation Legacy currently has 52 year-round staff members and hires an additional 80 seasonal staff positions each year. It operates eight year-round offices and a number of seasonal offices in six states. Conservation Legacy has made significant investment in recent years in systems and infrastructure including a web-based on-boarding system and a web-based time sheets. In addition the organization has procured significantly more vehicles, tools, gear and supplies. Conservation Legacy has been able to grow its operations without sacrificing any program quality by ensuring that all growth continues to ensure that participants receive the same or more support and oversight. Conservation Legacy's business model is dependent on building infrastructure and capacity as it grows to be able to support more participants. Much of the organization's growth is through mergers with existing programs; in 2014 Conservation Legacy merged the operations of the Coconino Rural Environment Corps (an AmeriCorps program since 1999), the Appalachian Coal Country Team (a

VISTA program since 2002) and the White Mountain Youth Corps. In each case, Conservation Legacy brought in staff members and infrastructure along with the original program to ensure that it could adequately support the additional programs. Conservation Legacy's primary goal is not program growth but the development of high quality programs and this is reflected in its Board-approved strategic plan which is focused on quality and not growth. The organization is well aware that a by-product of operating high quality programs is growth but it always ensures first that it can continue to operate expanded programs at the highest quality level before expanding. Conservation Legacy carefully considered its original request to CNCS for 91.69 MSY and, after it submitted its proposal, revised its internal projections to realize that it can adequately support 102.45 MSY.

3. Source(s) of non-CNCS funds. Provide a brief description of the amount, classification (cash or in-kind), source(s) (State/Local, Federal, Private) for all resources secured to manage, monitor, and support these additional members.

Conservation Legacy engages a large number of federal, tribal, state and local land and water management agencies to support its AmeriCorps crews and individual placements. Conservation Legacy anticipates that its overall revenue will increase approximately 30% from 2014 to 2015 and will grow further in 2016. These revenue sources will support an increased number of AmeriCorps members, primarily in team-based service but also in individual placements. Conservation Legacy has operated an AmeriCorps program since 1999 and has ensured that its internal budget for 2016 includes all of the costs needed to support member costs, management, oversight, program operations and program activities. Conservation Legacy's primary funding sources include the US Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Office of Surface Mining, Arizona State Parks, Colorado State Parks, Bureau of Indian Affairs, US Geological Survey, and Bureau of Reclamation. In 2014, Conservation Legacy raised over $¬¬-7,500,000 from project partners for all of its programs and anticipates raising over $11,000,000 from those sources in 2015. While most of these agencies do not finalize their 2016 budgets until much later in calendar year 2015, they have provided verbal commitments to Conservation Legacy to continue their partnerships, and Conservation Legacy will work with them -- as it has done in previous years -- to finalize funding commitments before the start of the 2016 AmeriCorps program year. What's more, many of the current projects have multi-year commitments that extend to 2018. All revenue sources are cash and not in-kind.

Narratives

4. The organization's capability and capacity to successfully implement, manage, and monitor the additional members.

Conservation Legacy expects to engage over 1,000 members and crew leaders in 2015 and has built the staffing, infrastructure, technology, support systems and capacity to manage large numbers of AmeriCorps members. Conservation Legacy currently has eight offices across the Country and places members in over 30 states. It maintains a strong central support staff that has years of experience operating, managing and monitoring AmeriCorps, VISTA and other conservation service programs. Conservation Legacy added a number of key staff positions in 2015 to handle additional members and will add more positions in 2016 should the organization's considerable growth continue; the additional 2015 staff positions in place now are sufficient to handle the number of members planned for 2016. Conservation Legacy first received an AmeriCorps National Direct grant in fiscal year 2010 when its project-based revenues were $3.4M. Those project-based revenues have grown to over $11M in 2015 and Conservation Legacy has added the staffing, infrastructure, systems and support to meet the needs of the growing organization and continue to operate a high quality, award winning program.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics