

## **Attachment 18A**

### **Explanatory Note for Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS) Report November 2, 2009**

The reported information was derived from standardized American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) section 1609(c) reports from the Corporation's financial Management system. The attached spreadsheet has the Corporation's ARRA NEPA data as of September 30, 2009. CNCS is reporting the appropriated amount minus salaries and expenses for ARRA implementation.

Since the last report, the Corporation has:

- Completed 112 new projects in the programs receiving ARRA appropriations. NEPA reviews for the 112 projects have been completed.
- Modified Project/Activity descriptions and NEPA action groupings on Page 2 of the spreadsheet for consistency with the "Award Type" field on the Recovery Act Status Report submitted regularly to OMB. Here is a summary of the changes to the spreadsheet since the last report:
  - Line 2 of the current spreadsheet (Discretionary Grant) combines the activities on Lines 1 (Grant – Competitive), 2 (Grant – Ed Award), 4 (Grant – National Direct), 5 (Grant – State without Commission), and 6 (Grant – Technical Assistance) of the previous spreadsheet.
  - The Project/Activity description on Line 3 of the current spreadsheet has been changed from "Grant – Formula" to "Formula and Block Grant." The total number of NEPA actions has also been reduced from 51 to 49 because of a tabulation error in the previous report.
  - The Project/Activity description on Line 4 of the current spreadsheet has been changed from "Grant – Tribe" to "Tribal Agreement."
  - Line 7 on the current spreadsheet combines the activities on Page 2, Lines 8 (Grant – State without Commission), 9 (Grant – Technical Assistance), and 10 (Grant – VISTA) of the previous spreadsheet.

The Corporation worked with CEQ to adopt NEPA procedures that categorically exclude national and community service projects/activities such as those funded under the ARRA ("Protocol for the Categorical Exclusion of Activities Funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service"). The categorical exclusions, in the absence of extraordinary circumstances, allow the Corporation to comply with NEPA and proceed with the funding and implementation of those projects without preparing Environmental

Assessments or Environmental Impact Statements because those activities do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment.

By adopting and using this protocol, the Corporation ensures that urgently needed ARRA financial assistance is disbursed to eligible entities in a timely manner.

**The Corporation's AARA funds support:**

**AmeriCorps State and National Grants**

The Corporation received \$89 million in ARRA appropriations to award approximately 10,000 full-time, part-time, and reduced part-time AmeriCorps State and National member positions. Grant recipients will primarily be nonprofit community organizations, but may also include local governments, Indian Tribes and institutions of higher education. Approximately 2/3 of the funds will be awarded competitively to existing, proven AmeriCorps grantees either directly or via state service commissions. By statute, 1/3 of the funds will be distributed to state service commissions based on a population-based formula and the in turn, states will select the subgrant recipients. Since the last report, nearly all of this appropriation has been obligated.

ARRA funding through the AmeriCorps program is awarded as grants to current national, regional, and local AmeriCorps grantees with a proven track record and demonstrate the capacity to efficiently and effectively draw upon this new resource to assist communities in need.

**AmeriCorps VISTA**

The Corporation received a \$65 million ARRA appropriation to award approximately 3,000 non cost share AmeriCorps VISTA member positions to new and existing sponsors. The Corporation, using it existing processes, will announce increased one-time funding for projects that result in the maximum, measurable impact on communities affected by the economic crisis. Since the last report, over \$20 million of the appropriation has been obligated.

The mission of the AmeriCorps VISTA program to create and expand programs that bring low-income individuals and communities out of poverty is strongly aligned with ARRA priorities. Existing VISTA projects already support job creation, the abatement of home foreclosures, credit counseling and financial asset development programs. Corporation state office staff will allocate VISTA resources based upon the critical needs of their states.

VISTA members funded through the ARRA will augment the ongoing work of the program through activities such as fundraising, establishment of volunteer recruitment and management systems, community outreach, and partnership development. These activities will help non-profit and other community organizations to build greater capacity and to be a sustainable local resource to their communities as they work to

increase economic opportunity for Americans living in poverty or who are in danger of falling into poverty. To create worthwhile volunteer positions for the additional VISTA members, we will expand existing projects and accelerate the development of new ones.

### **National Service Trust**

The Corporation received \$40 million in ARRA appropriations for the National Service Trust Fund (the Trust) to fund education awards and interest forbearance for AmeriCorps State and National and VISTA members serving in ARRA funded programs.

The Trust was established by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (42 USC 12601, et seq.) to repay qualified student loans; pay educational expenses at a qualified institution of higher education; and repay eligible interest expense on student loans for eligible participants who complete AmeriCorps service. Trust funds are obligated at the time a slot is awarded to an AmeriCorps grantee or at the time of enrollment of a VISTA member. Education awards earned by AmeriCorps members are available to be used for seven years from the completion of the service. Payments from the Trust are made directly to the educational institutions and the loan holders as directed by the members and by the institutions. Trust funds are not used to pay member stipends or other grant costs.

Additional information on the Corporation's ARRA plan can be found at:  
<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/recovery/index.asp>.

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