

TerraCorps Federal Performance Measures for the Massachusetts Program 2019-2021



For this three-year cycle of AmeriCorps funding, the TerraCorps program measures its impacts relative to AmeriCorps' definitions of **Environmental Awareness and Stewardship**, **Volunteer Engagement**, and **Capacity Building**.

Environmental Awareness and Stewardship is defined by AmeriCorps as organized efforts to teach about how natural environments function and, particularly, how human beings can manage their behavior and ecosystems to live sustainably.

Our goals for **Environmental Awareness and Stewardship** are for the 48 TerraCorps members to educate or train 5,000+ individuals in environmental stewardship each year. In this measure, "environmental stewardship" is how natural environments function and, particularly, how human beings can manage their behavior and choices in order to live sustainably within those environments. People counted as educated or trained must be from an EXTERNAL AUDIENCE and cannot be staff or recurring volunteers of the service site. Members may perform DIRECT SERVICE delivering education and training under this performance measure.

[The AmeriCorps definition of DIRECT SERVICE is any form of assistance provided directly to individuals, targeted groups, and communities, including hands-on or face-to-face activities.]

Examples of external audiences that TerraCorps members will count as trained or educated are:

- 1) landowners, farmers, and non-service-site volunteer groups such as municipal boards and all-volunteer land trusts engaged in conservation planning, and outreach activities;
- 2) adults and youth participating in internships and short-term stewardship projects or events
- 3) youth, teachers, and parents participating in service learning projects, inquiry-based science education field trips, and outdoor experiential education programs;
- 4) new constituencies (youth and adults) included in projects and events that demonstrate how land conservation can address many community needs, such as public health, economic development, education, poverty and hunger, neighborhood revitalization, and cultural decline.

Members will receive training on effective lesson planning that will guide them in identifying training/ education goals and achieving positive outcomes.

Volunteer Engagement

TerraCorps and AmeriCorps are interested in how members increase volunteer capacity for service sites. The TerraCorps program goal is for members to engage with 2,000 community volunteers who perform a minimum of one hour each of community service.

Capacity Building is defined by AmeriCorps as a set of activities that expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or

effectiveness of programs and organizations. These activities achieve lasting positive outcomes for the communities served by AmeriCorps programs. AmeriCorps considers capacity building activities to be indirect services that enable service sites and their community partners to provide more, better, and sustained direct services. Capacity building activities must:

1. be intended to support or enhance the program delivery model
2. respond to the organization's goal of increasing, expanding or enhancing services in order to address pressing community needs
3. enable the organization to provide a sustained level of more

Our goals for **Capacity Building** are for the 48 TerraCorps members to complete meaningful capacity building projects for 25 service sites and 40 coalition partners (e.g. regional conservation partnerships, food systems coalitions, etc.) totaling in 65 organizations. For each capacity building project, the service site or coalition partner organization will evaluate the degree to which their effectiveness has increased in the area of need addressed by the member's activities.

Each member will complete capacity-building projects for their service sites and coalition partners. In submitting a service site application, supervisors will briefly describe at least two potential capacity building projects for their member's service year. Additional projects can be identified and planned with the member and other organizations over the first months of service.

The following list illustrates the variety of service activities performed by our members that service sites could develop into projects:

Strengthening Volunteer Recruitment, Training, and Management:

- Creating volunteer land stewardship program for host site to conduct annual monitoring and maintenance of conservation properties.
- Creating videos and manuals to enhance training programs for volunteers
- Recruiting, training, and managing volunteers to conduct monitoring
- Establishing a program of volunteers to conduct organizational outreach at farmers markets, community events, local libraries, and other venues
- Organizing river clean ups, water quality monitoring, community paddles and other service and outreach events to increase citizen engagement in watershed initiatives
- Planning special natural history workshops to enhance the recruitment, training, and retention of volunteer conservation restriction monitors
- Developing partnerships with trail associations, scout troops, and other community groups to create and maintain trails on conservation lands

Helping Build Organizational Infrastructure and Resources

- Improving baseline and conservation restriction monitoring documentation and systems to meet LTA standards for accreditation.
- Developing new social media (website, Facebook, etc.) content and/or systems to increase community outreach and enhance volunteer recruitment; training staff and volunteers to use and maintain these new systems.
- Creating videos to promote community awareness of river greenway initiatives
- Sending requests to foundations and businesses for supplies - e.g. waders, binoculars, plants, field guides, lumber for bridges and bird boxes

- Setting up a Google Site and online forms for managing volunteer stewardship activities
- Conducting community surveys to assess needs for land protection and land stewardship training and assistance
- Helping municipal boards update their Open Space and Recreation Plans and create GIS maps for prioritizing land conservation efforts
- Building hoop houses for community gardens; establishing pollinator gardens at land trust headquarters or in schoolyards; establishing trails connecting with hospital grounds

Developing New Programs and Collaborative Relationships

- Coordinating advisors on new volunteer Community Councils to help the land trust establish local connections, support, and priorities for its land conservation activities
- Developing a program of children's activities to enrich land trust outreach at farmers markets
- Developing a series of "wellness walks" in partnership with a local hospital
- Developing a climate change monitoring and education program on conservation land, in collaboration with a high school science class and a scientific research center
- Initiating a summer film festival, photography workshops, art shows, or music performances with conservation themes and volunteer assistance
- Initiating a bird monitoring program for youth in urban parks Establishing a garden plot on conservation land, with volunteers organized to provide healthy foods to a community kitchen