



## Narratives

### Executive Summary

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) seeks to continue implementing Minnesota GreenCorps, a statewide AmeriCorps program that assists communities to preserve and protect the environment while training a new generation of environmental professionals. Members are hosted by eligible organizations to carry out projects that conserve energy, reduce and better manage solid waste, improve water and air quality, and accelerate adoption of sustainable practices at the community level.

### Rationale and Approach

#### a. Problem identification

Since passage of landmark laws in the 1970s and 80s, environmental protection has been largely addressed through regulatory approaches at the federal, state, and local levels. Command and control tools resulted in significant progress in Minnesota regarding pollution from large-scale, "point" sources, such as municipal and industrial wastewater discharges, power plants and other major air emission generators, and solid and hazardous waste management systems. While these methods continue to be essential tools for regulating air and water pollution, unresolved environmental challenges involve putting into place effective ways to reduce pollution from un- or under-regulated sources, mobile or area source air emissions, and water discharges from surface runoff. Traditional regulatory schemes are not easily applied for these sources of pollution, and present the need to engage residents and community organizations in the solutions. Without addressing all sources of pollution, threats to air and water quality will have long lasting impacts for quality of life, human health, and ecosystems.

Minnesota GreenCorps presents an opportunity to address environmental issues through a highly-structured, partnership-based program that engages local citizens to implement practical

## Narratives

environmental solutions. Minnesota GreenCorps aims to meet statewide needs including:1) Accelerating the application of infrastructure approaches that eliminate or reduce water runoff, stabilize soils, and have long-term cost benefits to the community (also known as green infrastructure); 2) Conserving energy and improving air quality; 3) Employing best practices for solid waste management, and 4) Catalyzing community involvement in solutions. Minnesota GreenCorps also plays a critical role in developing a new cohort of environmental professionals by providing training, mentoring and practical field experience.

Minnesota GreenCorps targets member services at the community level. Members are placed statewide with host sites including county and city governments, public school districts, regional parks, tribal governments, and non-governmental organizations. Member activities are designed to meet environmental challenges in a variety of settings, with each member project tailored to meet the specific needs of that community. The set of challenges, and proposed solutions, may vary for urban and rural settings. For example, in population centers local air quality and stormwater runoff are common issues related to high density, while in a rural area, air and water issues may be tied to agriculture, land development, or open burning.

### Accelerating green infrastructure

Known as the land of 10,000 lakes, Minnesota has plentiful lakes, rivers and streams. Community growth, particularly land conversions, threatens these water bodies with polluted surface water runoff and soil erosion created during rain storms and other precipitation events. Traditionally, communities addressed stormwater by channeling it into storm drains and discharging it untreated into lakes, rivers, wetlands and other water bodies. As water runs off impervious surfaces (those that cannot absorb water) it tends to pick up gasoline, motor oil, heavy metals, trash and other pollutants from

## Narratives

roadways and parking lots, including fertilizers and pesticides. This runoff often times contributes to a waterbody's designation as an 'impaired' water, one that does not meet the federal Clean Water Act standards set by the MPCA. Currently, MPCA estimates approximately 40 percent of Minnesota's lakes and rivers are impaired.

One new approach that can effectively minimize the impact of stormwater runoff on overall water quality, and thus contribute to the clean up of lakes and rivers, is the use of green infrastructure. This, as the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) states, "is an approach to wet weather management that is cost-effective, sustainable, and environmentally friendly. Green Infrastructure management approaches and technologies infiltrate, evapotranspire, capture and reuse stormwater to maintain or restore natural hydrologies." Examples include on-site treatment techniques such as rain gardens, bioretention systems, and permeable pavements, as well as tree and urban forest management. Through the Minnesota GreenCorps program, communities will be introduced to green infrastructure best practices that will help manage stormwater runoff and lead to improved water quality.

### Conserving energy and improving air quality

Minnesota faces significant challenges related to energy use and air quality. Foremost among these is the release of greenhouse gases (GHG) and their impact on our climate. Warming of our climate system occurs when atmospheric GHG trap heat. While some of these GHGs occur naturally, scientific consensus tells us that most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic (i.e. human caused) GHG concentrations. One of the primary anthropogenic sources of GHGs is burning fossil fuels, including coal and petroleum, to run cars, factories and power plants. It is recognized that addressing

## Narratives

climate change and its potential impacts will require a reduction in GHG emissions from human sources. Potential impacts of climate change for our state include increasing heat waves, reduced air quality, increasing insect and waterborne diseases, potential for floods and droughts, and threats to native species from rapidly changing climate conditions.

In 2008, the Minnesota Climate Change Advisory Group, a legislatively-mandated 56-member group representing a wide range of public/private-sector organizations and citizen interests, identified policy recommendations and strategies for addressing climate change. Among these actions that can be taken by organizations, households, and even individuals to reduce GHG emissions and other air pollutants include reducing energy consumption in homes and commercial buildings, reducing waste and increasing recycling and reducing vehicle miles traveled. Minnesota communities are responding to this immense challenge, and are beginning to institute changes. As of November 2010, 45 Minnesota cities have signed the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement (<http://www.usmayors.org/climateprotection/map.asp> ). Many Minnesota counties and other public entities have started sustainability initiatives, but at the same time, local governments are facing significant budget crises, leaving communities that seek to address environmental issues with limited resources.

In addition to the need to reduce GHG emissions, other air pollutants including ozone, particulate matter (PM), and carbon monoxide (CO) present environmental and public health challenges. Increased understanding of serious health effects has resulted in stricter national air quality standards. While Minnesota currently meets these, the number of poor air quality days has increased as standards have tightened. Both the EPA and the MPCA recognize that it is not enough to control single pollutants from individual sources. There is growing recognition of the need to reduce air

## Narratives

pollution emissions from scattered, less regulated sources such as transportation and residential burning.

Employing solid waste management best practices

Solid waste -- commonly referred to as garbage or trash -- can pose environmental threats and waste resources. When managed improperly, solid waste negatively impacts air, water and land resources. Federal and Minnesota solid waste laws recognize a waste hierarchy, commonly referred to as "the 3Rs" of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. This hierarchy signals the desirability of "the 3Rs" over other management methods such as land disposal or incineration. Reducing, reusing and recycling wastes results in conserved resources, saved energy, and lowered GHG emissions. In Minnesota, while recent data shows a slowing of per capita waste generation rates, the overall quantity of solid waste continues to increase. While Minnesota has high recycling rates compared to other states, in recent years, these rates have stagnated. As the state's lead authority for solid waste issues, MPCA recognizes that more investment and effort is needed to 1) prevent wastes from being generated in the first place 2) improve options for material reuse, and 3) increase recycling rates.

Every year, Minnesotans throw out more than 1.3 million tons of material that could have been recycled. This waste has an estimated value of \$312 million and costs Minnesotans \$200 million to throw away. Moreover, a recent study conducted by MPCA and Hennepin County found that more than 78 percent of all the waste generated by urban and suburban schools could be managed through a combination of recycling and composting. In 2008, Minnesotans recycled over 2.6 million tons of material. The recycling industry supports approximately 20,000 jobs, generates an estimated \$760 million in wages and adds nearly \$3 billion to the state's economy. While these results are impressive, significantly more environmental and economic benefits could be achieved by enhancing the

## Narratives

application of "the 3Rs". Minnesota GreenCorps members have had tremendous success in helping communities and organizations reduce waste and increase recycling. Several schools served by Minnesota GreenCorps members in the first year of the program increased recycling rates from twenty percent at one school and led to a tripling of recycling rates at another.

Catalyzing environmentally preferable changes by individuals and local organizations

Pollution and wastes resulting from the choices, actions and consumption patterns of individuals and households is one of the most challenging areas in the environmental field today. The collective actions of individual consumers have widespread and significant impacts on air quality, fossil fuel consumption, waste generation rates, water quality, and greenhouse gas emissions. Effectively engaging individuals to carry out environmentally-preferable actions and practices is aptly described in the recent report by Dietza, Gardner et al, entitled, "Household actions can provide a behavioral wedge to rapidly reduce US carbon emissions (September 2009)." Illustrating the importance of targeting households, the report states: "National implementation could save an estimated 123 million metric tons of carbon per year in year 10, which is 20% of household direct emissions or 7.4% of US national emissions, with little or no reduction in household well-being. The potential of household action deserves increased policy attention. Future analyses of this potential should incorporate behavioral as well as economic and engineering elements."

A recent EPA report (September 2009), presents a systems-based view of greenhouse emissions, where each system represents and comprises all the parts of the economy working to fulfill a particular need. The report cites, by example, the system of food provision--which includes all emissions from the electric power, transportation, industrial, and agricultural sectors associated with growing, processing, transporting, and disposing of food. In summary, individuals and households factor prominently in

## Narratives

the report's estimate that over forty percent of US greenhouse emissions are attributable to materials production and associated consumption flows.

### Professional Development and Quality Workforce

Like other professions, issues facing the environmental profession relate to an aging workforce and availability of potential employees. Between 2010 and 2030, the number of adults age 65+ is expected to double, while the number of younger people will increase only modestly. Like many states across the U.S., Minnesota will have increasingly fewer residents of traditional working age relative to those 65 or older. Minnesota GreenCorps is offering opportunities to address two pressing needs providing members, both those newly entering the workforce and those engaged in career transitions, with practical, structured and focused professional experiences, and cultivating a strong candidate pool of future leaders and employees at public, private and non-governmental environmental organizations. Individuals who have the opportunity to serve with Minnesota GreenCorps receive high quality guidance, mentoring and training from professionals in the environmental field. Data from Minnesota GreenCorps' first year shows that 19 of 21 of surveyed members were more likely to consider a career in environmental field, 18 of 21 were more likely to consider a career in public service, and 20 of 21 are more likely to be committed to continued community service. Our intention is to continue producing these strong results in future program years.

### b. Solution: Member Roles and Responsibilities

AmeriCorps members present a unique opportunity to addresses environmental challenges at the local and community level. Members are able to work one-on-one with local groups and individuals to affect change. MPCA is proposing to use AmeriCorps members to address issues in green infrastructure, energy conservation, waste prevention and recycling, and living green outreach in the



## Narratives

State of Minnesota. Member activities are pre-scoped in each topic area and described below:

### Green Infrastructure

Minnesota GreenCorps members assist local units of government in the application of green infrastructure principles related to stormwater management or urban forestry. Specific member activities include: 1) inventory and assessing existing stormwater practices; 2) developing and implementing management plans for urban forests, trees, or stormwater management; 2) providing outreach and education to residents and organizations; 3) utilizing specialized calculators to quantify and document economic and environmental outcomes; and 4) mobilizing community volunteers on green infrastructure related projects.

### Energy Conservation and Air Quality

Minnesota GreenCorps members assist local governments and communities in conserving energy at public buildings, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing other air pollutants. Specific Minnesota GreenCorps activities in this area may include: 1) assisting with collection, benchmarking and reporting up-to-date energy use and GHG emissions data from public buildings and vehicle fleets; 2) identifying opportunities and implementing low/no cost options to reduce energy use; 3) surveying employees on energy-related knowledge, attitudes, and practices at work; 4) delivering outreach/education on energy conservation practices, and 5) implementing air quality improvement campaigns including reducing vehicle miles traveled, burn barrel use, etc.

### Waste Prevention and Recycling

Minnesota GreenCorps members assist local organizations, including schools, in reducing waste generation and improving recycling and organics programs in facilities and/or at the community

## Narratives

level. Members are responsible for completing waste reduction or recycling/organics projects including: 1) implementing a new project to reduce waste generation; 2) launching a new or improving an existing recycling and/or source separated organics program; 3) developing a "how to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle at Home" campaign, and 4) increasing the capture and distribution of reusable materials.

### Living Green Outreach

Minnesota GreenCorps plays an important role in educating Minnesota residents about best practices at home. Minnesota GreenCorps members provide assistance on a range of "living green" topics including: waste prevention, energy, locally grown food, pollution prevention, and water conservation. Specific activities may include: 1) provide outreach and education through campaigns, presentations, regional fairs or events, workshops, social media and other appropriate strategies; 2) provide additional support to host organization's sustainability related education activities; 3) support host organization's outreach and technical assistance activities; and 4) work with local governments and their partners to ensure education strategies and materials are appropriate, informative and accurate.

Minnesota GreenCorps positions offer outreach and education on their respective topics, and most will engage community volunteers in either one-time or ongoing service projects. These focus areas are realistically scoped to achieve measurable outcomes and are implementation oriented. The projects are designed to be collaborative and sustainable after member involvement. Finally, all focus areas will provide a unique professional development experience for the member, allowing them to gain valuable work skills and learn how to work within an organization. For the three year grant period, Minnesota GreenCorps is requesting 30 full-time (FT) AmeriCorps members each year who will serve 1,700 hours with host organizations across the state. We anticipate placing members either

## Narratives

individually or in teams of two, in 15-30 organizations. An additional 5 reduced half-time (RHT) members, serving 720 hours, are requested to serve with the University of Minnesota -- Morris (UMM) each year in support of communities in West Central Minnesota. The total request is 31.9 member service years (MSY).

### c. Member Selection, Training and Supervision

Minnesota GreenCorps recruits and selects members through an open, transparent, and competitive process. MPCA publicizes the program at career fairs, college career websites, and other job websites. Many organizations assist by advertising Minnesota GreenCorps member recruitment processes. Potential host sites are also encouraged to identify local applicants to apply for service opportunities. Minnesota GreenCorps is committed to recruiting a diverse corps, including minority audiences and underrepresented constituencies.. In addition to college recruiting, we will continue to work with the State of Minnesota Workforce Diversity Coordinator to disseminate recruiting materials to groups specializing in providing outreach to diverse populations. For example, through this contact, the Minnesota GreenCorps 2010-2011 member application announcement was disseminated to eight groups with a total of 558 members. In each year of the program, we will continue to look for opportunities to reach out to ensure a diverse corps through attending diversity focused career fairs, sending program information and announcements to organizations that attract diverse audiences, and coordinating recruiting sessions with organizations that support diversity. We have the goal that a minimum of 10 percent of the AmeriCorps members will include individuals from minorities, including prospective members from Native Americans, African Americans, Latino and Asian Americans.

In addition to basic AmeriCorps requirements, Minnesota GreenCorps has a minimum education

## Narratives

requirement of an Associate in Arts (AA) degree or completion of at least two years of a four year degree program. In the program's first two years, all full-time members had earned a Bachelor's degree or higher. Minnesota GreenCorps applicants are screened for basic education requirements, and additional work skills including: 1) ability to build and maintain relationships; 2) ability to take the initiative in work assignments and to organize and complete them; 3) ability to research and organize information, and 4) functional computer skills. Applicants must also demonstrate interest in environmental issues and sustainability, through coursework, personal or work experience, or a combination thereof.

RHT members are current UMM undergraduate students. The UMM has the highest percentage of students of color (16 percent in 2003-04) within the entire University of Minnesota system, and one of the largest in the state of Minnesota. The Center for Small Towns (CST) has a routine recruitment process for identifying applicants. CST uses existing student email lists, social media, and faculty and staff contacts across the UMM to find qualified applicants. CST typically obtains an applicant pool of about 10-15 applicants, and provides a half-hour interview opportunity for all of the applicants. The interviews are conducted by a CST staff team. Members are interviewed and selected with the understanding that they will serve at least ten hours a week during the school year and full time during the summer months to meet their commitment. Qualified students are selected by the CST team, and their information is passed on to the MPCA.

Providing a professional development experience to Minnesota GreenCorps members is a key goal of the program. To help accomplish this, members are trained and supported by MPCA staff and others with experience in community environmental work. Importantly, members receive substantial day-to-day training and support from their respective host site supervisors.

## Narratives

In September of each program year, the MPCA holds an orientation and technical training retreat for members. Goals of this training are to provide an overview of AmeriCorps, ServeMinnesota and Minnesota GreenCorps, introduce members and provide training on the administrative systems and program policies. The training program also includes community engagement and team building skills development exercises, an overview of key dates and program timelines, and training on performance measurement. Members break out into smaller groups to receive training in their specific project area. Each year, these topic specific trainings are tailored to the projects members will be completing. In Waste Prevention and Recycling, members receive training on public space and event recycling, conducting waste sorts, waste management in Minnesota, and basics in organic management. In Energy Conservation, members receive training on energy efficiency investments, using benchmarking systems such as the Minnesota Buildings, Benchmarks, and Beyond (B3), and tour LEED certified buildings. In Living Green Outreach training, members receive training on engaging community members, launching campaigns, and providing education and outreach. In Green Infrastructure training, members receive training and information on stormwater and/or forestry management, including how to conduct inventories and assessments. The initial orientation and training retreat is also an opportunity to introduce members to host site supervisors. Members and host site supervisors discuss plans for the upcoming year and logistics for the start of service. This initial training extends for three days. Members receive ongoing onsite training and orientation from their host sites, once they begin service at their sites. After orientation, Minnesota GreenCorps members are brought together on a quarterly basis to allow for additional training, reflection and team building. Quarterly trainings extend from one to one and a half days, and the estimated timeline for each of these training events is early December, late February, late May, and mid August of each program year. Topics include: 1) civic engagement/citizenship; 2) Myers Briggs personality

## Narratives

assessment; 2) communication styles; 3) public speaking; and 4) volunteer management. Toward the end of service, members also receive training and information on "Life after AmeriCorps," including job searching and resume tips, a career panel of professionals, and graduate school information. Members are asked to submit monthly reflection logs, and have further opportunities at quarterly trainings for reflection in both individual and group settings.

Members also complete a personal development plan at the beginning of service to identify types of skills and knowledge they would like to develop further during their experience, as well as trainings they would like to attend. Development plans help members to set personal goals for the program year and their future. The plans will be revisited at the end of their service. Members are encouraged to seek out additional professional development opportunities throughout the year, such as relevant environmental conferences and workshops.

Host sites play a critical role in the training and supervision of members. Minnesota GreenCorps members receive day-to-day supervision from host site supervisors, with general oversight and direction provided by MPCA. The ability to supervise and support an AmeriCorps member during their service term is a very important criterion for selection of host sites. At the beginning of the program year, host site supervisors participate in an orientation and training session to familiarize them with policies and reporting requirements of AmeriCorps and Minnesota GreenCorps, and review their responsibilities as a supervisor. Each year, the MPCA and host site organizations enter into an agreement, outlining roles and responsibilities of each party.

Host site responsibilities include: provide day-to-day supervision and communicate expectations to members; advise MPCA on member development planning; oversee member compliance with

## Narratives

position description and workplan; resolve inquiries/complaints from members related to supervision; refer unresolved supervisory issues to the MPCA; sign off on hours worked during each pay period and at project conclusion; review members' quarterly and final reports; complete mid and end of year performance appraisals; advise MPCA on member training and travel issues; correct poor performance and report difficulties encountered; report to MPCA any work-related issues, and report of First Incidence (Workers Compensation form).

MPCA responsibilities include: oversee application and selection process for host sites and FT members, consult with UMM RHT member selection; develop a program performance measurement process; scope and write position descriptions; define member responsibilities (e.g., hours of work, reporting); create and oversee member HR policies; develop and carry out member and host site orientation, and quarterly trainings; field and resolve inquiries/complaints from members related to supervision; assess performance through visits and phone check-ins with host sites; create forms for member biannual performance evaluations; maintain all member personnel files; provide living allowance, health care insurance, workers' compensation; and approve member training and travel. Additionally, MPCA technical staff with subject area expertise mentor Minnesota GreenCorps members. The ratio of mentors to members is typically 1:1, although some mentors work with more than one member. Mentors provide technical assistance to members throughout their project, and maintain regular contact.

Minnesota GreenCorps members hosted by UMM receive support and supervision from university personnel, a project coordinator, and other staff, as appropriate. UMM responsibilities include: assume lead role in RHT member selection, utilizing the application process established by MPCA; assume lead role in scoping workplans for UMM members; directly supervise UMM members;

## Narratives

identify/propose solutions for any member-related supervisory issues; complete mid and end of year performance appraisals; refer unresolved supervisory issues to the MPCA; recruit community partner sites for member service; review members' quarterly and final progress reports for submittal to the MPCA; oversee member compliance for academic related aspects; and advise the MPCA on member training and travel.

### d. Outcomes: Performance Measures

The overall change we seek through the Minnesota GreenCorps program is contributing to the reduction of GHG emissions and other air pollutants, reduction of waste and increase in recycling, improvement in water quality (through management of green infrastructure), and bolstering greater awareness of Minnesota citizens on actions to reduce their environmental footprint. Working towards these goals will ultimately contribute to cleaner lakes and rivers, cleaner air, and an overall high quality of life for Minnesotans.

These end outcomes align with the MPCA's strategic plan. This plan, updated in 2008, is accessible at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/reports/strategicplan.html>. Some of the key goals and objectives of MPCA's plan are: 1) By 2013, Minnesota residents reduce their individual contribution to greenhouse gas emissions to 2005 levels; 2) Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Minnesota by 15 percent from 2005 levels by January 1, 2015 and by 30 percent by January 1, 2025 as set in the Next Generation Energy Act of 2007. 3) Protect and improve the chemical, physical and biological integrity of Minnesota's lakes, streams and wetlands; 4) To achieve MPCA environmental outcomes, increase the number of citizens volunteering at, or for the MPCA by at least 10 percent annually from 2007 to 2013. 5) By January 1, 2025, achieve a total reduction of 75 million metric tons of greenhouse gas attributed to changes in waste generation, materials conservation, and resource management



## Narratives

practices. The service of Minnesota GreenCorps members over the next three years will directly contribute to MPCA's ability to meet these strategic objectives. At the end of the three year grant period, Minnesota GreenCorps will have served communities around the state, and put in place systems that not only can carry forward after member involvement, but will also encourage neighboring communities to adopt similar practices.

The program will collect and report on a number of outputs and intermediate outcomes each year. Minnesota GreenCorps members will engage at least 3500 community members over the age of 25 in direct education and outreach efforts related to sustainable practices in our priority areas. Additionally, in alignment with a Clean Energy/Environment National Performance Measure, some members will work directly with at least 1000 youth (under the age of 25), providing education on environmentally-conscious practices related to our priority areas. For intermediate outcomes of the program, the MPCA expects a year-to-year basis to include energy and GHG emission assessments for participating communities and public entities, as well as identification, assessment, and improvement of green infrastructure. Member activities that engage community members will lead to the implementation of at least 50 practices and technologies by participating sites that result in environmental outcomes including GHG emissions avoided, energy saved, waste reduced/diverted, etc. In terms of youth education, member efforts will result in an increase in knowledge or adoption of sustainable practices by youth involved in the program. Minnesota GreenCorps will also achieve an increase in recycling and a reduction or diversion of waste by at least 10 percent in each of the participating communities or organizations. In terms of volunteer generation, Minnesota GreenCorps members will mobilize at least 350 volunteers in each year of the program, for an average of 1750 hours of service projects.

In addition to meeting environmental community needs, Minnesota GreenCorps has the goal of

## Narratives

training a new generation of environmental professionals. As a result, the program will collect performance measure data on member development in skill areas such as content-area knowledge, oral/written communication, organizational management, and citizenship participation. The end outcome we are seeking is for members to secure positions in the environmental field or to apply environmental preferable principles and practices in related fields of service.

Specific performance measure targets were established based on experience from implementing the first year of the program. Members will receive training from MPCA program and technical staff at the beginning of the year regarding the collection baseline environmental data, as it relates to their respective topic areas. Members will report progress towards meeting program-wide and any subject-specific performance measures, utilizing both a tracking system and an online service utilized by AmeriCorps programs in Minnesota, OnCorps Reports. Members will report progress utilizing the tracking system and OnCorps on a quarterly basis, with input and direction from host site supervisors, and submit final project reports that include community and environmental outcomes achieved. The data reported will be supported by event estimates, sign in sheets, pre/post surveys (as appropriate), etc. Member development information will be collected as part of our overall program evaluation efforts, and through training events.

### e. Volunteer Generation

Member position descriptions integrate volunteer recruitment and mobilization as key member activities. Involving community volunteers aids in expanding the reach and impact of member efforts. Members incorporate service projects and volunteer opportunities throughout their service assignments. Example service projects include helping at fairs/events, tree or rain garden plantings, neighborhood cleanups, or monitoring waste and recycling. Members will recruit volunteers utilizing

## Narratives

the existing networks within host site organizations, while also exploring other avenues to engage community members in their service work, including social media, websites, and participating in community events. In program's first year, members met and exceeded the goal of recruiting at least 200 community members in environmental service projects. The program has a goal for recruiting and engaging at least 350 community members for service projects each year, in years 3-5.

### f. Partnerships and Collaboration

Partnership and collaboration is a key component of the Minnesota GreenCorps model. Through a strategic partnership with UMM, Minnesota GreenCorps has a presence in west central Minnesota, allowing members serving through UMM to impact under-served and rural communities in the west central region. To date, thirty two diverse organizations have participated to host full-time members. These organizations ranged from large county government systems to small community-based nonprofits, and span many areas of the state both urban (e.g. Three Rivers Park District, Western Lake Superior Sanitary District, City of Woodbury, Gardening Matters ) and rural (e.g. Rice County, Onamia Public District, and University of Minnesota -- Crookston). MPCA solicits feedback from partnering organizations in order to improve the program design and will continue to do so. In addition, during the first two years of the program, MPCA received technical support from other executive branch state agencies including the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Department of Health, and Minnesota Department of Commerce - Office of Energy Security. MPCA will continue to seek support from other state agencies regarding program design, scoping member activities, and selecting host organizations.

### g. Sustainability

Long term sustainability of member efforts once service terms are complete is a key criterion for

## Narratives

selecting host site organizations. It is clearly communicated to prospective host sites that the program's intent is for members to lay groundwork and put in place systems that are to be carried forward by host site organizations beyond member service terms. Applicant host organizations must meet this program design element to effectively compete to be chosen as a host organization. Through first year Minnesota GreenCorps member efforts, several practices and systems were put in place at organizations that will be sustained long after service. Examples include establishment of composting programs in facilities within the Three Rivers Park District system ; over 175 buildings benchmarked on energy consumption , with ongoing updates from host site staff and ability for sites to have historical information for future building improvements; tree inventory programs in the cities of Woodbury and Duluth carried out by host site staff or volunteers that will inform forestry plans; multiple schools improved recycling and/or composting programs; and the launching or expansion of nine community gardens that will provide local food to community members.

### **Organizational Capability**

#### a. Organizational Background - MPCA

The MPCA is an executive branch state agency that has been protecting our state's air, land, and water since 1967. The MPCA's mission is "Working with Minnesotans to protect, conserve and improve our environment and enhance our quality of life." Comprised of over 900 staff, MPCA possesses significant experience and capabilities across a comprehensive array of disciplines within the environmental field, including working with communities, businesses, and volunteers. The MPCA has the ability to meet legislative expectations for outcomes. In addition to our role as the main environmental regulatory agency, MPCA also has experience in establishing and supporting assistance and outreach programs. Programs include 1) Minnesota GreenStep Cities, a challenge, assistance and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability goals; 2) Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP), housed at the University of Minnesota, provides waste

## Narratives

reduction assistance for Minnesota manufacturers and other businesses ([www.mntap.umn.edu](http://www.mntap.umn.edu)); 3) Minnesota Retired Engineers Technical Assistance Program (RETAP), provides waste and energy reduction assistance to small businesses and includes a Minnesota Climate Change Corps.

The annual operating budget for the MPCA in Fiscal Year 2011 is \$218,451,673 with approximately 83% coming from state funding sources (e.g. Environmental Fund, Clean Water Fund, etc) and the remainder from federal funding sources, primarily the EPA. The requested amount from CNCS to continue operation of the Minnesota GreenCorps program represents approximately 0.16% of the MPCA's annual operating budget in FY11. The MPCA has decades of experience applying for, administering and reporting on federal grants, primarily from the EPA. MPCA has been responsible for administering a grant for the first two years of Minnesota GreenCorps which includes YouthWorks funds and CNCS formula funds provided by ServeMinnesota. MPCA has implemented the first two years of the Minnesota GreenCorps program, with a full time coordinator, a part time program associate, and additional support from numerous professionals and administrative staff within the agency.

### Organizational Background - UMM

Founded in 1960, the University of Minnesota-Morris (UMM) is an autonomous liberal arts college of the University of Minnesota located approximately 150 miles northwest of Minneapolis and St. Paul, About 1,700 students pursue the Bachelor of Arts degree in more than 30 majors and seven pre-professional programs. The UMM draws academically strong students, with more than 45 percent graduating in the top 10 percent of their high school class and with a composite ACT average of 25. Moreover, the strength and quality of the student body is reflected in its diversity. Among its many distinctions, in recognition of its instructional excellence, commitment to collaborative student and

## Narratives

faculty research, many extracurricular programs and services and a strong sense of community, US News and World Report ranked the UMM among the nations' top three public liberal arts colleges. The UMM has played a unique role in researching and demonstrating innovative energy independence and developing innovative community service programs. The campus' engagement in community service, service-learning, and volunteerism has imbedded a culture of public service within the community.

