



2012 Request for Applications for SNAP Host Sites Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership

The Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership (SNAP) invites Sierra Nevada conservation organizations and agencies to apply to become a Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership (SNAP) Host Site for the upcoming 2012 program. SNAP Host Sites receive full-time AmeriCorps Member(s) who serve 11 months at your organization/agency by conducting watershed assessment and restoration, watershed education projects, volunteer recruitment and support, and a small amount of allowable fundraising.

The deadline for Host Site Applications is Close of Business (COB) on July 29, 2011. See below for application instructions.

I. SNAP Background:

In the fall of 2006, the Sierra Nevada Alliance received a grant from California Volunteers, to administer the Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership (SNAP) as part of the Member Group Support program to help build capacity of Sierra Nevada Alliance Member groups and complete on the ground restoration work throughout the Sierra. The mission of the SNAP program is to assess and restore impaired watershed habitats and to increase community stewardship of Sierra Nevada watersheds through education and volunteerism.

The program places twenty-seven full time AmeriCorps Members at different conservation organizations and natural resource agencies throughout the 400 mile long 'Range of Light'. Members conduct watershed assessment and restoration, watershed education, and volunteer recruitment. From Mt. Whitney to the Feather River, Members have contributed to Sierra watershed health through a variety of service projects including conducting invasive species removal, stream bank stabilization, environmental education presentations such as Trout in the Classroom, river clean ups, trail building, and water quality monitoring.

II. 2011-12 Grant Priorities and Member Service Activities

The 2011-2012 SNAP Performance Measure Worksheets (PMWs) comprise a logic model for AmeriCorps that explains the program priorities, goals, methods, and outcomes. The document can be downloaded at:

http://www.sierranevadaalliance.org/programs/articles/db/pics/1246907956_10940.f_pdf.pdf

To summarize the PMWs, the priorities of the 2011-12 SNAP program are focused on the following areas (please note that the Member hours listed below are the total percentage of hours for the entire group of 27 Members. Your Member(s) may have a different breakdown of hours):

1. **Watershed Assessment & Restoration (Primary Focus):** The goal is to restore disturbed Sierra watersheds through Member activities and community volunteers. SNAP seeks to restore 1,120 acres of watershed (Members – 120 acres, volunteers – 1,000 acres) in 2012. Watershed monitoring activities are allowed as long as they are linked to restoration projects or are used in some way to identify potential restoration sites. Project examples include: river clean ups,

invasive species removal, pre and post project water quality monitoring, meadow restoration projects, storm sampling, fuels reduction, trail building, grazing exclusions, etc.

Member Hours: 40.2%

2. **Watershed Education and Outreach (Secondary Focus):** The goal is to educate students and community members on watershed topics to create lifelong watershed stewards. In 2012, Members will educate 1,500 persons through presentations and/or service learning opportunities and conduct outreach to 5,500 community members. Project examples include: classroom presentations, tabling, field tours, interpretation, creating educational newsletters, etc.

Member Hours: 21.6%

3. **Volunteer Recruitment (Secondary Focus):** The goal is to encourage community watershed stewardship by increasing community volunteerism on watershed restoration and assessment projects. In 2012, Members will recruit over 2,000 community volunteers for over 15,600 volunteer hours. Project examples include: tabling to recruit volunteers, volunteer appreciation events, creating a volunteer database, email volunteers to attend restoration events, coordinating volunteers at events, etc.

Member Hours: 21.5%

4. **Resource Attainment (Minor Focus):** The goal is to increase the funding and resources of the Sierra community organizations and agencies for watershed restoration and education. In 2012, Members will secure over 60 donations (grants, in-kind, business, services) for restoration and education projects. Project examples include: asking local grocery store to donate snacks for a restoration event, writing a grant to start an invasive species removal program the Member will run, etc. Please note that the maximum hours any Member can spend on resource attainment is 170 hours. Members **CANNOT write federal grants or any grant that goes towards the required Member Cash Match**. All Member fundraising **must go directly to Member service projects**. Fundraising for general funds is NOT allowed.

Member Hours: 3.7%

5. **Member Training (Secondary Focus):** The goal is to train and mentor SNAP Members to do their service projects properly and for career development. Members must attend four required SNAP Sponsored trainings/Service Projects and will have Host Site trainings/orientation for site-specific skills and info. In 2012, 25 Members will receive at least 190 hours of training. Examples of Member training include: in house GIS training, attending the Wilderness Conference, wilderness first responder training, etc.

Member Hours: 13.1%

Please note that AmeriCorps regulations prohibit Members from conducting the following activities as part of their service:

- Efforts to influence legislation.
- Organizing or engaging in protest petitions, boycotts, or strikes.
- Assisting or deterring union organizing.
- Impairing existing contracts or collective bargaining agreements.
- Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities, which are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation or elected officials (including school levies).
- Engaging in religious instruction.
- Providing a direct benefit to a for-profit entity, a labor union, a partisan political organization, an organization engaged in religious activities, or a non-profit entity without 501C(3) status.
- Organizing voter registration drives.

- Preparing any part of a grant proposal or performing fundraising functions which help the Host Site achieve cash match requirements, or to fund general operating expenses, or providing fundraising assistance to other community-based organizations. Member activities for fundraising must be directly linked to raising resources for current or future Member service projects.
- Members may not assist with federal grant applications.

Examples of what Members can and cannot do:

Members may not spend service time on activities deemed as advocacy by the SNAP program. The following examples illustrate the difference between education and advocacy as it relates to the SNAP Program:

Members May:

- Educate community members about an existing dam's effect on a watershed.
- Educate ranchers about the impacts of cattle in riparian zones.
- Educate people on the effects of pesticides and herbicides that run off fields into watersheds.
- Create a newsletter detailing the effects of climate change on the Sierra.
- Organize snowshoeing tours on public lands and discuss the effects of motorized vehicles.
- Write a grant to the ABC Foundation to implement a meadow restoration project that a SNAP Member will work on.
- Organize a Dinner Benefit event in which funds raised go directly to the Member's service projects.
- Write a state grant

Members may NOT:

- Ask for signatures to stop the building of a proposed dam.
- Lobby to cease grazing on a specific parcel of land
- Write the EPA requesting the ban of certain pesticides and herbicides.
- Provide public comments on state planning processes/policies regarding climate change.
- Ask legislators to vote to prohibit motorized vehicles on public lands.
- Write a grant to the ABC Foundation to implement a meadow restoration project which includes covering the Member's Partner Cash Match.
- Organize or assist with your organizations Annual Auction event in which money raised goes to the general fund of the organization.
- Write a federal grant

If you have any questions regarding what are allowable Member service activities or your organization is involved in advocacy and is interested in hosting a SNAP Member, SNAP highly recommends that you call our office before completing an application!

III. What Organizations are eligible?

Host Site requirements include:

- Complete and submit 2012 Partner Site Application Form by close of business July 29, 2011.
- On-site training, supervision, and support for AmeriCorps Members.
- By January 1, 2012 contribute the per Member financial Cash Match due from your organization based on the following criteria:
 - Host Sites that are Sierra Nevada Alliance Member Groups: \$7,850
 - Host Sites for non-Member Group organizations: \$8,350
 - Host Sites that are agencies: \$8,850
- Workspace and materials/equipment necessary for the AmeriCorps Member to successfully complete their projects.
- Member projects must benefit Sierra watersheds and/or residents in California.
- Select at least one Site Supervisor for Members to provide supervision and mentorship of Member(s). Site supervisor requirements:
 - Monthly and quarterly reporting to the Sierra Nevada Alliance and AmeriCorps.
 - Participation in Member recruitment, interviews, and selection in fall 2011.
 - Attendance at SNAP orientation January 23 & 24. (Host Sites that are partnering to host Members must have one representative from each organization attend.)
 - Participation in quarterly partner conference calls.
 - Participation in annual SNAP Host Site visit.
 - Monthly communication with SNAP Regional Coordinator.
 - Regular meetings with SNAP Member(s).
 - Monitor and track progress toward the Member's service goals.
 - Support and mentor the Member(s) (ensure their work and time is being valued and recognized, ensure they are receiving the experience and skills necessary for their position, etc.).
- Must be a 501(c)(3) organization or a governmental agency.
- Liability insurance that covers the AmeriCorps Member(s) while performing service at your organization and in the field.

IV. Host Site Timeline

- June 15, 2011: RFA for SNAP Host Sites released
- June 29, 2011: Program Scorecards for Reapplying Sites Issued
- **July 29, 2011: Host Site Applications Due**
- August 1 - 23, 2011: Site Selection Committee reviews applications and selects sites
- August 26, 2011 (or earlier): 2011 host sites announced
- September 2 - October 17, 2011: Recruitment of SNAP Member applications
- September 19, 2011: SNAP MOUs signed and submitted by host sites to SNAP
- October 20 – November 2, 2011: SNAP Staff complete 1st round interviews of qualified applicants

- November 4 – 18, 2011: Host sites conduct 2nd round interviews of qualified applicants sent to their site.
- November 22, 2011: SNAP Staff will send out position offers to selected applicants
- November 22 - January 23, 2012: Host sites and SNAP staff coordinate with new Members to help facilitate housing, background checks, and initial paperwork.
- January 23 - 24, 2012: Required training for Site Supervisors in Oakhurst, CA
- January 23 - 27, 2012: SNAP Member Training and Orientation in Oakhurst, CA.
- December 15, 2012: Last day of service for Members

V. Number of Members per Host Site

Determining the number of Members hosted at your Site: CaliforniaVolunteers, the state commission for AmeriCorps, requires two Members be placed at each Host Site. The SNAP program will request waivers to this rule and foresees CaliforniaVolunteers providing waivers for 1-5 sites to be single Member Host Sites. Therefore Sites are highly encouraged to apply for 2 or more Members.

There are three possibilities for the number of Members at your Site:

1. 2 or more Members (majority of selected Sites, most competitive model)
2. 1 Member (only 1-5 of the single placements Sites will be selected)
3. Local Host Site partnership to host 2 or more Members (also a competitive model): In this situation, a community has 2 or more small organizations that do not have the capacity to host 2 Members at each organization but could host a total of 2 or more Members through a partnership between the organizations. In this situation, the application must clearly explain:
 - i. How the Members are working as a team. It must be clear to SNAP Staff that the Members will not simply be serving at separate organizations. There must be a true partnership with genuine teamwork between the Members.
 - ii. Identified lead Site and Site supervisor. There must be a lead organization and Site Supervisor to coordinate logistics, info and reporting with SNAP Staff and make it clear to whom the Members are be supervised by. The partnership may determine one lead Site Supervisor for each Member or one lead Site Supervisor who will be supervising both Members.
 - iii. Clear structure and communication for Members, SNAP Staff and organizations involved in the partnership.
 - iv. It is recommended that a single workplace is designated for both Members to clearly show that they are serving at a single partnership site.

VI. How to Apply

If you are a **current** SNAP Site interested in reapplying, please complete the Host Site Reapplication Form. This form can be downloaded at:

http://www.sierranevadaalliance.org/programs/profile.shtml?index=1189101768_13950

For organizations new to the SNAP program please complete the Host Site Application Form. This form can be downloaded at:

http://www.sierranevadaalliance.org/programs/profile.shtml?index=1189101768_13950

Please note that the application questions have strict character limits. If you require additional space to elaborate on any question in the application please use the 'comments' section at the end of the application which does not include any character limits.

The applications must be turned in by email to Morgan Fessler (morgan@sierranevadaalliance.org) by July 29, 2011 at COB. Please do not fax or send hardcopy applications.

VII. Host Site Selection Process

All applications will be scored based on criteria listed in the Host Site Scorecard. Applications that score highest will receive highest selection priority by the selection committee. The scorecard can be downloaded at:

http://www.sierranevadaalliance.org/programs/articles/db/pics/1246922337_22234.f_pdf.pdf

Other factors that will be considered in the site selection process:

- Ability of the service plans proposed by Host Sites to help the SNAP Program achieve the outcomes outlined in the 2011-12 Performance Measure Worksheets:
http://www.sierranevadaalliance.org/programs/articles/db/pics/1246907956_10940.f_pdf.pdf
- Overall mix of Member service time as outlined in the Service Plan. As mentioned above in section II, the total hours by 27 Members approximately should be within reasonable a range of 40.2% watershed assessment & restoration, 21.6% education, 21.5% volunteer recruitment & support, 3.7% resource attainment, and 16.1% Member training.
- Geographic distribution in the Sierra Nevada
- Status as a Member Group of the Sierra Nevada Alliance

A Site Selection Committee will review and score applications in early August and convene by mid-August to select sites.

VIII. SNAP Contact Info

For questions or inquiries, please contact:

Morgan Fessler, Program Director

530-542-4546 x 312

morgan@sierranevadaalliance.org



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Keeping light in the range.