

PART I - FACE SHEET

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE <small>Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to conform to the Corporation's eGrants System)</small>		1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction														
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS):	3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE: 20-JAN-11	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:														
2b. APPLICATION ID: 11AC122117	4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER: 09ACHVT0010003														
5. APPLICATION INFORMATION																
LEGAL NAME: Vermont Housing and Conservation Board DUNS NUMBER: 781157961 ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 58 E. State Street Montpelier VT 05602 - 3043 County: Washington	NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Joan Marie Misek TELEPHONE NUMBER: (802) 828-3249 FAX NUMBER: (802) 828-3203 INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: joan@vhcb.org															
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 030311984	7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Other 7b. Other State Government															
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box). <input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE <input type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> AMENDMENT If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es): <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> A. AUGMENTATION B. BUDGET REVISION C. NO COST EXTENSION D. OTHER (specify below):																
9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: <b style="text-align: center;">Corporation for National and Community Service																
10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: 94.006 10b. TITLE: AmeriCorps State	11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: Vermont Housing and Conservation Board AmeriCorps 11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): Statewide, in nearly every county in the state.	13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 09/01/11 END DATE: 08/31/12															
14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant <input type="text" value="VT 001"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="VT 001"/>																
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: <input type="text" value="1"/> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 5px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">a. FEDERAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 378,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. APPLICANT</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 444,420.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c. STATE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d. LOCAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e. OTHER</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f. PROGRAM INCOME</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g. TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 822,420.00</td> </tr> </table>		a. FEDERAL	\$ 378,000.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 444,420.00	c. STATE	\$ 0.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00	e. OTHER	\$ 0.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 822,420.00	16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372
a. FEDERAL	\$ 378,000.00															
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17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO																
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.																
a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Joan Marie Misek	b. TITLE: Program Director	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (802) 828-3249														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 01/04/11														

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Executive Summary

The VT Housing & Conservation Board proposes to address housing and environmental needs by deploying AmeriCorps members to serve with nonprofits around the state. Under Opportunity and Environmental Stewardship priorities, members will help secure affordable housing, engage in environmental stewardship and education, and reduce demand for fossil fuels through energy efficiency.

Rationale and Approach

The VT Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) is a quasi-governmental funder with dual goals of providing affordable housing to low income Vermonters while preserving natural lands and agriculture. Development pressures and increased costs of living are challenging traditional settlement patterns, isolating disadvantaged Vermonters. VHCB focuses on affordable housing in conjunction with downtown/neighborhood revitalization while providing communities with long-term public access to open space near where residents live/work. Its AmeriCorps program, the VT Housing and Conservation Board AmeriCorps (VHCB AC), supports this focus, tailoring member activities to address local needs. Through partnerships with 25 nonprofit housing/conservation organizations statewide that receive VHCB investments (a.k.a. "sponsors"), VHCB AC enhances the welfare and stability of Vermont's communities, environment and citizens through education, skills development, participation and achievement. The mission of the VHCB AC is to support the creation of more stable affordable housing situations for Vermonters while fostering a greater appreciation of and responsibility for the environment. The common ground for all partners and program strategies can be found in VHCB AC's holistic approach to strengthening communities and meeting basic human needs, while delineated responsibilities offer clarity about roles. VHCB AC assesses need using statistics from the U.S. Census, VT Housing Awareness Campaign, VT Consolidated Plan, various statewide housing/economic studies and extensive surveying of its sponsoring organizations.

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In 2010, VHCB AC was recognized by America's Service Commissions as among, "The 52 Most Innovative AmeriCorps Programs in the U.S.", cited for its "Lasting Impact on Members; Delivering Meaningful Service; Exceptional Partnerships; and Strong Record of Compliance." This application proposes continuation and enhancement of these innovative elements during a time when the need for integrative approaches to address affordable housing, energy conservation and environmental conservation in VT are at an unprecedented high.

PROBLEM #1: HOUSING and HOMELESSNESS- Stable family and community life is integrally connected to and dependent on finding and keeping quality, affordable and permanent housing. Housing provides an anchor for employment, education and civic relationships and defines a sense of place. For years, VT has faced challenges in providing safe, decent affordable housing for its people, including inadequate supply, high housing costs, disproportionately low wages, loss or reduction of jobs, damaged household credit and lack of services.

As it had for many years, the Nat'l Low-Income Housing Coalition named VT among the top 10 most expensive non-metro jurisdictions for renters in 2010. According to a 2010 report published by the VT Housing Council, homeownership in VT has become increasingly out of reach as the rise in the median purchase price of a home has out-paced the growth of median household incomes. More than 80% of Vermont's occupations had median wages below what would be needed to afford a median-priced home. VT's home prices increased overall by 13% over the last 5 years, compared to a nationwide increase of 1.7%. Thousands of private and public sector jobs have been eliminated in the last 2 years and home foreclosure rates are on the rise. In response, VT's HomeOwnership Centers have shifted focus from pre-purchase to foreclosure, delinquency and post-purchase counseling, all-the-while facing tremendous budgetary constraints, including reduction of staff. Demands for affordable housing services dramatically increased the past 2 years (by 68% in the case of one housing

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placement sponsor).

In addition, the VT Finance Housing Agency reports that VT continues to have the lowest rental vacancy rate in the nation (2% in '09). The average Fair Market Rent for a 2-bedrm apartment in VT increased 9% from '08 to '09. At least 52% of VT's employees earn wages below what is needed to afford the market rent amount. 62% of lower-income renters in VT pay more than 30% of their incomes for housing expenses. When households pay so much for housing, they don't have enough left over for other basic necessities, such as food, transportation, heat and health care.

Homelessness in VT continues to grow. Vermont now leads New England in numbers of homeless individuals per capita. Most VT shelters have waiting lists, despite the creation of temporary "overflow" shelters. The VT Campaign to End Homelessness' Point-In-Time survey revealed that, on one day in January 2010, the state's network of shelters and service providers counted almost 2,800 people who were homeless. This is a 22% overall increase since '08. VT's largest homeless service provider reports the fastest growing group of clients is families, many of whom are working but who simply do not make enough money to afford a decent place to stay. Without access to stable, affordable housing, families are often forced to move from place to place, job to job, or even shelter to shelter. The cycle of disruption and displacement leads to family instability and breaks meaningful bonds within the community. It is particularly difficult for children who are uprooted from schools, neighborhoods and friends.

VHCB AC's housing sponsors report the following impediments to stable housing occupancy that VHCB members are currently helping to address: 1) lack of services for homeless people including identifying transitional/permanent housing; 2) damaged credit histories, mortgage/rent delinquency and possible foreclosure/eviction; and 3) shortage of quality, accessible housing, particularly for elders and people w/ disabilities.

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PROBLEM #2: DEPENDENCE ON FOSSIL FUELS-The energy costs related to affordable housing seriously affect the cost of the housing, further stressing access to and affordability of housing for lower income Vermonters. Lowering energy costs in affordable housing is now a priority for Vermont's housing programs.

The increasing and volatile cost of fossil fuels, VT's cold climate, and old housing stock make its residents particularly vulnerable. Approximately 70% of VT homes are heated with oil or natural gas. 1/3 was built before 1950. Low-income households pay a disproportionate share of their income for energy costs-17.8% compared to 8% for the general population in the Northeast U.S. (Nat'l Campaign for Home Energy Assistance). Homeowners are left with less money for food, medical care, transportation and, a resultant decrease in financial security. Rent increases driven by fuel expenses have a direct impact on residents leading to increased delinquencies, turnovers and evictions. Rents often go up with energy prices but rarely come back down when price spikes abate. High fuel prices also burden the nonprofit owners of affordable housing properties straining the financial stability of projects. Fuel prices have risen this winter and more significant increases are likely in the future. The general upward trend in fuel costs increases the need to educate and assist residents and homeowners w/ energy-conserving measures, including weatherization applications. VT has good state energy policy and programs but needs community workers on the ground to provide education and services.

PROBLEM #3: THREATS TO OPEN SPACES AND ECOSYSTEMS-Settlement patterns are an important consideration in balancing the needs of housing and those of the working landscape and open lands in VT. VT is dedicated to focusing housing development in downtowns, village centers and existing neighborhoods. The pressure of additional population growth creates greater friction b/n the demand for housing and the need for open space. VHCB is uniquely positioned to address this inherent

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conflict given its dual mission.

VT forests provide the state with an array of collateral benefits including clean water, stable/fertile soils, and a vibrant recreation/tourism industry that improve the health, culture and economy of the state. As the population grows and development spreads, open spaces become fragmented and difficult to preserve, threatening wildlife habitat and quality of life for Vermonters. VT's Forest Resources Plan identifies the need to support programs that: 1) protect streams, rivers, wetlands, lakes and ponds; 2) protect habitat for rare species; and 3) monitor/control invasive plant species. The plan encourages volunteerism in stewardship of urban and community forests. There is an associated need to engage youth in outdoor activities, thereby fostering an appreciation for the interdependence between Vermonters, their environment and civic responsibility.

A survey of VHCB AC's conservation sponsors identified the following needs: 1) making conserved areas accessible to the public including people w/ disabilities; 2) education about impact of humans on the environment; and 3) engagement in service to eliminate invasive species and perform other stewardship activities. VHCB AC will design AmeriCorps member (ACM) activities to directly address these needs.

OTHER PROBLEMS/NEEDS FOR AC ASSISTANCE- In addition to the community needs described above, a 2010 External Evaluation (conducted by an independent consultant) found that 100% of VHCB AC's sponsors reported needing help with outreach; 78% for systems creation/improvement; and 100% for assistance w/ volunteer mobilization.

The demand for VHCB ACMs in VT is strong. The historically positive impact of the Program has resulted in a waiting list of nonprofits seeking partnership. Currently, the demand for members exceeds the number of slots available by 36%. Sponsoring nonprofits have an ongoing need for their

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ACMs with 8 of 10 reporting that tasks would go undone without their service. Despite VHCB AC's track record in addressing problems, prevailing economic conditions have created even greater needs and urgencies among families and communities. Half of current sponsors report "the need is higher than at any time during their participation in the VHCB AC program", and 75% of all sponsors state that, if their ACM position becomes unavailable, hiring to fill the gap will not be possible. All sponsors working on housing financial security issues report increased needs with ½ reporting that the need grew by more than 50% over the past 2 years. This environment makes it critical that limited resources be directed to effective, established delivery programs. VHCB AC has proven capacity and is positioned to make an even greater impact in this time of unprecedented need. This was demonstrated through its success in the procurement and implementation of a CNCS ARRA grant in 2009 that increased program size by 30% and focused on foreclosure prevention/intervention, energy efficiency, and assisting homeless shelters. These ARRA positions were aimed at increasing capacity of sponsors during a time of dramatic increase in requests/needs for services while experiencing significant loss of financial resources. 50% of ARRA members were hired on by their sponsors, signifying the value of these positions.

SOLUTIONS

VHCB's innovative dual mission, strong relationships w/ community organizations, and experience w/ AmeriCorps make it uniquely suited to address these problems. Members will be placed where they can have the most impact- on the front lines of VHCB's existing nonprofit partners. VT's population is primarily rural; needs are statewide. Member placements will reach all parts of VT; the proposed target community is the entire state. If funded, additional focus will be given to further targeting veterans, as both beneficiaries of housing services and as members and community volunteers. In collaboration w/ sponsors, VHCB AC will create positions and service activities to address the above

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stated needs while adhering to CNCS provisions and aligning with nat'l priorities. Community organizations and clientele were critical to the design of this proposal. Service projects for 32 MSYs (30 FT/4 HT) will be designed w/ an emphasis on direct service, volunteer mobilization and capacity building. ACMs will be in direct contact w/ communities and will serve as a bridge that connects organizations to the communities they serve. ACM activities are aligned w/ CNCS' focus on Opportunity (financial stability and affordable housing) and Environmental Stewardship/Clean Energy (reducing fossil fuel consumption and improving at-risk ecosystems). ACMs will serve in one of 25 sponsoring organizations, including: community housing trusts, HomeOwnership Centers, homeless shelters, energy conservation organizations, nature centers, and land conservation nonprofits (see list of proposed sponsors at end of Evaluation Plan section).

MEMBER ROLES & ACTIVITIES

In response to Problem #1, members will provide:

1. HOMEOWNERSHIP EDUCATION & FINANCIAL LITERACY-delivery of financial literacy, credit repair counseling and foreclosure prevention; assistance with home buyer classes, loan restructuring/outreach.
2. HOMELESS SHELTER SUPPORT-facilitating intakes, orientations, placement services, service coordination, meal preparation, coordinating educational and social opportunities.
3. RESIDENT SERVICES-providing household budgeting assistance, service referrals, resident organizing, home sharing coordination for elders and people with disabilities, community garden creation; housing repairs and accessibility improvements (e.g.wheel chair ramps, safety device installations).

Additionally, many current sponsors serve veterans and their families by providing emergency shelter and transitional services like housing, financial counseling, resource referral, community outreach

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and social forums. Under this proposal, VHCB AC plans to expand these veteran services.

In response to Problem #2, members will provide:

1. ENERGY CONSERVATION-installation of energy-saving items (e.g. CFLs, low-flow shower heads), energy efficiency education/outreach, energy audits, weatherization improvements.

In response to Problem #3, members will provide:

2. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION-facilitating/coordinating natural history programs, children's day camps, curricula development, displays for schools/libraries.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP-trail creation/maintenance, easement monitoring, watershed protection, riverbank stabilization; volunteer mobilization, invasive species removal.

In response to Other/Additional Needs, members will provide Capacity Building services such as: volunteer mobilization; creation of outreach materials; database maintenance/creation; conducting community surveys; and participating in agency committees. In each case, the ACM will supplement, not duplicate/replace work already being done by the sponsor. The common thread between all positions is their support for the dual-goal mission of VHCB.

The daily routine of ACMs will vary according to sponsor with a typical day including time spent at the sponsoring site (e.g. planning, intake, casework) and in the field (e.g. resident mtgs, on-site surveys, trail maintenance). All ACMs will gather to implement MLK Day, AmeriCorps Week and other regionally-focused service projects. While VHCB AC is structured as an 11-mo. program, terms can be adjusted to meet the needs of sponsors. Half time positions accommodate the differing level of need and/or supervision capacity of sponsors. Service terms and agreements will comply with AC

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rules on how hours can be fulfilled and the living allowance distributed, and will include the position description.

MEMBER SELECTION

VHCB AC has a 12-yr record of recruitment/retention success. More than 90% of all ACMs over the life of the Program have completed a full term of service. In addition, the 2010 Evaluation found that over 90% of both ACMs and sponsors have a strongly positive assessment of their experience. Much of this success is due to a thoughtful approach to position design, thorough selection process and emphasis on training, supervision, support and recognition. If this proposal is funded, VHCB AC will continue this effective approach.

