

From: Copans, Jon [Jon.Copans@state.vt.us]
Sent: Wednesday, June 03, 2015 5:21 PM
To: Coriell, Scott
CC: Richards, Alyson; Mears, David; Hengstenberg, Carey
Subject: Americorps Grant
Attachments: 2015-05-07 DRAFT ECO Vermont AmeriCorps Grant Press Release.docx

Hey Scott,

I spoke to Aly a bit earlier and we agreed that I would shoot you a quick e-mail. As you know, VTDEC has collaborated with the mayors to apply for a batch of Americorps positions to work on water quality issues around VT. I understand there was some dialogue about hosting an event when the grant was scheduled to be announced. We just got the good news this week that, despite earlier being put on a wait list, we will receive these funds. Corporation for National Service will likely make a national announcement including Vermont sometime in the near future. Phil with SerVermont is trying to nail down timing. Aly lead me to believe the Gov likely wouldn't be available to do press on this sometime soon given the slate of bill signings you are still working through, so maybe we just do Vermont release and then try to do an event later this summer once we have staffers actually on the ground doing work? Or do we do an event with Agency folks and mayors but no Gov? I've attached the press release we worked up in anticipation of the announcement.

What do you think? What is our best approach to get some good coverage of this good news?

jon



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VERMONT AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Press Release

For Immediate Release:
Contact:

Vermont Receives Federal Funding for Clean Water and Community Service Program

Today, Governor Shumlin and SerVermont announced that the State of Vermont received a grant in the amount of \$XXX,000 per year over X years from the Corporation of National Community Service to oversee an AmeriCorps program focused on supporting clean water efforts and creating new job opportunities for recent college graduates entering the work force. This funding will support a new Environmental Careers and Opportunities (or ECO) Vermont Program in Vermont administered by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Under ECO Vermont, DEC will oversee a team of up to twenty-five full and part-time AmeriCorps members who will be hosted by local governments or non-profit organizations to work on projects designed to enhance the quality of water in the Vermont's streams, rivers, ponds and lakes.

AmeriCorps was established as a way for Americans to provide intensive service to their communities, to earn money towards their educations, and to help launch their careers. Host site communities and organizations train and manage AmeriCorps members in service and capacity building activities to address unmet community needs such as environmental protection and conservation. Their experiences provide valuable on-the-job training and help them develop an appreciation for the value of civic engagement.

The AmeriCorps grant announced today is funded under a special Governor and Mayor Initiative designed to encourage Governors and Mayors to work together to create programs that address significant problems in their states. Vermont's Governor Peter Shumlin applied for the grant in the Fall 2014, with the support of Mayors Miro Weinberger of Burlington, Mayor Elizabeth Gamache of City of St. Albans, and then Mayor Michael O'Brien of Winooski. Initially the program will prioritize projects focused on the restoration of clean water in the Lake Champlain watershed but communities across the state are eligible to apply. Longer term, the program will expand to serve communities across the state address a range of environmental challenges such as implementing recycling and composting programs, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Governor Peter Shumlin expressed his appreciation for the grant noting that, "this is a terrific new program that will enhance Vermont's reputation as a leader in the development of green jobs, and help our communities protect Vermont's green hills and sparkling waters."

[Mayor(s) Quote]

[SerVermont Quote]

Vermont Environmental Commissioner David Mears encouraged municipal governments, watershed organizations, conservation districts and others to apply to host AmeriCorps members through the ECO Vermont program. "This program provides a well-timed boost to our state's efforts to advance clean water," said Mears, "and will provide an opportunity for many communities and organizations across Vermont to work with talented and hardworking recent college graduates to protect our waters."

Find more information at the following link: <http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/co/ecovermont.htm>

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