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Executive Summary

An estimated 220 RSVP volunteers will serve. Some of their activities will include delivering meals on wheels, providing emergency food boxes, assisting with tax preparation for seniors, advocating for residents of long-term care facilities and assisting at libraries and museums. The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the three-year grant, homebound and older adults and individuals with disabilities will have reported increased social ties/perceived social support and individuals will report increased food security as a result of CNCS-supported services. The CNCS federal investment of \$52,166 will be supplemented by \$30,238.

Strengthening Communities

The Eastern Idaho RSVP is one of six RSVPs in the state of Idaho. The wide spread geography of the RSVP service area poses special challenges to all aspects of service delivery. The service area includes nine counties. This accounts for 19,331 square miles of Idaho's 83,564 square miles. This geographic area is larger than Vermont and New Hampshire combined. The service area population continues to show a steady growth from both local births and in-migration.

Eastern Idaho is a spread out and predominantly rural region. Except for the city of Idaho Falls in Bonneville County, all of the current cities fall into the category of "under 50,000 population" rural communities. While large differences exist in income, assets, education, age, length of residency and many other statistical categories, the demographics of the area are quite homogeneous.

According to the ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, the population of the nine-county area is 206,396 people. 94% of this population is white. Bonneville County, the largest county population-wise (with over half of the area's total population), is the only county with less than 95% of the population being white. However, even in Bonneville County over 92% of the population is white, which is also the statewide percentage. The area is relatively young with only 13.2% of the population being age 62 or older as compared to 15.6% of the statewide population. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program works with 37 active volunteer stations which have 69 jobs. The RSVP program currently has 216 registered volunteers.

In Idaho, food insecurity is a fairly serious issue. 15.8% of Idaho's residents and 21.6% of Idaho's children are food insecure. The Idaho Food Bank has identified Madison and Lemhi counties as

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among the counties with the highest rates of food insecurity. Given this, we have identified Healthy Futures as the Primary Focus Area within our geographic service area. Currently 112 of our 216 (51.8%) registered volunteers are assigned to jobs in the Healthy Futures focus area.

Currently, 92 of the 216 registered volunteers work in jobs that address food security, either by working in a local food bank or food pantry and delivering meals to homebound seniors.

The RSVP will support data collection outputs through collaboration with two divisions of EICAP, the Area Agency on Aging and the Community Services. The RSVP program will use data provided by these divisions to report the number of food boxes provided and meals delivered. Since the RSVP is not privy to individual client records, the RSVP will leverage its partnership with stations to distribute surveys to appropriate participants using tools available from the CNCS Resource Center. The outcomes we will attempt to measure are two-fold. First, the number of homebound and older adults and individuals with disabilities reporting increased social ties/perceived social support and second, the number of individuals reporting increased food security as a result of CNCS-supported services.

In general, there are minimal veteran's resources in eastern Idaho. In fact, depending on where an individual lives in eastern Idaho, their closest VA Medical center is located in Utah, Wyoming or Montana. There is a VA outpatient clinic and a veterans living center located in Bannock County, about 45 miles south of Idaho Falls (which is located on the southern edge of our service area). Given this, none of the current activities in our area specifically target veterans, but all services are open to veterans and military families who meet the general eligibility criteria.

To address this challenge with veterans services, we are working with one station, the local American Legion, to create jobs for veteran volunteers to provide supportive services to veterans and military families. Our hope is that this will increase the participation of veterans in our program.

Recruitment and Development

The majority of RSVP volunteers in eastern Idaho come to us from the stations. Many of these individuals have been volunteering for years and are registering to be covered by the insurance or simply because they were asked to register by the station supervisor. With that said, we are dedicated to fostering meaningful volunteer opportunities at strong and active stations. This has required our program to be more aggressive in eliminating jobs that don't fit within the Service Categories and

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stations that don't have the capacity to support RSVP in its mission. To demonstrate, in our 2012 grant application, we reported having over 220 jobs in over 120 stations. Currently, we now have 39 active stations and 69 jobs.

Concurrently, we have focused on keeping our volunteer rosters limited to active volunteers who are willing to report their hours per our procedures. This has resulted in a significant downsizing of our volunteer roster. In our 2012 grant application, we reported 677 active volunteers. Currently, our volunteer roster is at 216 active volunteers.

It is our philosophy that having high standards for our volunteers and our stations will create win-win opportunities for both. Volunteers will have meaningful and productive volunteer experiences and stations will do better work by being able to rely on the caliber of volunteer with which we are willing to work. In order to accomplish this, our Volunteer Coordinator (RSVP Director) works closely with stations to ensure that our standards are understood and agreed upon. We also network with local agencies that may benefit from being a RSVP station, in hopes that should a volunteer approach us with a desire to volunteer in a capacity, we can quickly respond to their interests.

As part of our orientation for both new volunteers and new stations, we have handbooks that we provide. These documents explain the purpose of RSVP and outline the expectations for both volunteers and stations. In these documents and in our work with the stations, we vigorously encourage that stations foster their volunteers and ensure that volunteers are trained in local processes and their impact in the community. This is particularly emphasized at our high volume jobs, such as food pantries, home delivered meal sites, the long-term care volunteer ombudsman program, AARP tax aid, and in the local support roles that are critical for recruiting and managing volunteers.

As mentioned in the Strengthening Communities narrative, eastern Idaho is a highly homogeneous community with 94% of the population being white. We are unsure how representative our volunteer population is, because nearly 40% of volunteers did not indicate their race when they registered. Only two of our volunteers indicated that they have a disability, but that does not mean that a greater percentage do have some form of disability. 10% of our volunteers report themselves as veterans. Our rural communities are proportionately represented by our volunteers. Bonneville County makes up 51% of our area's population, but only 33% of our volunteers report living in Bonneville County.

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Given this information, we can see the need to specifically recruit volunteers that are veterans. One reason that we think we may have a low percentage of veterans is that we currently do not have any volunteer jobs that fit within the Veterans and Military Families Focus Area. As mentioned in our Strengthening Communities section, we are currently working with our local American Legion to create meaningful jobs to allow veterans to assist veterans and military families. We believe that by giving veterans the possibility of assisting people close to their hearts, we will be able to increase participation from veterans in RSVP. Until we have better information about volunteers with disabilities, we cannot be sure if our volunteers represent that demographic of our community.

We understand that recognition is a critical component to retaining and recruiting quality volunteers. We plan five recognition activities each year. We have a recognition event at the Idaho Falls Senior Center for volunteers in Bonneville County, at the Lost River Senior Center for volunteers in Butte County, at either the Mackay or Challis Senior Centers for volunteers living in Custer County, at the Salmon Senior Center for volunteers living in Lemhi County and at the Madison County Senior Center for volunteers living in the "Upper Valley" of eastern Idaho (Madison, Fremont, Jefferson and Teton Counties). Currently, we do not have any active volunteers living in Clark County.

Program Management

The RSVP Program has two direct employees. The Area Agency on Aging Volunteer Coordinator acts as the RSVP Director and the primary point of contact with the CNCS office, the volunteer stations, and the volunteers. The Senior Services Director (who oversees the Area Agency on Aging) supervises the Volunteer Coordinator and prepares reports and budgets for the grant. Both of these employees have received training from CNCS staff on the RSVP Program Regulations.

The Volunteer Coordinator is the primary person responsible for management of volunteer stations. They issue MOU renewals and ensure compliance of protocols with all volunteer registration and reports. It is the Volunteer Coordinator's responsibility to ensure all station activities are conducted in compliance with RSVP regulations and to provide training and technical assistance to stations as necessary.

The volunteers, through their station, send monthly timesheets that are processed by the Volunteer Coordinator. During this process, the Volunteer Coordinator matches reported time with assigned

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jobs. If a volunteer and/or station report time that cannot be linked to an assigned or designated job, the Volunteer Coordinator researches the report to determine if it was mistake. If it was not a mistake, the Volunteer Coordinator will work with the station to determine if the activity is consistent with a service category and if so, if it needs to be articulated as a formal job. If the volunteer is reporting time for a job in which he/she has not been assigned, the Volunteer Coordinator works with the station to determine whether or not the volunteer's skillset is congruent with the needs of the station in fulfilling those job duties. If so, the Volunteer Coordinator will assign the volunteer to that job.

During FY 2014 we went through an aggressive evaluation of stations. Given our current station roster and our standard for accepting new stations, the only time we would graduate is if the station will not update their MOU or documentation that they have with us. When this happens, we will notify the registered volunteers that if the station does not update the MOU within 30 days, we will have to terminate them as a station and the volunteer will no longer be covered by insurance or be eligible to receive mileage reimbursement. We have found that often the volunteers are able to use their leverage with the station to get those documents updated. In addition, we renew MOUs annually because we found that longer term MOUs become taken for granted and are harder to keep up to date. Should a station not renew the MOU and have to be graduated, we will work with the registered volunteers and determine if they wish to be reassigned. If they do, we will work with them to find other meaningful volunteer opportunities.

EICAP is the designated Area Agency on Aging and has a long-standing relationship with senior centers that provide home delivered meals. In addition, as the site of the USDA Commodities Warehouse that delivers food to food pantries across our service area, we have a long-standing relationship with food banks. Given this, it is a natural fit for us to be able to work with providers doing work in the Healthy Futures Focus Area to be able to measure performance, as necessary.

As the current RSVP grantee, we already have an understanding of federal regulations. In 2013, our program was reviewed and ultimately determined to be in compliance with federal regulations. As part of this, we have an existing Advisory Council that meets monthly to help establish priorities for the program. This group has formal by-laws and also selects an individual to serve as an Ex-Officio member on the EICAP Board of Directors. As mentioned, all stations are required to sign a MOU

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annually and stations delinquent in this requirement are graduated if they don't submit the required MOU. All volunteers must be registered and agree with to the conditions of being a RSVP volunteer. As part of that process, the volunteers must provide their date of birth and location of residence. Further, if a volunteer wishes to receive mileage reimbursement, he/she must submit their driver's license, allowing further verification of their date of birth.

Organizational Capability

RSVP is sponsored by The Eastern Idaho Community Action Partnership (EICAP). EICAP dates back to 1968 and celebrated its 45th Anniversary in 2013.

EICAP's Executive Director is Jay Doman. The Retired Senior Volunteer Program is located within the Area Agency on Aging, which is overseen by the Senior Services Director, Nick Burrows. The Senior Services Director supervises the AAA Volunteer Coordinator, Helen Stanton, who does the bulk of the programmatic oversight. The Senior Services Director is responsible for ensuring that the program operates within compliance to statutes, regulations and applicable OMB circulars.

EICAP's various programs span much of the social services spectrum. A division of EICAP is entitled the "Area Agency on Aging of Eastern Idaho." RSVP is under the umbrella of this division within EICAP. At its peak staffing during winter months, EICAP has about 125 employees and a budget of approximately \$8.5 million. The requested \$52,166 amount of this grant is less than 1% of total revenues.

The EICAP fiscal department manages the costs for a number of departments. Departments include Adult Protection, Affordable Housing, Energy Assistance, GED Tutoring / prep, Homeless shelter, Head Start, Senior Programs, and Weatherization. Financial oversight is the responsibility of EICAP's Finance Director, Kathy Owens. To ensure that our internal controls are operating soundly and that we are compliant with major program requirements, EICAP has an annual A-133 audit performed. We had an unqualified opinion in our FY 2013 audit. In addition, EICAP's fiscal programs operate under a Board approved Financial Policies and Procedures document. These policies assist in governance and managing risk, specifically for accounting and purchasing.

In-Kind donations are tracked by the Senior Services Director. These are predominantly from United Way contributions and meals that are served by stations to their volunteers. The rest of the non-Federal share comes from work done by the Senior Services Director with funding provided by the state of Idaho and EICAP's cost allocation plan.

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EICAP has a well-established Human Resources program that is overseen by the Human Resources Director, Melissa Krieger. The Human Resources Director is responsible for ensuring that we are in compliance with our Board approved Personnel Policies and Procedures and Recruitment and Selection Policies.

EICAP provides RSVP with office space, telephone, utilities, building maintenance, and a wide diversity of administrative functions such as accounting, receptionist, computer technical support, records retention, etc. A variety of skilled EICAP personnel are always available to assist RSVP staff in situations where their expertise is necessary. EICAP's Weatherization/Maintenance Director, Brad Simmons, oversees facility management and maintenance. EICAP has a robust information technology system that is overseen by its Information Technology Director, Blake Jones.

With EICAP as both a sponsor and a supporting organization of considerable depth, RSVP is well positioned to utilize this organizational capacity to enhance efforts on behalf of the Senior Corps RSVP program goals and objectives. Likewise, the support of EICAP enables RSVP to recognize and develop innovative opportunities as they arise.

The ample organizational capacity EICAP brings to the partnership table provides a solid foundation for implementation of effective RSVP Program Management strategies and tactics.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A