

**APPLICANT FEEDBACK - Program Design**

2011 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

<b>Legal Applicant:</b> <b>Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota GreenCorps</b>	<b>Application ID:</b> <b>11AC123805</b>
<b>Below are the comments from each External Peer Reviewer that read and evaluated the application. While Reviewers did engage in discussion about their evaluations, consensus was not required as part of their review. Therefore, there may be differing views in their feedback on the quality of the proposal.</b>	
<b>COMMENTS:</b> The applicant clearly states it's goals of improving the environment by 1) reducing water runoff problems by applying infrastructure solutions, 2) efforts in improving energy conservation and air quality 3) dealing with solid waste and 4) involving the community in helping achieve these goals. The applicant only cites its own research in defining the extent of the problems in the area. MPCA states that it estimates that 40% of Minnesota's lakes and rivers are impaired.	
<b>COMMENTS:</b> The applicant provided clear evidence of the existence of problems within their area and provided evidence as to the soundness of their selected solutions, demonstrating extensive knowledge and understanding in that area. The project model was well-thought-out, incorporated specific recruitment strategies to access diverse community members and also directed specific services to an underserved area of the state. Training and supervision was well-planned so that AmeriCorps members would be well-supported not only during participation in their project activities, but through their entire experience and when planning for their future endeavors. The applicant's proposal demonstrated how members are best suited for the implementation of solutions and how they will mobilize and engage the community so that they can continue these efforts long after the project ends. The anticipated outcomes respond to the identified problems by reducing the environmental risks and increasing community awareness of the issues.	
<b>COMMENTS:</b> The applicant provides an excellent description of the problems in the service area; the scope of the proposed activities addresses each of those problems with effectively designed plans. The outputs are specific with respect to the units of deliverables (number of volunteers to be recruited, etc.). The applicant provides sufficient detail with respect to selection, training and supervision of Members. The applicant's description of the anticipated outcomes is weak with respect to the final outcome of their Members' efforts (i.e., percent reductions in GHG releases, reduction in waste, etc.).	

**COMMENTS:** (+) The applicant presents a project aligned with the NOFO and designed to make strong use of the AmeriCorps program by meeting identified community needs while developing skills and experience within members and encouraging a life-long service ethic. (+) The applicant presents community needs that are compelling and specific, with references from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and standards set to meet the Federal Clean Water Act. For example, the MPCA estimates that approximately 40 percent of Minnesota's lakes and rivers are impaired. The identified needs can be addressed within the proposed project. (+) The applicant presents a personal development and training plan intent on developing within the member a sense of community engagement and life-long service. This is evidenced through the opportunities for reflection, mentoring within the program, and the variety of community service activities the members will be participating in.