Site supervisors, assisted by Program staff, will recruit, screen and select their ACMs based on position descriptions specific to the needs of their site. In addition to CNCS requirements and minimum selection criteria, the process will consider existing skills, technical knowledge, placement appropriateness, commitment to service, and motivation for professional/personal development. Recruitment will use internet forums such as MyAmeriCorps, VHCB's website and social networks. Targeted recruitment will go to VocRehab, Dept of Labor, VT Youth Conservation Corps, court diversion programs, universities, community and faith centers, and sponsoring sites (e.g. residents & clients). Outreach to veterans will be a priority and achieved by working w/ the Veterans Admin and VT National Guard. As in the past, a significant number of applicants are expected to be referred by alumni. Over the years, enrollment has included local individuals from sponsoring organizations, such as former clients, volunteers and residents. Many ACMs choose to re-enroll for another term (41% of eligible ACMs re-upped in '09). Recruitment efforts will continue to attract a diverse membership of varying ages, genders, ethnicities, dis/abilities, and education/experience levels. Ages of ACMs from a recent grant cycle averaged 31.7 yrs and ranged from age 18 to 72. VHCB AC has a history of

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enrolling ACMs 40 yrs and older and is applying as an ENCORE program. In the past 5 yrs, 16% of ACMs were 40+ yrs. The Program will enhance its efforts to include older ACMs by recruiting through college adult degree and alumni organizations, AARP, civic organizations, continuing ed forums and places of worship. Education levels range from working towards GED to Master's Degrees. For the 2011-12 year, full time VHCB ACMs will receive a living allowance of \$13,702; half time \$7,254.

TRAINING

VHCB AC highly values member experience and success, and puts significant effort into a training continuum that ensures members leave the Program more informed, skilled, and empowered to respond to local needs w/ a life-long commitment to service. The 2010 Evaluation found that 8 of 10 ACMs report they are very likely to continue to volunteer for their rest of their lives; 90% recommend VHCB AC to others. An average of 25% of ACMs go on to be hired by their sponsors and significantly more are employed by similar nonprofits, demonstrating that ACMs are having powerful service experiences that lead to continued engagement in civic participation. The vast majority of alumni reported the training they received through the Program was useful to their personal/professional development (88%) and gave them new skills (97%). 100% reported they improved in the area of interpersonal communication and working relationships.

New ACMs & sponsors will attend a 2-day Pre Service Orientation (PSO) where they will be given handbooks and attend presentations to prepare for a successful service term. At the PSO, ACMs & supervisors will learn about rules, requirements, paperwork and performance tracking methods. They will attend position description/goals sessions, and will break into regional/service area subgroups for discussions, networking and planning. The PSO also includes presentations on Work Styles, History of Nat'l Service, and a service project designed to encourage team building, communication and service ethic. A comprehensive on-site orientation to the placement site will be conducted by the supervisor

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and key staff to ensure immediate integration.

VHCB AC will provide an on-going training curriculum that enhances technical skills, promotes professional development, and provides the experience being part of a team performing meaningful work. The timeline and training curriculum are planned as follows:

- * September: 2-Day PSO
- * October : 2-Day Statewide Launch Conference (general professional development workshops & cross-program networking), Ropes Course (team building & communication)
- * November: Affordable Housing/Land Conservation/Energy Efficiency in VT (overview & integrated approaches), Volunteer Mgt (recruitment, recognition, supervision, etc.)
- * December: Leadership Development I (MBTI, SMART Goals), Conflict Resolution, CPR/1st Aid
- * January: MLK Day of Service, Leadership II (Communication Skills), Cultural Competency
- * February: Winter Retreat (reflection, citizenship, team building), Disability Awareness, Mandatory Reporting
- * March: Leadership Development III (Crucial Conversations, Decision Making, Time Mgt)
- * April: Fair Housing, Public Speaking
- * May: 2-Day VT Nat'l Service Conference (workshops, networking, service project), AC Week activities
- * June: VT Socio-Economics, Service Day
- * August: End of Year Session (Life After Service, Interview Skills, Resume, Reflection & Exit Interviews)

Members will receive on-the-job training and sponsors will offer site-specific trainings such as Crisis Intervention, Credit Repair, Invasive Plant ID, etc. A Spring Service Day culminates the team-building process, and members will be given structured opportunities to reflect on their service at the trainings, Winter Retreat and End of Year Session. During these events members are recognized for

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their commitment to service and participate in activities that explore the spirit of teamwork and volunteerism. Other service days (MLK Day, Make A Difference Day and AC Week) instill an ethic of service and civic responsibility. Members have on-going opportunities to enhance leadership and public presentation skills in their positions. They will be encouraged to visit at least 2 other sponsoring sites over the course of the year to learn best practices from peers doing similar work, network, offer peer support, and build a strong team within the context of a multi-site program.

SUPERVISION

Supervisors are employees of the sponsors and are designated based on their ability to support the ACM position. Supervisors have experience hiring/supervising and are trained in non-discrimination. The VHCB AC Director meets w/ all supervisors throughout the year, including a sponsor orientation, PSO, regional mtg, and site visits where compliance is monitored. ACMs are supervised daily at their sites, w/ required weekly mtgs at which timesheets and activities are reviewed. ACM performance and satisfaction will be assessed continuously, as supervisors provide regular feedback. ACMs and supervisors will be fully informed of CNCS/VHCB rules during their orientations and will sign an agreement that outlines requirement, rules, and prohibitions. Supervisors will complete a performance review w/ the ACM twice per service term.

ACMs will also have on-going technical assistance, guidance and support from VHCB AC staff. When conflicts arise or if an ACM is faltering, VHCB AC will follow a grievance procedure. The VHCB AC Director is available to assist w/ on-site conflict resolution. The Director maintains frequent communication w/ ACMs via trainings, events, site visits, phone, email and special TA mtgs. Through attentive, supportive on-site and Program supervision, member performance is continuously monitored, modified and (re)directed towards meeting existing needs. ACM accomplishments and recognition will be highlighted throughout the year in newspapers, list serves, newsletters, annual

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reports, at the End of Year Session, and by nominations for the Governor's Award for Outstanding Service (to date, 28 VHCB AC members have received the Governor's Award).

OUTCOME: PERFORMANCE MEASURES (PMs)

VHCB AC will address the focus areas of OPPORTUNITY and ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP/CLEAN ENERGY and their key objectives of improving access to financial stability and affordable housing as well as improving at-risk ecosystems and reducing fossil fuel consumption. PMs were determined based on needs targeted by sponsoring organizations that align with national priorities. Target numbers were determined through historical performance. VHCB AC will adopt 7 national PMs, many of which align naturally w/ its mission and have been successfully implemented and tracked over the life of the Program.

PMs and their respective outcomes under OPPORTUNITY include:

1. Housing Placement Services-3,000 economically disadvantaged individuals, including veterans, will receive housing placement services and at least 275 will transition into safe, affordable housing.
2. Financial Literacy Services-at least 300 economically disadvantaged individuals will become more financially stable by receiving financial literacy services.
3. Housing Units Developed, Repaired, or Otherwise Made Available-at least 150 units of affordable housing will be repaired or otherwise made available for low-income households.

Under ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP/CLEAN ENERGY:

1. Housing Units and Structures Weatherized/Retrofitted to Improve Energy Efficiency-150 housing units will experience an approximate total annual energy reduction of 1800 MMBTUs through weatherization and retrofit measures.
2. Energy Audits Conducted-at least 25 low-income households will experience an energy audit to help

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reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.

3. Education/Training in Energy Efficient and Environmentally-Conscious Practices- 2,500

students/youth will receive education on energy efficient and environmentally-conscious practices.

4. Parks, Trails, Rivers Cleaned, Improved or Created-10,000 acres and 80 miles of trails/rivers will be cleaned, improved or made more accessible.

Two additional applicant-determined measures are also proposed:

1. Volunteer Mobilization-1,000 community volunteers will be mobilized who will log at least 6,000 hrs, thereby leveraging and expanding upon member efforts.

2. Member Development-80% of members will report improvement on at least 3 of 7 life skills needed to become productive, engaged citizens and at least 90% will report commitment to continue engagement in civic participation beyond AmeriCorps.

More broadly, successful outcomes will mean that Vermonters will have a greater understanding of and mitigate their impact on the environment. Sponsors will have increased capacity to meet their missions and serve clientele. At the same time, ACMs will improve their life skills, become more employable and increase civic involvement. The pool of qualified potential employees for affordable housing/conservation organizations will increase (an annual average of 25% of VHCB AC alumni are hired by their sponsors). VHCB AC will use assessment systems currently in place including measurement tools developed in conjunction w/ Project STAR, outcome indicators and management strategies recommended by CNCS. An external evaluation that measures community impact and sponsor/ACM satisfaction will be conducted once during the grant cycle. ACMs will be trained to use reporting tools that capture activities, numbers, impacts and outcomes and will be aggregated on a quarterly basis. VHCB AC has a strong record of tracking and achieving its goals by consistently

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meeting or exceeding PMs. In the first 2 years of the current grant, VHCB AC exceeded all 7 of its PMs.

VOLUNTEER GENERATION

VHCB AC emphasizes getting things done by mobilizing volunteers of all ages/abilities and fostering an ethic of civic responsibility, particularly among youth. Most sponsors have a great need for volunteers but insufficient time/staff to mobilize them. VHCB AC will build on its strong track record of volunteer generation to enhance sponsor services. ACMs will be trained in volunteer recruitment/management. While all ACMs will be required to mobilize volunteers, several positions will focus entirely on volunteer coordination. Volunteer mobilization will include recruitment, training, supervision, coordination and recognition. Volunteer recruitment efforts will target colleges, faith centers, newspapers, and social networking venues. ACM's will work to enhance sponsors' volunteer systems by maintaining/creating new databases and strengthening volunteer relationships. Volunteers generated by ACMs exponentially increase the positive impact ACMs have and contribute to the sustainability of their efforts. Volunteers recruited through local venues will provide much-needed assistance such as child care, fundraising, event planning, managing food shelves, environmental stewardship, office work, among other functions. VHCB ACMs will continue engaging youth in Service Learning initiatives, such as trail maintenance and preparing meals for shelters. The Program has often exceeded its performance goals in this area. A total of 19,288 volunteer hrs were logged in the last 2 years (equivalent to 11 additional MSYs). This success demonstrates VHCB AC's ability to multiply its efforts through engaging thousands of local citizens. It also gives older and younger Vermonters opportunity to serve and engage in their communities. An informal survey of current sponsors found that 75% of their volunteers are >40 years and 69% are >55 yrs. Last year, 365 youth participated in Service Learning activities led by a VHCB ACM.

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PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

VHCB AC was named among 'The 52 Most Innovative AmeriCorps Programs in the U.S.' by America's Service Commissions, attributed in part to the Program's "Exceptional Partnerships". In the 2010 Evaluation, 9 of 10 sponsors rated their return on investment in the Program worthwhile to excellent. This proposal is based on the same model of placing members at VHCB's existing network of housing and conservation nonprofit partners throughout the state (see list in Evaluation Plan). This proposal was designed based on the needs and solutions expressed by these nonprofits and implementation will be done in collaboration w/ them. They will serve as sponsoring sites ensuring ACMs are placed where community needs are greatest and will have optimal impact on community stakeholders. Creative collaboration and breaking down silos between housing and conservation nonprofits is one of the benefits of a multi-site, multi-disciplinary model. Just such a collaboration between ACMs placed at a housing site and a nearby nature center has resulted in an environmental sciences program at an affordable housing complex that otherwise would not have occurred. VHCB AC has also been a leader in creating a collaborative environment among nat'l service programs in VT through engagement in statewide mtgs and facilitating communication among VT program staff by exchanging info, systems templates and best practices. It has initiated joint trainings w/ programs to maximize funds and foster networking among members of different programs. VHCB AC has served as a program mentor and resource for new AC programs.

SUSTAINABILITY

VHCB AC will continue to build capacity of sponsoring nonprofits by enhancing their mission and strategy, as well as developing infrastructure and human resources that contribute to the organization's sustainability. Historically, an average 25% of VHCB AC alumni have been hired on by

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sponsoring organizations, which speaks to the need of these organizations to find highly qualified and trained employees in a rural state and to VHCB AC's success as a professional development program. Throughout its history, 25% of sponsors have "cycled through" partnership with VHCB AC, becoming independent, operating now without CNCS funding.

The members' role in sustainability is to create/improve systems, provide information, referral and outreach, or perform other tasks such as CNCS-approved fundraising. Members will further develop/strengthen volunteer systems so that volunteer efforts (e.g. conducting baseline surveys, shelter assistance, land stewardship) will continue beyond members' service.

Long term community support and program sustainability will continue in several ways, primarily by building self-sufficiency and local capacity to meet community needs. First, some ACM projects are designed to have a distinct beginning and end, while leaving a lasting, tangible impact on the community. Examples are the construction of playgrounds, resource centers, resident libraries and computer labs. Secondly, sponsors often experience enhanced capacities to serve their communities as a result of ACM accomplishments. For example, during its first 2 grant cycles, VHCB AC members contributed so much to the program and systems development of 5 of the state's new HomeOwnership Centers that 4 of those centers were then able to hire employees and no longer rely on member support. A third way VHCB AC exhibits sustainability is by providing organizations with a solid service track record that helps to leverage additional public/private funding to carry out the work initiated by their ACM. For example, a subsidized housing development received a drug-elimination grant based on the ACM's service work. VHCB AC will continue to have a lasting impact on community members, as well. Tenants, homeowners and youth will carry with them into the future the skills and knowledge to sustain stable housing situations and provide stewardship for their communities. These problem-solving skills are transferable to many situations (e.g. credit repair, job-readiness, creation of savings accounts, living healthier lifestyles). ACMs promoting energy efficiency

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will contribute to environmental sustainability and long-term household savings. If funded, VHCB AC will seek additional, creative partnerships and funding w/ VT foundations and the private sector. Finally, VHCB AC's support of the work done by sponsors will yield enduring results in the form of perpetually affordable housing and open land/natural areas protected by conservation easements.

Organizational Capability

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

VHCB has extensive experience using state and federal funds to meet local needs. Two of its experienced staff members will oversee the proposed program, VHCB AC Director Joan Marie Misek and Housing Programs Director Polly Nichol. Misek and Nichol serve as primary and secondary contacts for this application, respectively. VHCB Conservation Director will also assist. Since 1987, VHCB and its partners have used \$230 million in state funds to develop more than 10,000 units of affordable housing and to conserve more than 380,000 acres of land while leveraging an additional \$800 million from federal programs, foundations, private capital and other charitable donations.

VHCB administers funding from VT's property transfer tax revenues, state appropriations and a variety of federal programs including AmeriCorps. Other federal programs administered are: HOME, Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction, Farmland Protection, Agency of Transportation TE-21, Rural Business Development, HUD EDI, HOPWA, CHDO Tech Assistance, ARRA State Energy, and Neighborhood Stabilization.

VHCB's knowledgeable staff, solid track record and effective systems enable it to successfully respond to new funding opportunities. Last year VHCB AC was awarded an ARRA grant from CNCS to expand the program by 30%, serving homeless service providers and homeownership centers. VHCB recently secured \$2.2 million in grants/loans from foundations and ARRA funds to create a roadmap to energy efficiency, research impacts of deep retrofits, create systems for long-term efficiency

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tracking, and provide weatherization TA. Its total budget for FY11 is \$28.8 million with an operating budget of \$2,463,711. This proposal equals 1.4% of the total. Similarly, CNCS funding during the last 5 yrs equaled \$1,735,111 or 1.4% of VHCB's total funding.