As the organizational home and lead unit at the UMM for the Minnesota GreenCorps program, the Center for Small Towns is a community outreach program dedicated to meeting the challenges and opportunities to the communities of western Minnesota. Since its inception, the CST has served as a point of entry to the many resources of the University of Minnesota. Small towns, local units of government, K-12 school systems, non-profit organizations, and other University units are able to utilize the CST's resources when working on rural issues or making contributions to rural society. The CST works to involve UMM faculty and students in the challenges and issues facing rural communities, which provide rich opportunities for applied learning. Partnerships and collaboration are central and recently have included units within the University system as well as other community and rural development organizations. Combining knowledge of the rural environment with the faculty, students, and programs of the University, the CST has become a valuable resource for applied research and services in addressing the problems of small cities.

### b. Staffing

MPCA will provide 1.50 FTE to implement years 3-5 of the program. One full time program coordinator, along with a program associate, will be responsible for overall program administration including: annual work planning, budgeting, performance measurement tracking, in kind

## Narratives

contribution tracking, member recruitment, member hiring and placement, host site marketing and application submittal, host site review and selection, project scoping, member and host site management, training, regular coordination meetings with internal staff, and partner and stakeholder relations. The program coordinator, with the program associate, will also provide regular updates to MPCA management, ServeMinnesota, and external parties as appropriate. The coordinator has been in her role since the inception of the Minnesota GreenCorps program in the summer 2009, with a full year of experience in administering an AmeriCorps program. Prior to the Minnesota GreenCorps program, both the coordinator and associate had experience in managing state and federal grants, and working on sustainable development issues at the MPCA. If new staff become involved in a program administration capacity, there are systems in place to ensure successful continuing operation of the program, including an annually updated program operating procedure that covers all aspects of the program, and process maps that document the member and host site selection processes. In addition to coordinator and associate responsible for the overall program, additional MPCA staff members provide support in meeting budget, contract, fiscal, communications, and other needs. Human resources also plays an integral role in the member recruitment, application, and selection process, to ensure a fair and open process for hiring, as well as providing support throughout the year related to benefits management and resolving member personnel issues, should any come up. Subject matter experts help design and modify position descriptions, assist in selection of host site projects, assist in training members, and serve as mentors.

Several CST staff member help support the program at UMM. The Project Director is a staff member of the CST and sustainability coordinator at UMM. He has served as the first sustainability coordinator in the University of Minnesota system since 2006. In his role at CST, he has been responsible for developing new programs and curriculum on campus, and serving the regional community. Before

## Narratives

that he worked with several start-up companies around the country as a semiconductor engineer and lab manager. The program at UMM is also served by several staff members with significant experience in working with students and community engagement, some staff members each having over 10 years of experience developing and implementing programs.

In sum, the MPCA, with partner support from the UMM, has the experience, structure, human capital and expertise to continue coordination of the Minnesota GreenCorps program. MPCA envisions the program as a model for other environmental agencies that seek local, community-based solutions to environmental problems. In 2010, MPCA was able to share this model of utilizing AmeriCorps members with other states in the upper Midwest through the US EPA Region 5/state climate change group.

c. Multi-state applicants only N/A

d. Multi-site applicants only

Minnesota GreenCorps sites are selected through an open, transparent and competitive process. All eligible host site organizations (e.g., local governmental units, schools, 501(c) 3 nonprofits) will be invited to apply in the spring. MPCA utilizes a substantial network of contacts established through existing programs and associations, including applicants in the first two years of the program, groups such as the League of Minnesota Cities, Association of Minnesota Counties, Minnesota NextStep website and e-newsletter program marketing advertisement via the internet, and through earned media. Current and past host sites are notified of the opportunity to re-apply.

Host site applications are reviewed by subject matter experts at the MPCA in the priority topic areas



## Narratives

for which Minnesota GreenCorps members are sought. Criteria used to review applications include: 1) quality of proposed placement, as characterized by service activities meeting a demonstrated community need, as well as the ability to yield documentable positive impacts on community served; 2) alignment with Minnesota GreenCorps goals and outcomes; 3) local project definition and timeline; 4) information assuring non-displacement of employees, and 5) sustaining after member involvement. As a statewide program, MPCA seeks to select organizations of varied geography, size, structure and other factors to assure a diverse mix of communities served. MPCA is also committed to continued partnership with host sites that work with underserved and minority populations. In the first two years of the program, approximately 40 percent of our site placements occurred in greater Minnesota, with the remaining 60 percent located in the Minneapolis-St Paul seven-county metropolitan area. As a state agency, MPCA manages over a dozen outgoing grant and loan assistance programs, and has likely had previous funding relationships (with MPCA as the funder) for a wide range of potential host site applicants.

### e. Slot fulfillment, retention and returning members

In the first two years, the MPCA filled 100 percent of our MSY slots (20 and 27.9 respectively). In the program's first year, Minnesota GreenCorps maintained a 100 percent retention rate. For the program's second year, we have 5 members, or 22 percent, who returned for a second year of service. To date, all 31 members are currently still serving.

### Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

The overall budget for the program at 31.9 MSY is \$789,480, including a request for approximately \$424,330.89 in CNCS funds, which is within the allowable cost of \$13,300 per MSY. The program currently needs an additional \$365,149 in non-corporation resources to successfully operate. The MPCA obtained diverse resources for the first two years of the Minnesota GreenCorps program, and

## Narratives

will continue to do so in future years. Costs for supervision, program operation, living allowance, training, travel, etc, benefit from diverse non-federal support provided from state (MPCA, ServeMinnesota) and local (UMM, host sites) cash and in kind resources. A cash match from ServeMinnesota of YouthWorks funding at \$750/MSY, and additional cash match of approximately \$75,165 is provided by MPCA funds. The cash match portion provided by MPCA is determined through a biennial budgeting process. MPCA will continue to explore the potential for other support, including foundation funds or collection of a host site fee.

In program years 3-5, MPCA is increasing the local shares of the program costs by providing additional cash match support. Overall match (in kind and cash contributions) is over 40 percent. The budget is adequate to support this program design and to realistically achieve the projected outputs and outcomes. The costs outlined in the budget reflect the lessons learned since the program inception. Travel, training, and gear costs per member have been reduced based on actual expenditures, accounting for program growth.

### Evaluation Summary or Plan

The MPCA conducts an independent program evaluation each year. The effort includes evaluation of member and host site experiences, as well as the overall program impact of the program. The Year One evaluation report has been completed. A copy of this evaluation report is provided. Data from this report show that members and host sites are satisfied with their experiences in the program, and the vast majority feel member activities contribute to the host site organization, the larger community, and the environment. A similar program evaluation will occur for year two, which is currently underway. Additional feedback is also gathered periodically through training evaluations, site visits, and other communication with sites and members. Minnesota GreenCorps program staff utilize the results of these program evaluations, as well as the other feedback gathered throughout a program year, to continuously improve the program.

## Narratives

### Amendment Justification

N/A

### Clarification Summary

Budget Clarification Items:

1. Section A- the UMM staff listed on the budget are all budgeted for 4% or less time. Please explain how this amount of time will be sufficient for management and oversight and how staff time will be tracked accordingly. This item can be addressed in the Clarification Narrative Field with other programmatic clarification items rather than in the budget (due to space limitations).

MPCA staff are responsible for management, oversight and day-to-day operations of the Minnesota GreenCorps program. UMM staff is responsible for a relatively small number of RHT members. The duties assigned to UMM are similar to those of host site supervisors, with the additional roles of member recruitment, interviews and selection. Based on the first two years of the program, an accurate time investment has been recorded.

2. Section B- Please itemize benefits for both MPCA and UMM staff listed on the budget.

MPCA and UMM are public entities. The standard benefits include health and dental insurance, social security and medical employer portion, pension and deferred compensation contributions. MPCA staff fringe based on 30% of salaries includes FICA (7.65%), health insurance (17.35%), Pension (5%).

UMM staff fringe (coordinator) includes FICA (6.61%), retirement (13.31%), health insurance (11.88%), and other benefits to total 33%. UMM staff fringe (other staff) includes FICA (7.37%), retirement (5.07%), health insurance (22.98%), and other benefits to total 40.1%.

## Narratives

3. Section E- confirm that member service gear displays the AmeriCorps logo.

As has been our practice since program inception, all member service gear will display the AmeriCorps logo.

4. Section G- please provide a breakdown of costs for included in member training.

Member training cost calculated at \$35/day/member for 10 days = \$12,250. \$35 includes \$20 for training space rental, \$10 for food for all day training, \$5 for training materials.

5. Section H- costs listed (for pre and post member and host site surveys) do not appear allowable for evaluation. Please explain what these costs include.

MPCA is committed to systematically and regularly collecting and monitoring data related to the direction and impacts of its programs, including Minnesota GreenCorps. In addition to environmental and community-related performance measures, a formalized approach has been developed to collect, monitor and analyze overall programmatic performance data.

An important and valued data set for this programmatic performance tracking effort is the perspective, views and input from both Minnesota GreenCorps members and host site supervisors. At two different points during the service year (i.e., pre and post survey), an electronic survey instrument is completed by members and host site supervisors to gather their feedback on key programmatic data, including operational, training and other management-related subject areas. The same or similar data has been collected and monitored since program inception, and the resulting trend

## Narratives

analysis and ongoing adjustments and enhancements guide and support ongoing continuous program improvement activities.

Note: Cost for program survey transferred to I. Other Program Operating Costs

### 6. Section I -

Criminal history checks must be conducted on all members, employees or other individuals who receive a salary, education award, living allowance, stipend or similar payment from the grant, regardless of whether these costs are coming from federal or non-federal share. Criminal history background checks include a search of statewide criminal history repositories and the National Sex Offender Public Website for all members and employees as described above. An FBI check is also required for members, employees or other individuals with recurring access to vulnerable populations.

A detailed description of the requirements can be found at:

<http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/criminal-history>.

Please verify that criminal history checks will be conducted on all members, employees and other individuals as described above. You may revise the budget to include these costs, if necessary but may not exceed the level of funding for which you are under consideration. Please verify that the criminal history checks conducted for members and staff will include an FBI fingerprint check in addition to the state registry check and the NSOPR for anyone with recurring access to vulnerable populations.

The Minnesota GreenCorps program works closely with MPCA's Human Resources department to comply with all CNCS requirements regarding background checks and safeguarding vulnerable populations. With the guidance and support of the MPCA's Human Resources department, the

## Narratives

program has in place the necessary procedures to meet the fingerprint check requirements. We will meet the FBI fingerprint check, as well as the NSOPR, check requirements. Additionally, MPCA performs checks of state-specified repositories.

7. Section I - please provide a description of what is included in the UMM supplies and move to Section E if these are consumable supplies

These supplies include standard office materials including paper, printer cartridges, folders and pens.

Note: Budget moved to Item E. Supplies, using formula of \$40/RHT.

Programmatic Clarification Items:

1. Please provide more detail regarding the roles of the RHT members at UMM, how it's determined what slot type a host site will sponsor, and how the RHT positions differ from the FT positions.

Through a collaborative process with MPCA, the UMM determines, at the beginning of the service year, the mix of project types to which the RHT members will be assigned. This process includes building on the activities of the previous year's RHT member service, community and environmental needs assessments, as well as assuring that RHT members will have solid access to mentoring and support offered through MPCA technical experts.

While the RHT members at UMM differ from FT positions in the total number of hours invested in service, there are other modest differences. As the RHT members at UMM are undergraduate students, their weekly hours of service during the school year are fewer. The model for RHT members

## Narratives

at UMM emphasizes accruing service hours during scheduled breaks in the school year, as well as focused and concerted service delivery during the summer months. Based on two years of programming, this approach strikes a healthy balance recognizing their undergraduate student status and AmeriCorps service commitment.

RHT members at UMM are not physically assigned to host communities as are FT positions. The RHT members operate out of UMM's Center for Small Town's office on campus, and carry out service activities using a field operations approach.

2. Please provide more detail regarding the staffing and management structure of the program (i.e. who will have direct oversight and leadership of the program, who will report to whom, how the different organizations such UMM, MPCA, and CST will work together).

Minnesota GreenCorps is managed by MPCA's Prevention & Assistance Division. The division is led by a Division Director who is part of the nucleus of senior leaders of the organization. The Division Director provides oversight and leadership in concert with other subordinate division management, including a Section Manager and Unit Supervisor. The Sustainable Development Unit Supervisor serves an important role in the day-to-day oversight, direction and management of the Minnesota GreenCorps Program.

A Program Coordinator works full-time to oversee the program. In addition to detailed programmatic tasks and functions, this person plays an important role in the leadership of the program. A Program Associate works on a half-time basis in meeting the administrative needs of the program. Both Program Coordinator and Program Associate are direct reports to the Supervisor of the Sustainable

## Narratives

Development Unit of the MPCA's Prevention & Assistance Unit.

The Center for Small Towns (CST) is a program of UMM. For Minnesota GreenCorps purposes, there is no material difference between UMM and CST when referenced in the grant application. CST staff oversee day-to-day activities of RHT members, and provide the requisite oversight and leadership for these members. CST is responsible for meeting programmatic obligations, as well as meeting CNCS requirements, and, as the CNCS sub-grantee, MPCA assumes responsibility in assuring that all obligations and requirements are fully met. From a reporting structure standpoint, and for purposes of Minnesota GreenCorps, UMM (and CST) report to MPCA.

3. Please provide more information about background and experience of the 1.5 FTE (program coordinator and associate)

The Program Coordinator received a Bachelor's of Science degree from University of Arizona, as well as a Master's in Environmental, Science and Technology from the University of Minnesota. Prior to overseeing day-to-day operations of the Minnesota GreenCorps since program inception, the incumbent administered the MPCA's Clean Diesel Program -- a high profile US EPA initiative to reduce particulate and others emissions from buses, commercial trucks and off-road diesel engines. Prior to joining MPCA, she served on staff at the University of Minnesota's Environment, Science and Technology Program, conducting research on water and climate change-related areas.

The Program Associate is a 21-year veteran of MPCA. The Program Associate received an MBA from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania. Prior to joining MPCA, he was an product executive with the Pillsbury Company. His long tenure at MPCA includes groundbreaking work in the areas of



## Narratives

industrial pollution prevention, sustainable development, community-based service delivery systems, and citizen-driven environmental improvements.

Performance Measure Clarification Items:

1. Member training and development: This measure was removed.

2. Environmental Awareness and Change:

- Please clarify what is meant by participation in a GreenCorps program activity and identify a threshold of engagement.

Examples of GreenCorps program activities include environmental education and outreach activities such as planning and coordinating fairs, events, workshops, earned media efforts (e.g., newspaper articles and television news stories), spent compact fluorescent bulb collection events, and presentations and talks.

Members receive training on the importance of establishing numeric baselines by which performance can be measured. MPCA technical experts mentor members on tailoring projected outputs and outcomes based on the type of environmental awareness and change measure being pursued. These measurement efforts constitute thresholds of engagement. Members receive training and support throughout the service year on the concepts and practical application and approaches to measure performance, and the importance of these actions are regularly reinforced.

MPCA has developed and graphically illustrated a ladder concept showing the graduated steps, and investments and degrees of actions, that yield intended increased awareness and environmental

## Narratives

preferable behaviors. This outreach continuum represents a threshold of engagement for this service project area, and the commitment exists to continue enhancing this component of the program's performance measurement system.

- Please identify in more detail what constitutes an energy assessment and the expected deliverable of the assessment.

GreenCorps members assist with energy assessments that are conducted on public sector/institutional buildings (not residential). The assessments are the first step to assess how much energy a public sector structure consumes and to evaluate what measures can be taken to make the building more energy efficient. An assessment will show problems that may, when corrected, save significant amounts of money over time. During the assessment, the GreenCorps member works with other technical experts to pinpoint where the building is losing energy. Energy assessments also determine the efficiency the building's heating and cooling systems. An assessment may also show ways to conserve hot water and electricity. Working with host site personnel and other partners, GreenCorps members can take assessment results and benchmark them against other public sector buildings of similar type, size and age.

- Please explain the who will determine that a green practice or technology has been implemented. Explain how participant surveys will be used to count the implementation of practices and/or technologies. With 35 members, expecting 50 community members or sites to undertake a green practice does not sound very ambitious. Consider a more specific definition of what constitutes a project and a more rigorous method of documenting its implementation.

## Narratives

Host site supervisors are responsible for determining that a green practice or technology has been implemented. Day-to-day supervision, guidance and oversight of GreenCorps members reside with host site supervisors. Host site supervisors are responsible for approving member monthly reports and accomplishments, including recording of green practices and technologies actually implemented.

In the energy conservation project area, projects include a range of no/low cost to high capital cost investments, as well as non-technological/low technology to high technology solutions. Examples include: bulb choice (incandescent versus CFL or LED), heating/ventilation issues (programmable thermostat versus high efficiency/heat pump upgrade), and employee behaviors (computer & peripheral turn-off versus tele-commuting policies).

The program sets the expectation that, through service, all GreenCorps members are instrumental in driving implementation of energy conserving practices and technologies, including measuring actual savings. We anticipate approximately 4 members serving in the energy conservation project area, and the projected goal of 50 sites implementing actual changes in practices and technology represents the floor of our expected implementation measure.

### 3. Waste Reduction, Management and Recycling:

- Please explain how you will measure that the entities that were provided waste reduction and/or recycling technical assistance have reduced waste by 10% and increased recycling by 10%. Also please address at what time after the technical assistance you will measure the waste rates. Finally, please consider using the national performance measure EN6 for tons of waste recycled.

Several methodologies are used to measure waste reduction and recycling outcomes. These include

## Narratives

on-site, facility specific waste sorts, as well as survey instruments. MPCA has developed a noteworthy methodology for measuring waste generation changes, as well as adjustments in recycling rates, using a measurement technique involving weighing and hand-sorting waste material types during waste sorts. This methodology has been successfully employed by GreenCorps members in the first two years of the program.

Another methodology involves survey instruments. GreenCorps members receive training, guidance and support in development of statistically sound and relevant survey instruments. They are instructed to prepare pre surveys to measure the "knowledge, attitude and practices -- KAP" of targeted audience prior to conducted service activities and projects. A post survey is carried out to measure reductions in waste generated and increases in recycling.

For year three of the program, we will take measures to assure that the approaches and methodologies described in the document, " AmeriCorps National Performance Measures, Pilot Year 2: 2011-2012, Output Instrument Packet (EN6) are fully addressed and integrated into our performance measurement system for this project area.

4. One Time Service Projects: This measure was removed.

5. Environment/clean energy (EN3)-

- Please define how much of an increase in knowledge or adoption of a behavior is necessary to be considered a success. While member quarterly reports can be used to communicate the data gathered, please develop specific data collection tools for each measure that will be used by the members.

## Narratives

Success, in environmental terms, is well defined in various chapters and section of Minnesota Statutes.

These statutes broadly reflect that international goals of principles of sustainable development encouraging patterns of resource use, that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for generations to come. In broad terms, the goal is to see increases in environmental knowledge, as well as environmental preferable behaviors, to assist in achieving sustainable development -- this is the long-term target formally established by Minnesota policymakers for 'success.'

Minnesota Statutes provides several nearer term benchmarks for success, including Minn. Stat. 115A.073. This section of law establishes a state plan for environmental education where by youth and citizens of this state should be able to apply informed decision-making processes to maintain a sustainable lifestyle. In order to do so, citizens should understand ecological systems, understand the cause and effect relationship between human attitudes and behavior and the environment, be able to evaluate alternative responses to environmental issues before deciding on alternative courses of action, and understand the effects of multiple uses of the environment. Minnesota GreenCorps' EN3-related performance measures are closely aligned with this Minnesota law.

In other specific environmental subject areas, Minnesota statutes guides the program in defining overall success. These include the Minnesota Waste Management Act (Minn. Stat. 115A) and its statewide mandates for source reduction, reuse, recycling and composting, as well as its directives related to household hazardous wastes and problem materials. As appropriate, the service activities and performance measure of Minnesota GreenCorps members are aligned toward these benchmarks of success. Minnesota statutes also sets statewide goals for energy conservation, urban forestry, sustainable agriculture and stormwater management practices.

## Narratives

Pre/post participant surveys provide Minnesota GreenCorps members with a realistic and manageable tool to gauge contributions toward this larger benchmarks and targets of success. While survey techniques differ depending on the service project and activity carried out, a survey is completed by youth and other citizens who are targeted for increasing their environmental knowledge and encouraging environmentally preferable behavior. With support from MPCA technical experts, mentors and host site personnel, GreenCorps members develop unbiased survey instruments, and are responsible for aggregating pre/post participant survey results. The benefits of surveying youth and other citizens prior to a GreenCorps service activity or project is that it establishes a baseline of knowledge and behavior. The same youth and citizens, or representatives of the same target population, are surveyed after GreenCorps activities. Members are responsible for aggregating data and work with technical experts, members and host site personnel to analyze and interpret the data and results. The EN3 performance measure for Minnesota GreenCorps is to achieve an increase in environmental knowledge (or environmentally preferable behavior) in the targeted audience (e.g., 30% increase as a result of GreenCorps service activities and projects). Minnesota GreenCorps allows members to record adaptation of environmentally preferable behaviors as the equivalent of increased knowledge -- the assumption being that increased environmental knowledge typically is achieved, and often drives, adaptation of environmentally preferable behaviors.

MPCA takes seriously the importance of measuring impacts of program activities and interventions intended to increase environmental knowledge and yield positive, environmental preferable changes in behavior. We understand that we, in many ways, pioneers in developing methodologies to capture data showing impact of program activities such as the service efforts of GreenCorps members.

## Narratives

We recognize that increased environmental knowledge, by itself, does not necessarily produce the desired environmentally preferable behavior. And, we are cognizant that changes in behavior often result from a confluence of factors, including importantly, those resulting from real and substantive interactions with GreenCorps members.

Minnesota GreenCorps members receive training on practical approaches and techniques to gather data and track project outputs and outcomes. These approaches include surveying target audiences prior to carrying out, as well as after, a planned activity or project. The members regularly receive coaching and mentoring to design, develop and implement these measurement techniques. By gathering data prior to and after service projects, members can analyze the data and gauge impact of their activities. This survey scoring approach is one aspect of the member driven performance measurement system.

We have made substantial progress in the program's first two years to develop highly tailored data collection tools for use by members in each of the specific project areas. We are committed to enhancing these existing tools, and developing new approaches, to accurately gauge to impact of GreenCorps service toward improving environmental quality.

