Attachment 18A

Explanatory Note for Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS) Report
May 3, 2010

The reported information was derived from standardized American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) reports from the Corporation's financial Management system. The attached spreadsheet has the Corporation's AARA NEPA data as of March 31, 2010.

The Corporation adopted NEPA procedures ("Protocol for the Categorical Exclusion of Activities Funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service") that categorically exclude the type of national and community service projects/activities that are funded under the ARRA from the requirement of preparing Environmental Assessments or Environmental Impact Statements under NEPA because those projects/activities do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment.

By adopting this protocol, the Corporation assured that urgently needed ARRA financial assistance can be disbursed to eligible entities in a timely manner and that such funds are used in accordance with the NEPA. CEQ reviewed the Corporation's protocol and concluded that it is in conformity with NEPA and the CEQ regulations.

The Corporation's AARA funds are to support the following:

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.

ARRA funding through the AmeriCorps program will be 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. Currently there are 130 grants covered under individual categorical exclusions. The Corporation has obligated 97% of the appropriated funds to date.

AmeriCorps VISTA

The Corporation received a $65 million ARRA appropriations 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. There are currently 164 projects that have been identified which are covered under individual categorical exclusions. The Corporation has obligated $23,139,043 (approximately 36% of the appropriated funds).

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 Administration and Congressional priorities in the ARRA. 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. No projects have been identified to date.

Salaries and Expenses

The Corporation received $6 million in ARRA appropriations for salaries and expenses to administer the funds appropriated under the ARRA. These actions are not included in the Corporation's spreadsheet and account for the $6 million difference between the Corporation's total ARRA appropriation ($200 million) and the appropriation total listed on Page 1 of the spreadsheet ($194 million)..

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

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