For 23 yrs, VHCB has partnered w/ housing and conservation nonprofits throughout the state, including most of the VHCB AC sponsors (e.g. housing trusts, homeownership centers, housing placement orgs, emergency shelters and land conservation organizations- see list in 'Evaluation Plan'). This unique and established delivery system is well positioned to maximize the benefits of the proposed project. Results prove that an integrated delivery network tailored to the realities of delivering services in smaller towns/cities, scaled appropriately, are essential to success. The 2010 Evaluation reflects the ability of VHCB AC to provide significant and critical benefits to its ACMs, sponsors and communities they serve. Systems for tracking, fiscal accountability, and other essential elements of program administration are well established. VHCB AC staff collaborates closely w/ financial, housing and conservation staff to ensure financial integrity and maximized deployment of ACM positions. Renewed funding of VHCB AC would fit within the existing administrative structure and not require the establishment of new systems or control.

STAFFING

The VHCB AC Director has over 9 yrs experience working w/ the Program, initially as its Program Asst. She is an AmeriCorps alumna and has worked as a teacher, int'l volunteer and has managed programs internationally. Her background includes project mgmt, policy development, and needs assessment. She has completed many CNCS trainings & TA sessions and is certified in Conflict Mediation. She will be responsible for: implementing existing/developing new program policies and procedures; planning training, service and team events; monitoring/ensuring compliance with state/federal requirements; supervising staff and members; overseeing ACM selection; and reporting.

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The Director will be available to supervisors and ACMs throughout the grant period for on-site consultation, and on a daily basis by phone and e-mail. The VHCB AC Program Asst. has worked w/ the Program for 4 yrs and is an N*CCC alum. He will also be in regular contact with the sponsors and ACMs and oversee time tracking, member files, newsletter creation, website maintenance and other administrative duties.

The Director will be supervised by VHCB's Director of Housing who has been with VHCB for 23 yrs and has administered state/federal programs for most of her career. VHCB AC will collaborate with the VHCB Conservation Director who has a background as a farmer and director of an environmental nonprofit. Responsibility for the financial aspects of the program will continue to reside with VHCB's CFO, who has managed the accounting for another nat'l service program prior to joining VHCB. She is responsible for the distribution/tracking of project funds through the state's existing cash management system, and for financial reporting. She will oversee a staff accountant who will do the financial reports and grants coordinator who will administer member payroll. The Communications Director has worked w/ VHCB for over 20 yrs and will continue to support the Program's marketing/outreach needs. The Administrative Officer has also worked w/ VHCB for over 20 yrs and will provide general oversight of program operations.

VHCB is governed by an independent board comprising 3 governor-appointed citizens, 4 citizens appointed by the Legislature and 4 ex-officios from state agencies for housing, human services, agriculture and natural resources. The VHCB AC Director will provide the Board w/ periodic reports as well as an annual presentation highlighting program impacts and relevant developments from the previous year.

VHCB AC has a strong record of compliance for which it was nationally recognized by America's Service Commissions. It will provide initial programmatic/financial orientation and training for sponsoring sites which will include a review of CNCS/VHCB AC requirements, rules of compliance

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and set of best practices based on previous years' experiences. The Director will facilitate at least one additional meeting during the service year at which time any new rules, updates and special topics trainings are covered. Program progress and regulation compliance will be monitored by the Director on a continual basis via written reports from sponsors and ACMs, site visits, annual regional supervisor mtg, and weekly contact. Monitoring criteria will include match provision, rules compliance, quality of supervision, on-site training, required meeting attendance and ability to fairly recruit, appropriately select and retain ACMs. Most of the sponsors are also monitored by VHCB for compliance on other grants resulting in a more thorough awareness of strengths/weaknesses for each organization. ACMs will complete program evaluations and have many opportunities during the year to evaluate specific events, their supervisor and service experience. Twice a year, each member's performance is formally evaluated by his/her supervisor. Community impact and client beneficiary feedback is gathered in an external evaluation conducted every 3 years. Changes are made annually or as needed based on all of these sources in a continuous improvement cycle.

MULTI-SITE PROGRAMS

VHCB AC is unique in having a diverse, collaborative range of sponsors w/ decades of award winning results of breaking down silos to solve community problems w/ innovative approaches. Service sites will include community housing trusts, HomeOwnership Centers, emergency shelters, home repair nonprofits, affordable housing developments, and nature centers as well as energy and land conservation nonprofits (see list in 'Evaluation Plan'). While the concept of integrating land conservation and housing development is relatively new in many parts of the country, VT has a long history of encouraging partnerships between these often competing interests. AmeriCorps placements through VHCB have proven to strengthen these partnerships and foster creative collaborations that otherwise would not happen.

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VHCB AC will apply its Site Selection Criteria based in accordance with 45 CFR 2522.475 to select sponsoring organizations that ensure adequate supervision, non-duplication and displacement, and cash match. Selection criteria will also include: local needs, 501(c)3 status, geographic location, positions that support meaningful and innovative solutions, and sponsor past performance . The selection process will be enhanced by years of program experience and VHCB's ongoing relationship w/ its network of local nonprofits which includes funding, programmatic and TA support.

ENROLLMENT & RETENTION

VHCB AC's enrollment rate for program years '08 and '09 was 100%. The program's retention rates for '08 was 92.9% and '09 was 89.2% for a 91% average. All attritions were due to personal circumstances unrelated to and unforeseeable by the Program.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

VT is one of the most rural states in the U.S. which presents challenges in meeting the needs of its citizens and communities. Much of the area to be served through this proposal is remote and resource poor. 62% of Vermonters live in rural towns and 9 of the state's 14 counties have Beale Codes of 6 or higher. Philanthropic and corporate resources are extremely limited. According to the VT Community Foundation, VT's average charitable contribution is 25% less than the nat'l average and falls in the bottom 10 states. VT is 48th in a ranking of states based on foundation assets within each state and per capita grant-making by in-state foundations. With only one metropolitan area, the state's giving is limited by a lack of major corporations and residents that have less discretionary income than their urban counterparts.

A program model covering both housing and environmental focus areas may seem complex and over-reaching. However, the Program's 12-yr record of successful performance and strong relationships

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built upon VHCB's solid network of nonprofits where members will be placed, speaks to the viability and efficacy of such a model. Sponsors report that this innovative, dual-mission approach has benefited their missions and stakeholders in many positive ways. VHCB AC can be used as a model for replication for any intermediary organization.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

COST EFFECTIVENESS

The CNCS cost/MSY for the proposed grant is \$13,000, which will allow the Program to effectively leverage VHCB and local dollars. The Property Transfer Tax appropriated to VHCB for FY10 reflects a 49% decrease from FY09. VHCB utilizes this revenue to match the AmeriCorps Program. While VHCB was awarded a Capital Appropriation to offset the decrease in Property Transfer Tax, those funds may not be utilized to match the AmeriCorps Program. Leveraged monies will go towards items (e.g. living allowance, member trainings, health insurance) to support a high-quality program.

VHCB staff works to maintain a diverse funding stream that includes state and some private funds. In the past, VHCB AC's Director helped to secure a \$20,000 grant from the state's Welfare Division for all AC programs recruiting welfare-to-work recipients. VHCB AC is supported by a variety of community-based organizations and businesses through contributions of services, supplies, training, and other in-kind donations. During the last 10 yrs of the program, over 300 individuals and businesses statewide have provided in-kind match to member projects and the Program. VHCB AC will continue to leverage resources from Efficiency VT, the nation's first energy efficiency utility. The total cost of this proposal is \$878,983. VHCB requests \$416,001 from CNCS and will provide \$462,982 in non-federal matching funds, or 53% of the total. VHCB will provide \$170,584 cash match. Sponsoring organizations will contribute \$173,129 in cash match and \$119,271 in-kind. This does not include thousands of dollars of in-kind donations from the community. VHCB AC has a 100% success rate in securing local cash match over the life of the Program. In-kind match has often

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greatly exceeded the anticipated amount and continues to draw from an expanding base of local vendors and community members. VHCB AC recognizes the value and interest in creating public-private partnerships and, if funded, will seek ways to partner and receive funding and other resources from an even more diverse pool of entities, including alternative energy and other companies and community foundations.

CURRENT GRANTEE

VHCB AC has exceeded the minimum required match in every grant year. For the proposed year, VHCB matching funds equal 53% of the total proposed budget. VHCB AC will continue to increase sponsor match for each successive program year. For PY11, sponsor cash match will represent 40% (up from 37%) of the member living allowance amount of \$13,702/FT (32 MSYs=30 FT/4 HT).

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The challenge of limited corporate/philanthropic resources is outlined in the previous section. Another challenge presented by the rural nature of a statewide program is the need to manage transportation costs. However, the existing network of sponsors will allow VHCB to continue to mitigate the expenses associated w/ a multi-site program. ACMs and sponsors are kept connected via list serves, regional mtgs, trainings, conferences and events held throughout the year. Employing innovative technologies, such as on-line learning and social platforms, will be further piloted if proposal is funded.

BUDGET ADEQUACY

This budget was designed specifically for this proposal and is based on years of experience operating a high-caliber AmeriCorps program. Special consideration was given to the logistics of a statewide program, an anticipated rise in cost-of-living, a 15% potential increase in health insurance and

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decreases in VHCB 's flexible spending revenue. The integration of CNCS funds, VHCB funds, sponsor match and resourcefulness will sufficiently support this individual-placement model program as it has in the past. If funded, VHCB will seek opportunities for new public/private partnerships to leverage resources for member support costs and program marketing support.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

As it has in previous grant cycles, VHCB AC will budget for and contract an independent evaluation of the Program. The primary objective will be to assess: the benefits to and impact on sponsors; sponsor interest in future participation; and benefits members receive as participants. A secondary objective will be to identify both the evolving needs of stakeholders and changes to the program that would make continuing the partnership more beneficial. Although not required, VHCB AC has found past external evaluations to be instrumental in determining the needs of its sponsoring organizations and assessing benefits experienced by its members, thereby strengthening the Program and its impact. VHCB AC also conducts its own on-going evaluations and assessments as part of its best practices continuum.

The 2010 External Evaluation has been submitted to VTCNCS as part of this application. It found an exceptionally high level of member and sponsor satisfaction. As concluded by the 2006 Evaluation, "VHCB AC is clearly a highly effective and valued program with its members doing work that makes real positive differences in Vermont communities."

PROPOSED SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS: Catamount Trails Assoc., Central VT Community Land Trust, Champlain Housing Trust, Committee On Temporary Shelter, COVER Home Repair, Franklin Watershed Committee, Gilman Housing Trust, John Graham Emergency Shelter, Green Mountain Club, HomeShare VT, Housing Foundation, Montpelier Parks, NeighborWorks of Western VT, North Branch Nature Center, Northgate Residents Corp, Regional Affordable Housing Corp, Rutland County Housing Coalition, The Nature Conservancy, The Veteran's Place, VT Energy

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Investment Corp, VT Natural Resource Council, Windham Housing Trust, Winooski Valley Park District, others TBD.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

*Please note we are requesting 29 FT, 1 HT, and 1 QT, for a total of 31 member slots. Slot adjustments have been made in the eGrants application (14.26 under Environmental Stewardship/Clean Energy and 15.5 under Economic Opportunity= 29.76 MSY).

BUDGET CLARIFICATION ITEMS: Have been addressed and submitted directly into application budget in eGrants.

PROGRAMMATIC CLARIFICATION ITEMS

1. Number of members and funding level request has been removed from executive summary.
2. Service-Specific Member Training- Immediately following the PSO, members participate in a comprehensive On-Site Orientation that includes, but is not limited to: development and review of member/position goals; review and signing of the position description; review of expectations, protocols and policies; safety and emergency training; setting up weekly check-in time; introductions to staff and community resources; release of a PSA, etc. An On-Site Orientation checklist is signed by member and supervisor acknowledging these essential items have been reviewed.

Throughout the service year, members will have many technical-specific training opportunities to support their service work. These will be provided and paid for by the sponsoring organization and is an expectation and requirement as stated in VHCB's Agreement with Sponsoring Organizations.

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Examples include NeighborWorks Institute (certification trainings to become credit repair counselors, housing counselors, etc.), Invasive Species Identification, GPS Mapping, Fair Housing Laws, Working with Individuals with Substance Abuse, Traumatic Brain Injury, Energy Efficiency: Better Buildings By Design, Youth Nature Deficiency Disorder, Access software, Social Media, etc. Members will also have the opportunity to attend state agency, service provider, task force, coalition and other field-specific meetings. Additionally, on-site supervisors will be regularly available to train, guide, and assist members as they navigate and take a lead in their service work. Supervisors have years (often decades) of experience in the field and are highly knowledgeable.

The service-specific training will be complimented by the more general professional development trainings that VHCB AmeriCorps will provide members.

3. Threat to Open Spaces and Ecosystems-

Vermont's forests, natural resources, and outdoor recreation opportunities are a big part of our identity and economy. The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation states that forests comprise 78% of the Vermont's landscape, provide habitats for a great many species of plants and animals, and are a valuable, renewable and sustainable resource supporting many products, jobs, and recreational activities. Cooperative action must be taken by both public and private partnerships in order to sustainably manage these resources and the forces that threaten them.

VHCB AmeriCorps members will augment the state's dearth of manpower resources by providing in-the-field stewardship measures, such as trail maintenance, easement monitoring, tree hazards removal, riverbank stabilization, eco-systems restoration, tree planting, environmental education and volunteer mobilization.

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Among the most threatening of forces are invasive plants. According to The Nature Conservancy, invasive species, along with climate change and habitat loss, represent the greatest threats to the diversity of life on earth. Ecologists estimate that invasive species have contributed to the decline of 49% of imperiled or endangered species in the U.S. The Vermont Invasive Exotic Plant Committee, comprised of representatives from state/federal government, non-profit organizations, and private industry, reports that infestations of exotic plants may also interfere with navigation, recreation, power generation, water supply, production on agricultural and range lands, and create public health and safety hazards. The direct monetary cost of trying to control and alleviate the negative effects of these pests are enormous, running into hundreds of millions of dollars annually in the United States. The impacts of invasive terrestrial plants are prolific throughout Vermont. The health and sustainability of our working forests, agricultural lands, waterways, and natural areas are at risk from these non-native species.

VHCB AmeriCorps members will continue to have an important role in managing invasives in Vermont. They will work in concert with Vermont's invasives quarantine efforts by providing Vermonters with the tools and resources they need to control invasive species in their own backyards and open spaces. They will create and disseminate educational materials, assist with development of state interactive online weeds map, assist in the design of invasive management plans and will coordinate volunteers, many consisting of students and retired citizens, to implement these plans (e.g. identification and extraction of the weeds).

Essential to the long-term sustainability of our natural world is connecting younger generations to the land. Today's youth are losing the contact with the natural environment. This poses not only a threat to the future stewardship of our natural resources but to the health and well-being of our children.

Our children may be the first generation at risk of having a shorter lifespan than their parents.