### 6. General Performance Measure Clarification Items:

- Consider developing a performance measure for number of individuals reached by outreach campaigns, events, workshops, or similar awareness strategies as the output and pro-environmental behavior change as the outcome.

The MPCA regularly tracks the number of individuals reached by outreach campaigns, events,

## Narratives

workshops and other similar strategies. We have, and will continue to, track this data as part of Minnesota GreenCorps. The data is captured in the Environmental awareness and change performance measure.

### Continuation Changes

N/A



## Performance Measures

### SAA Characteristics

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

### Priority Areas

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Opportunity                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Stewardship            |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input 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 27.9

### Service Categories

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Energy Use Reduction                           | Primary <input type="checkbox"/>            | Secondary <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Environmental Awareness-building and Education | Primary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Secondary <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Waste Reduction, Management, and Recycling     | Primary <input type="checkbox"/>            | Secondary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

### Environmental awareness and change

**Service Category:** Environmental Awareness-building and Education

**Measure Category:** Not Applicable

### Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Minnesota GreenCorps members will be assigned specific projects intended to reduce energy use in local government and public buildings and fleets, improve air and water quality at the local level, as well as other community level activities that will reduce energy use, GHG emissions, and improve water and air quality through the application of non-regulatory assistance and educational activities.

Projects will be oriented at delivering technical assistance, engaging and educating citizens and host

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

sites staff, building capacity/delivering training to targeted audiences, leveraging other existing environmental programs, disseminating information and encouraging technology transfer, facilitating public/private partnerships, inventory of existing green infrastructure, and assisting in implementation of green practices and technologies.

Practices implemented will meet minimum standards to be included in reporting. Some examples include implementing an employee energy campaign, installation of a rain garden or community garden, installation of energy saving devices.

**Results**

**Result: Output**

Number of community members who are engaged and/or educated by Minnesota GreenCorps program activities.

Indicator: participants

Target: Number of community members (both residential and non-residential) who participate in Minnesota GreenCorps program activities.

Target Value: 3500

Instruments: registration materials, event attendee estimates, member quarterly reports

PM Statement: Minnesota GreenCorps members will engage and educate community-based organizations and individuals on how to implement green activities intended to reduce GHG emissions, and improve air and water quality.

Prev. Yrs. Data:

**Result: Output**

Minnesota GreenCorps members will identify, assess, and improve green infrastructure (stormwater best management practices, low impact development, urban trees)

Indicator: green infrastructure spaces

Target: Green infrastructure spaces are inventoried and/or assessed. Examples include urban trees, planting spaces, stormwater BMPs, or low impact development sites

Target Value: 1000

Instruments: inventory databases, member quarterly reports

PM Statement: Green infrastructure in participating communities is inventoried and/or assessed. Environmental outcomes are dependent on the scope and type of the individual projects, but may include reduced stormwater runoff and/or reduced GHG.

Prev. Yrs. Data:

**Result: Output**

**Result: Output**

Members will assist in energy assessments, including the collection and benchmarking of energy use and GHG emissions from public buildings.

Indicator: energy assessments

Target: Number of energy assessments completed

Target Value: 50

Instruments: member quarterly reports, energy use databases

PM Statement: Minnesota GreenCorps members will assist communities and public entities in assessing energy use and GHG emissions.

Prev. Yrs. Data:

**Result: Intermediate Outcome**

Minnesota Greencorps members activities will catalyze implementation of green practices and technologies.

Indicator: green practices and technologies implemented

Target: At least 50 green practices and/or technologies will be implemented by participating sites and/or community members.

Target Value: 50

Instruments: member quarterly reports, participant surveys

PM Statement: Minnesota GreenCorps members will catalyze community-based individuals and organizations to implement green practices and technologies that will reduce GHG emissions, improve water and air quality, and reduce waste.

Prev. Yrs. Data:

**Result: End Outcome**

Minnesota GreenCorps members catalyze individuals and organizations to implement practices and technologies that reduce GHG emissions, improve water and air quality, and reduce waste.

Indicator:

Target: n/a

Instruments: n/a

PM Statement:

Prev. Yrs. Data:

**Waste and Recycling**

**Service Category:** Waste Reduction, Management, and Recycling

**Measure Category:** Not Applicable

**Strategy to Achieve Results**

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

Minnesota GreenCorps Members will be assigned to specific projects to reduce waste in Minnesota communities and/or increase recycling, and also to promote waste reduction, recycling, and

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

environmentally friendly activities among community residents. A 'site' is defined as a distinct building with a contained recycling or organics system. Implementation of two projects (e.g organics and waste reduction) at one site will be considered as two distinct projects.

**Results**

**Result: Output**

Minnesota GreenCorps members provide technical assistance to sites to reduce waste and/or increase recycling.

Indicator: beneficiaries

Target: Members will provide technical assistance to at least 20 sites in an effort to reduce waste and/or increase recycling.

Target Value: 20

Instruments: member quarterly reports

PM Statement: Minnesota GreenCorps members provide technical assistance to reduce waste and/or increase recycling to at least 20 sites.

Prev. Yrs. Data:

**Result: Intermediate Outcome**

Waste is reduced as a result of Minnesota GreenCorps member efforts.

Indicator: lbs/tons of waste prevented and/or diverted

Target: Waste is reduced and/or diverted by 10 % in participating communities.

Target Value: 10%

Instruments: estimates of waste reduced and/or diverted, member quarterly reports

Percentages will be reported as an average across participating communities/sites.

PM Statement: Waste is reduced and/or diverted as a result of Minnesota GreenCorps member efforts.

Prev. Yrs. Data:

**Result: Intermediate Outcome**

Recycling is increased as a result of the Minnesota GreenCorps program.

Indicator: pounds/tons of waste recycled

Target: Increased recycling by 10% in participating communities.

Target Value: 10%

Instruments: estimates of recycled materials, member quarterly reports

Percentages will be reported as an average across participating communities/sites.

PM Statement: Recycling is increased by 10% in participating communities through Minnesota GreenCorps member efforts.

Prev. Yrs. Data:

## National Performance Measures

**Priority Area: Environmental Stewardship**

**Performance Measure Title:** EN3

**Service Category:** Environmental Awareness-building and Education

### Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Minnesota GreenCorps members, as part of their overall outreach and education efforts, will provide education to youth (under age 25) on environmentally conscious practices including but not limited to energy, waste prevention/recycling, water quality, and sustainable agriculture.

### Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Youth receiving education and outreach from Minnesota GreenCorps members will show an increase in knowledge and/or adoption of new sustainable behavior.

Indicator: Percent increase in knowledge/adoption of a behavior

Target :Percent increase in knowledge/adoption of a behavior

Target Value: 300

Instruments: member quarterly reports, pre/post participant surveys

PM Statement: At least 30% (300) of youth educated by Minnesota GreenCorps members will show an increase in knowledge or adoption of a new sustainable behavior.

### Result: Output

Result.

At least 1000 youth under the age of 25 will receive education in environmentally-conscious practices including but not limited to energy, waste prevention/recycling, water quality, and sustainable agriculture.

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

Target :Number of youth receiving education

Target Value: 1000

Instruments: member quarterly reports, attendance logs

PM Statement: At least 1000 youth will receive education on environmentally conscious practices including but not limited to energy, waste prevention/recycling, water quality, and sustainable agriculture.

## Required Documents

**Document Name**

**Status**

Evaluation

Sent

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable