AmeriCorps National Performance Measures
Pilot Year 2: 2011-2012
Output Instrument Packet

PARKS, TRAILS, RIVERS CLEANED, IMPROVED, OR CREATED

Environmental Stewardship Focus Area

National Performance Measures: ***Choose one or both of the following outputs.***
Output: Number of acres of national parks, state parks, city parks, county parks, or other public lands and tribal communities that are cleaned or improved (EN4).
Output: Number of miles of trails or rivers (owned/maintained by national, state, county, city governments or tribal communities) that are cleaned, improved, and/or created (EN5).

Definition of Key Terms[1]

- ***National parks, state parks, city parks, county parks*:** parks/recreation areas that are designated by national, state, city, or county governments (not trails or rivers).
- ***Other public lands***: other publicly owned lands.
- ***Tribal communities***: Same meaning as imparted by the definitions of "Indian Lands" and "Indian Tribes" provided in. SEC. 101. [42 U.S.C. 12511] Definitions (http://www.americorps.gov/help/ac_sn_all/ASN_Megasearch_Site.htm).
- ***Trails***: for walking, running, biking, or horses.
- ***Rivers***: for swimming, boating, fishing, or other forms of water-based recreation.
- ***Cleaned***: cleared of unnatural debris such as litter, hazardous waste, etc.
- ***Improved***: cleared of natural debris (such as fallen trees/limbs), made safer, etc.
- ***Created****:* implementing safety measures, making handicapped accessible, or environmental protection measures such as boardwalks, grading, trail-blazing, converting a railroad bed to a trail, etc. that make trails newly available.

Considerations for these National Performance Measures[2]

Output

- Will your efforts in cleaning, improving, and creating trails, rivers, parks, other public land, or tribal communities meet the description as stated in the Definition of Key Terms?
- Will you be able to count each acre or mile cleaned/improved/built only once even if the same acres are worked on more than once during the same program year?

[1] 2011 National Performance Measures: Background Information References and Authorities, Definitions, Suggestions Regarding Data Collection, and Additional Notes, CNCS: http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_1018_americorps_nofo_background_document.pdf.

[2] For more on alignment of performance measures, see the AmeriCorps Toolkit: http://nationalserviceresources.org/star/ac-program-toolkit.

Outcome

- You will be required to identify and measure an intermediate outcome, a change that you expect will occur because of cleaning, improving, or building. What measurable gain can be expected in areas that are cleaned, improved, or built? Will you be able to measure this change?

Data Collection Challenges

- Will you be able to identify each work site using a unique name, ID code, GPS coordinates, or other identification system to avoid counting the same work site more than once?
- Will you be able to measure the size of each work site where cleaning, improvement, or building activities are completed in acres or miles and report results accurately to the Corporation?
- Will you be able to count only the acres that you clean and/or improve and not count the entire park/land area (unless your project cleans the entire park/land area)?
- After using the data collection instruments to document outputs and outcomes, do you have a safe place to store these documents? This "raw data" will provide evidence that you collected the data in a systematic manner and will verify the results reported.

Data Collection Strategies

- The attached "Project Log for Parks, Other Public Lands, and Tribal Communities" and "Project Log for Trails and Rivers" can be used as part of a system to track cleaning, improvement, and building activities completed at each project location.
- Determine a reliable method to identify each work site (e.g., a picnic area) at a project location (e.g., a public park). You may want to identify each work site using a unique name, ID code, or GPS coordinates. If you return to the same work site during the same program year, use the same identifier you used previously. Each work site should be counted only once per program year, no matter how many times you return to the work site and regardless of the types and number of activities conducted there.
- Determine a method to accurately measure the size of each work site. Define the boundaries within which service activities will be conducted and only count the acres or miles within these boundaries. Parks, public lands, and tribal communities that are cleaned or improved should be measured in acres. Trails that are cleaned, improved, or built should be measured in miles. Rivers that are cleaned or improved should be measured in miles. River work may be either in-stream (in the water) or near-stream (on the banks of the river).
- To avoid counting the same work site more than once, list work sites in alphabetical or numerical order, depending on your naming system.
- Consider developing your instrument in an Excel spreadsheet, or at least transferring your data to an Excel spreadsheet. This will allow you to add new rows and sort your list so you can easily spot multiple entries for the same work site and avoid counting them more than once.

Sample Instruments in this Packet

Project Log for Parks, Other Public Lands, and Tribal Communities (EN4)

The "Project Log for Parks, Other Public Lands, and Tribal Communities" can be used to track acres of park land, public land, or tribal community land, cleaned or improved.

Project Log for Trails and Rivers (EN5)

The "Project Log for Trails and Rivers" can be used to track miles of trails cleaned, improved or built, and miles of river cleaned or improved.

These logs collect output data on the types of activities completed at each work site, along with the dates when work is started and completed. Make sure you document the amount and unit of effort (i.e., acres or miles). You should use a new log sheet (or set of log sheets) for each project location. You are encouraged to develop an Excel spreadsheet with room to add rows.

Parks, Trails, Rivers Cleaned, Improved, or Created

Sample Instruments:

Project Log for Parks, Other Public Lands, and Tribal Communities (EN4)

Project Log for Trails and Rivers (EN5)

Project Log for Parks, Other Public Lands, and Tribal Communities (EN4)

Project Log for Trails and Rivers (EN5)

Instructions	
What is the purpose?	To determine how many acres of parks, public lands, or tribal communities are cleaned or improved (EN4); or how many miles of trail are cleaned, improved, or built, and how many miles of rivers are cleaned or improved (EN5).
Who should complete this instrument?	Site supervisors or other staff who directly oversee the activities of AmeriCorps members can complete the instrument.
When should we complete this instrument?	At the start and completion of each service activity at each work site.
What should we do to prepare?	Identify project locations and specific work sites where service activities will be conducted. Measure the size of each work site in acres or miles, and identify the types of cleaning or improvement activities that will be conducted. Determine a system to uniquely identify each work site. Add rows to the form as needed, or clip additional log sheets together. Consider using an Excel spreadsheet.
What should we do afterwards?	Verify that a particular work site was cleaned or improved by the end date and supervisor initials. Use the description/notes field to indicate whether or not work was completed, or if you will need to return later in the same program year to continue/finish work. Do not count the same acres or miles twice when aggregating the data. Keep all the logs together in a safe place; **this is your data.** Each unit (acre/mile) where service activities are completed will need to be reported to the Corporation. You will aggregate this data later to determine if you met your output and outcome targets.
Can I use an alternative instrument?	Different forms can be developed/used to document unduplicated acres of land or miles of trail/river worked on by AmeriCorps members. In any case, remember to save the “raw” data as proof that a systematic process was used to document the outputs.

Project Log for Parks, Other Public Lands, and Tribal Communities (EN4)

AmeriCorps Program: _____ **Program Year:** _____

Project Location: _____ **Completed by:** _____

Location Type (check one): ☐ **National Park** ☐ **State Park** ☐ **County Park** ☐ **City Park** ☐ **Other Public Land** ☐ **Tribal Community**

Instructions: Track acres of land cleaned and/or improved in parks, on other public lands, or in tribal communities. Use a log sheet for each project location (e.g., public park). Enter information about each work site (e.g., a picnic area within the park) in a row of the log. Identify each work site using a unique name, ID code or GPS coordinates. Use the suggested list of project activities below to code activities in the "type of activity" column. The project supervisor should initial each row of the log when work is completed at each work site.

Work Site Name/ID	Type of Activity*	Start Date	End Date	Acres Completed	Description/Notes	Supervisor Initials
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						

Total Acres Completed: ☐

***Suggested list of project activities**

Code	Type of Activity
A.	Remove unnatural (human-made) debris (litter, hazardous waste, etc.).
B.	Remove natural debris, such as fallen trees/limbs.
C.	Make an area safer by reducing or controlling hazards (e.g., cut down dead/dying trees, safety pruning, fire hazard reduction)
D.	Conduct reforestation activities in wilderness areas (plant trees, etc.).
E.	Plant trees in non-wilderness areas (e.g., in urban parks and along city streets).
F.	Plant bushes, shrubs, groundcover, flowerbeds, etc.
G.	Remove non-native plant species and/or weeds and re-vegetate with native plant species.
H.	Control erosion and flooding (e.g., by maintaining or improving drainage systems).
I.	Rehabilitate or maintain historic sites and structures.
J.	Maintain, repair, replace, or install equipment and facilities in public parks (for picnics, sports, recreation, etc.).
K.	Rehabilitate, repair, or enhance existing paths/trails.
L.	Other activities designed to improve the usability and/or appearance of park area, trail or river, or intended to restore a natural location to a healthy state (explain under "Description/Notes").

Project Log for Trails and Rivers (EN5)

AmeriCorps Program: _____ **Program Year:** _____

Project Location: _____ **Completed by:** _____

Location Type (check one): ☐ **National Park** ☐ **State Park** ☐ **County Park** ☐ **City Park** ☐ **Other Public Land** ☐ **Tribal Community**

Instructions: Track miles of trails cleaned, improved, and/or built, and miles of rivers cleaned and/or improved in parks or on other public lands. Use a log sheet for each project location (e.g., public park). Enter information about each work site (e.g., a trail within the park) in a row of the log. Identify each work site using a unique name, ID code or GPS coordinates. Use the suggested list of project activities below to code activities in the "type of activity" column. The project supervisor should initial each row of the log when work is completed at each work site.

Work Site Name/ID	Type of Activity*	Start Date	End Date	Miles Completed	Description/Notes	Supervisor Initials
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						

Total Miles Completed: _____

***Suggested list of project activities**

Code	Type of Activity
A.	Remove unnatural (human-made) debris (litter, hazardous waste, etc.).
B.	Remove natural debris, such as fallen trees/limbs.
C.	Make an area safer by reducing or controlling hazards (e.g., cut down dead/dying trees, safety pruning, fire hazard reduction)
D.	Remove non-native plant species and/or weeds and re-vegetate with native plant species.
E.	Control erosion and flooding (e.g., by maintaining or improving drainage systems).
F.	Rehabilitate, repair, or enhance existing paths/trails.
G.	Build new paths/trails.
H.	Other activities designed to improve the usability and/or appearance of park area, trail or river, or intended to restore a natural location to a healthy state (explain under "Description/Notes").