Increased sedentary lifestyle and physical inactivity have contributed greatly to the numerous health

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problems plaguing today's children, including obesity, asthma, and attention-deficit disorder, all which have increased over the past few decades and have been linked to decreased outdoor play. According to the Vermont Department of Health, one in four Vermont youth in grades eight through 12 were overweight or at risk of being overweight. This is double the number from 20 years ago. Outdoor activity has taken a back seat to television and computers. In Vermont, fifty percent of overweight children watch three or more hours of television per day.

Research shows that outdoor education enriches children's lives in fundamental ways, including longer attention spans, more creativity, increased self-confidence, greater academic success, and significant improvements in cognitive development, self-discipline, creative expression, language skills and social interactions. We also know that one of the most effective ways to ensure future care of our earth is by educating children now on natural history and on ways they can be excellent stewards of the land.

VHCB AmeriCorps members will continue to engage thousands of Vermont youth in nature camps, school outreach programs, and field service learning opportunities. These children will experience greater awareness and knowledge of the natural environment that will lead to healthier lifestyles, enhanced appreciation for the environment and a lifetime ethic for stewardship of the land.

We propose 11.26 MSYs to serve in the following sponsoring organizations: Catamount Trail Association, Franklin Watershed Committee, Green Mountain Club, Montpelier Parks, North Branch Nature Center, The Nature Conservancy, Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences, and Winooski Valley Park District.

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4. Staff Timekeeping- VHCB staff who will be charging time to the AmeriCorps grant will track actual hours using an organization timesheet that delineates staff time by grant. VHCB AmeriCorps Director and the CFO will continue to advise staff on what constitutes AmeriCorps time. A copy of VHCB's timesheet can be furnished upon request to demonstrate how AmeriCorps time is documented.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE CLARIFICATION ITEMS:

PM 1 and PM 2: Volunteer Mobilization & Member Development- Have been removed. We will continue to track this data, as member development is a Program core value and volunteer mobilization, as an inherent part of many of our member positions, can be easily tracked.

PM 3: Housing Units and Structures Weatherized

Output- Target statement has been revised to focus solely on the number of houses weatherized or retrofitted.

Outcome-Data collection instruments added. We do not foresee a problem with collection of accurate and consistent energy usage data. In 2007, VHCB AmeriCorps implemented a successful pilot project called Smart Glow Vermont, whereby we partnered with the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation/Efficiency Vermont, a non-profit organization that specializes in reducing the economic, social, and environmental costs of energy consumption. VEIC is internationally recognized for our cutting edge work helping federal, state, county, and municipal governments develop and achieve energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy goals and initiatives. We have relationships with VEIC staff who can provide us with technical assistance and possible future member placements.

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PM 4: Housing Placement Services- No changes.

PM 5: Energy Audits Conducted-

A. Energy audit activities will not be linked to subsequent home retrofitting/weatherization in every case. In some cases, energy conservation measures will be the result of a preceding audit, however, we anticipate some weatherization efforts that will be conducted separately and with independent goals. For example, while one sponsoring organization will be seeking to provide resident education first, followed by an audit then actual implementation of efficiency measures, another sponsor has the single goal of weatherizing "100 homes in 100 days" and does not provide any auditing services. We believe it makes the most sense to keep this as its own measure.

B. Assuming full recruitment/engagement of the proposed number of members serving with energy efficiency organizations, we believe 25 energy audits will be attainable. In fact, based on the responses to our RFP (Application for VHCB AmeriCorps Sponsorship), 25 audits is a conservative number. Proposed sponsoring organizations serve multiple counties and/or statewide, so their reach is far-reaching. This first year of the grant will be a learning year for this PM, and will provide the baseline for the two subsequent grant years.

PM 6: Financial Literacy Services- An intermediate outcome was added. Please note that financial literacy services will be happening in a variety of settings, such as during case management appointments, homeless shelters, housing resource centers, traditional college classrooms, and at home ownership centers. Because much of the financial literacy activities will be taking place in sensitive situations and settings (e.g. emergency shelters), we believe it is not appropriate to implement pre/post tests. This is why we have not opted to measure improved financial knowledge in this way, rather by the quantity of information distributed. We will, however, make every effort to

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implement pre/post tests when appropriate (e.g. classrooms and workshops).

PM 7: Education/Training in Energy Efficient and Environmentally-Conscious Practices- An intermediate outcome has been added. Please note the unit of "100 students and youth improving knowledge of energy efficiency and environmentally-conscious practices" is very conservative. We used a conservative number because of the inability to implement a pre-post test in all educational settings. Tests will be possible in nature camp and classroom settings, however, thousands of children will improve their awareness and knowledge simply by virtue of their participation and exposure during public programs facilitated by members (e.g. live raptor shows, visits to nature centers, trail Nordic ski trips, etc.). In fact, during the 2009-10 program year, 5,288 youth received environmental education through nature camps, hikes, tree plantings and invasives removal, and more. However, it is not always possible to collect raw data that captures the level of improved awareness.

We are open to your feedback on how to best assess and document the increase in awareness and knowledge among youth who are exposed to the programs and learning opportunities provided by our members.

PM 8- Housing Units Developed, Repaired, Or Otherwise Made Available- Has been deleted and added under Housing Placement PM as an intermediate outcome.

PM 9- Parks, Trails, Rivers Cleaned, Improved, or Created- An intermediate outcome has been added.

ADDITIONAL NOTE: As part of our efforts to recruit more veterans and older workers as members in our program, we have already made important contacts with the Department of Labor Veterans Employment Coordinators and Vermont Associates (who implements a Senior Community Service

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Employment Program --SCSEP). We have made presentations in front of both groups, and have scheduled additional networking sessions at the DOL. As a result, we have already received calls from individuals who were at these presentations and from clients of DOL and Vermont Associates.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Performance Measures

SAA Characteristics

- AmeriCorps Member Population - None c Geographic Focus - Rural
 Geographic Focus - Urban Encore Program

Priority Areas

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economic Opportunity | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Stewardship | |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Futures | |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans and Military Families | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Services | | | |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 29.76

Service Categories

Other Environment

Other Housing

National Performance Measures

Priority Area: Environmental Stewardship

Strategy to Achieve Results

Briefly describe how you will achieve this result (Max 4,000 chars.)

Up to 5 ACMs will improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions of housing units and structures through weatherization, retrofits and other energy efficiency measures.

Result: Output

Result.

150 housing units and structures will experience weatherization and/or retrofitting measures.

Indicator: EN1: Housing units weatherized or retrofitted.

Target : 150 housing units and structures will experience weatherization and/or retrofitting measures.

Target Value: 150

Instruments: Weatherization/Retrofit Log, quarterly activities report, organization tracking sheets

PM Statement: ACMs will improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions of 150 housing units and structures through weatherization, retrofits and other energy efficiency measures.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

More energy will be saved and carbon emissions will be decreased as a result of weatherization and retrofit measures.

Indicator: (DELETED) EN7: Annual energy usage reduction (in units).

Target : Units will experience an approximate annual energy usage reduction of 1800 MMBTUs through weatherization and retrofit measures.

Target Value: 1800

Instruments: Home Energy Saver Pro web site and/or Weatherization Assistant software, Weatherization/Retrofit Log, quarterly activities report, organization tracking sheets, other software programs that individual sponsoring organizations may use

PM Statement: Units will experience an approximate annual energy usage reduction of 1800 MMBTUs through weatherization and retrofit measures, resulting in decreased carbon emissions.

Priority Area: Economic Opportunity

Strategy to Achieve Results

Briefly describe how you will achieve this result (Max 4,000 chars.)

Up to 7 ACMs will provide housing placement and accessibility services to economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless and near-homeless. Services will include housing identification, applications assistance, referrals, back rent and security deposit disbursements, home sharing coordination, repairs and weatherization.

Result: Output

Result.

Economically disadvantaged individuals will have greater access to safe, affordable housing opportunities.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) O5: Individuals receiving housing placement services.

3,000 economically disadvantaged individuals will receive housing placement services.

National Performance Measures

Result.

Target :

Target Value: 3000

Instruments: Service log, quarterly activities report form, attendance rosters

PM Statement: 3,000 economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless and near-homeless will have greater access to safe, affordable housing opportunities through housing placement and accessibility services provided by ACMs. Services will include housing identification, applications assistance, referrals, back rent and security deposit disbursements, home sharing coordination, repairs and weatherization.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

More affordable housing units will be repaired or otherwise made available.

Target :150 affordable housing units will be repaired or otherwise made available.

Target Value: 150

Instruments: Member activity logs, individual housing unit tracking form, sponsor organization tracking logs, case management services journals/reports

PM Statement: ACMs will develop, repair or otherwise make available 150 affordable housing units for low income individuals and families, including older adults and people with disabilities.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

More economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless and near-homeless, will transition into safe, affordable housing as a result of ACM services.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) O11: Individuals transitioned into housing.

Target :275 economically disadvantaged individuals will transition into safe, affordable housing.

Target Value: 275

Instruments: Service log, quarterly activities report form, shelter records

PM Statement: 275 economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless and near-homeless, will transition into safe, affordable housing as a result of ACM services.

Priority Area: Environmental Stewardship

Strategy to Achieve Results

Briefly describe how you will achieve this result (Max 4,000 chars.)

Up to 2 ACMs will conduct energy audits on low income homes and public buildings through on-site assessments.

Result: Output

Result.

Low income homes and/or public buildings will experience an energy audit to help in the effort of reducing energy costs and carbon emissions.

National Performance Measures

Result.

Target :At least 25 low income homes and/or public buildings w ill experience an energy audit to help in the effort to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.

Target Value: 25

Instruments: Energy Audit Log, quarterly activities reports, organization tracking sheets

PM Statement: ACMs w ill conduct energy audits on low income homes and public buildings through on-site assessments that w ill help in the effort to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.

Priority Area: Economic Opportunity

Strategy to Achieve Results

Briefly describe how you w ill achieve this result (Max 4,000 chars.)

Up to 3 ACMs w ill provide financial literacy services including credit repair education and counseling, household budgeting, foreclosure prevention/intervention, home ow nership education, outreach, and development and distribution of educational materials to economically disadvantaged individuals.

Result: Output

Result.

More economically disadvanaged individuals w ill receive financial literacy services.

Indicator: O1: Individuals receiving financial literacy services.

Target :At least 300 economically disadvantaged individuals w ill receive financial literacy services.

Target Value: 300

Instruments: Service log, quarterly activities report, attendance rosters from classes

PM Statement: ACMs w ill provide financial literacy services including credit repair education and counseling, household budgeting, foreclosure prevention/intervention, home ow nership education, outreach, and development and distribution of educational materials to at least 300 economically disadvantaged individuals.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Information aimed at improving financial know ledge (e.g. brochures, information packets, literacy curriculum materials, flyers, etc.) w ill be disseminated through case management sessions; housing placement services; financial literacy and credit repair w orkshops and classes; home buyer education courses; foreclosure prevention/intervention consultations; and post-purchase consultations.

Indicator: O9: Individuals w ith improved financial know ledge.

Target :1,000 units of information aimed at improving financial know ledge (e.g. brochures, information packets, literacy curriculum materials, flyers, etc.) w ill be disseminated.

Target Value: 1000

National Performance Measures

Result.

Instruments: Member activities report, tally sheets, case management journals/records

PM Statement: 1,000 units of information aimed at improving financial knowledge (e.g. brochures, information packets, literacy curriculum materials, flyers, etc.) will be disseminated through case management sessions; housing placement services; financial literacy and credit repair workshops and classes; home buyer education courses; foreclosure prevention/intervention consultations; and post-purchase consultations.

Priority Area: Environmental Stewardship

Strategy to Achieve Results

Briefly describe how you will achieve this result (Max 4,000 chars.)

Up to 5 ACMs will deliver education on energy efficient and environmentally-conscious practices, including but not limited to sustainable energy and other natural resources, and sustainable agriculture.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Youth will gain greater knowledge and appreciation for the natural environment and how people can help conserve energy and care for natural eco-systems.

Indicator:

Target :100 unduplicated students and youth will demonstrate improved knowledge of energy efficient and/or environmentally conscious practices.

Target Value: 100

Instruments: Pre/post tests, attendance rosters, member activity reports, qualitative/behavioral assessments

PM Statement: 100 unduplicated students and youth will demonstrate improved knowledge of energy efficient and/or environmentally conscious practices that will lead to a lifetime ethic of environmentally-conscious stewardship citizenry.

Result: Output

Result.

Students and youth will have greater knowledge and appreciation for the natural environment and how people can help conserve energy and care for natural eco-systems.

Indicator: EN3: Individuals receiving education in energy-efficiency.

Target :2,500 students and youth will receive education on energy efficient and environmentally-conscious practices, including but not limited to sustainable energy and other natural resources, and sustainable agriculture.

Target Value: 2500

Instruments: Attendance Logs, quarterly member activities reports

PM Statement: ACMs will deliver education on energy efficient and environmentally-conscious practices, including but

National Performance Measures

Result.

not limited to sustainable energy and other natural resources, and sustainable agriculture, to 2,500 students and youth.

Priority Area: Environmental Stewardship

Strategy to Achieve Results

Briefly describe how you will achieve this result (Max 4,000 chars.)

Up to 6 ACMs will clean and/or improve at-risk eco-systems, lakes, parks and/or other public or conserved lands through such stewardship measures as, but not limited to, maintenance, invasives species management, signage, hazards removal, boundary marking, trail blazing and easement monitoring.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Public and conserved lands and waterways will be made more accessible as a result of member stewardship activities.

Target :8,000 acres of public and conserved lands and waterways will be made more accessible.

Target Value: 8000

Instruments: Project Log for Parks, Lakes and Conserved Lands, quarterly activities report, organization tracking sheets

PM Statement: 8,000 acres of public and conserved lands and waterways will be made more accessible as a result of member stewardship activities, including trail maintenance, invasive species management, construction/repairs of bridges, puncheons, benches, boardwalks, etc., signage, clean-up campaigns, boundary marking, mapping, toxic runoff diversions, and more.

Result: Output

Result.

Trails and/or rivers will be cleaned and/or improved.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) EN5: Miles of trails or rivers improved and/or created.

Target :80 miles of trails and/or rivers will be cleaned and/or improved.

Target Value: 80

Instruments: Project Log for Trails and Rivers, quarterly activities reports, organization tracking sheets

PM Statement: 80 miles of trails and/or rivers will be cleaned and/or improved through such stewardship measures as, but not limited to, trail maintenance, invasives species management, signage, hazards removal, boundary marking, trail blazing and easement monitoring.

Result: Output

Result.

Parks, lakes, conserved lands and/or at-risk eco-systems will be cleaned, improved and/or better stabilized.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) EN4: Acres of parks cleaned or improved.

8,000 acres of parks, lakes, conserved lands and/or at-risk eco-systems will be cleaned,

National Performance Measures

Result.

Target :improved and/or better stabilized.

Target Value: 8000

Instruments: Project Log for Parks, Lakes and Conserved Lands, quarterly activities report, organization tracking sheets

PM Statement: 8,000 acres of parks, lakes, conserved lands and/or at-risk eco-systems will be cleaned, improved and/or better stabilized through such stewardship measures as, but not limited to, maintenance, invasives species management, signage, hazards removal, boundary marking, trail blazing and easement monitoring.

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Sent

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable