

**AMERICORPS SERVICE PROJECT APPLICATION  
FROM  
CITY OF SACO, MAINE  
4-16-02**

**1. MISSION AND OBJECTIVES:**

Sponsoring organizations for the projects included in this application are Saco Bay Trails, the City of Saco, Saco Department of Public Works, and the Saco Code Enforcement Departments.

Saco Bay Trails, established in 1996, is a subcommittee of Saco's Conservation Commission. Saco Bay Trails stated vision is: "Saco Bay Trails seeks to acquire permanent public access to recreational greenways in the Saco Bay Area by working in cooperation with private landowners, and community volunteer organizations, and commercial organizations, and with municipal and State and Federal agencies".

The City of Saco, the Saco Department of Public Works and the Saco Code Enforcement Departments provide services and safety for the 18,000 citizens of the City of Saco.

The projects included in this application are:

- a. Using GPS equipment provided by the Department of Public Works, locate, identify, inventory and assess the condition of all drainage culverts in the City;
- b. Using GPS equipment provided by the Department of Public Works, locate, identify, inventory and assess condition and effectiveness of all roadway safety and directional signage in the City;
- c. Using GPS equipment provided by the Department of Public Works, work with the Code Enforcement Department to locate, flag, check the condition and inventory all flood elevation markers;
- d. Continue building the Industrial Park Trail begun by a previous AmeriCorps team;
- e. Begin building the Saco City Park Trail;
- f. Construct a dock and picnic area on Dubois Pond in the Proposed City Park.

Drainage Culverts

The City has an extensive storm drainage collection system of inlets and closed pipes that are located, inventoried and maintained on a regular basis. However, there are literally hundreds of drainage culverts crossing in-town and more rural roads, driveways and critical access roads that need to be located, assessed and included in a database for maintenance and/or replacement. We often find out about these culverts only when they fail during a storm event and create a hazard for the passage of emergency vehicles and the general public. An inventory and database will permit establishment of a proactive

program of preventative maintenance instead of reaction to emergency needs. Including this infrastructure on the City's infant GIS system will help establish such a program.

### Road Signs

Road signs are installed to provide for safety and to provide direction to motorists and pedestrians. Missing signs, signs in the wrong location, signs no longer in legible condition and signs in need of replacement can lead to serious accidents and misdirection. It is essential to keep track of all signs for the safety of motorists and pedestrians. Locating signs by GPS and establishing a maintenance database in the GIS system will improve safety for motorists and pedestrians.

### Flood Elevation Markers

Sections of the City of Saco are periodically subject to flooding from the Saco River. Flood Elevation Markers have been set to designate the limits and potential extent of flooding. These markers delineate the flood evacuation limits and are essential elements in flood disaster control. The City of Saco Code Enforcement Department is charged with inventorying and maintaining the markers. Over time, the markers are often destroyed, buried, hidden by vegetative growth or otherwise rendered ineffective. The Code Enforcement Department consists of two persons who can barely keep up with new building inspections and other immediate needs. Help to re-establish the flood markers and locate them onto the City's infant GIS system will help make future upkeep easier.

### Trail Projects and Boat Dock

The proposed trail and dock projects, items d, e and f above, were described in previous applications. The trails would provide service and connecting links for not only the 18,000 residents of the City of Saco, but for the many tourists visiting the Saco Bay area.

The Industrial Park Trail will be over 10,000-ft. when complete. The first section of about 1,500-ft. is along an existing unpaved road serving a campground. That road will be extended, reconstructed and paved with a bike lane to connect to the existing Industrial Park Road that goes west and south about two miles to Route 112. The proposed trail will go west and north through existing Conservation Easements to Flag Pond Road where it will connect with the existing Sylvan Trail system (description forwarded previously). Although over 10,000- ft., the proposed trail will be partly along meadowland. The woodland trail area will be over a mile and will include two stream crossings and an estimated 200-ft. of boardwalk.

The City Park Trail is the initial effort in developing the proposed Saco City Park. This is a high priority for the City that is planned to be developed in three phases. The first phase includes about 13,000-ft. of perimeter trail, about 5,500-ft. through woodland. An additional 2,500-ft. woodland connector to the Saco Middle School is proposed and easements have been acquired. The proposed trail system would include 8 stream crossings, about 500-ft. of boardwalk and a small boat dock and picnic area on Dubois Pond. The park area is abundant with wildlife including wild turkey, deer, coyotes, turkey vultures, several species of hawks, muskrat, otter and numerous other species.

Last year, an AmeriCorp group installed several wood duck and bluebird houses in a habitat enhancement and wetland area recently created in the proposed City Park area.

## **2. WORK PLAN:**

### GPS Location, Inventory and Condition Surveys:

The City of Saco owns a sub-meter accuracy GPS unit that will be used for these projects. A second GPS unit may be rented. We plan to provide all AmeriCorp team members with the opportunity to learn the GPS operation. Training will be provided by Department of Public Works personnel. It is anticipated teams of three will conduct the field inventory work. One team member will be dedicated to safety while the team is on public roads while the remaining two members operate the GPS equipment and record data. We hope to have hand held data-loggers for ease of data entry. We expect a total of five or six team members will work on the GPS/GIS project at any on time. The necessary documentation procedure, mapping, transportation and logistics would be coordinated by the DPW and the Code enforcement Department. The team members will also work to establish the GIS databases for these projects and enter or download field data into the GIS system. We expect field inventory and GPS location work on the three projects combined will take the full 6 to 8 week cycle. Substantial office work will be associated with these projects involving the GIS system, daily pre-planning, database development and data entry. These programs do not exist at this time and we hope to call upon the talent and intelligence of the AmeriCorp teams to help us develop meaningful and long-term useful programs for the safety of the Citizens of Saco. The success of these projects will not be measured in physical objects built but will be measured in the improved safety that will be afforded to the Citizens of Saco over many years. During inclement weather, the entire team will be able to concentrate on the office work portion of these projects.

### Trail Work:

Americorps has had considerable experience in trail building. We will provide materials, supplemental equipment and guidance in expediting the work in the most practical manner consistent with your work methods and expertise. The tasks and activities required include:

- Evaluate the best route within the property limits (most property is City owned).
- Assess structural and/or boardwalk needs.
- Clear the trail.
- Level or grade areas as required.
- Construct and install bridges, structures and boardwalks where needed.
- Spread wood chip base cover along trails.

In the event of inclement weather, the GPS survey projects can be conducted. In addition, structural work can be done at the Department of Public Works facilities. The team would also be able to help the City conduct wet weather site surveys to identify problem culverts and drainage ways.

### **3. PROJECT SITES:**

Site Address: City of Saco –Trails within Conservation easements and rights of way within the Saco Industrial Park. Woodland trails in the proposed City Park. GPS Surveys throughout the entire City of Saco. Office work in the Department of Public Works facility.

Site Telephone Number: Department of Public Works 207-284-6641

Distance From Campus to Site: Approximately 3 miles for trail projects. Varies for surveys up to 8-miles.

The project area is coastal. The climate this time of year is generally pleasantly cool to warm, but generally not humid. The spring foliage season will occur in this time period.

The project area and specific sites includes, urban, suburban, sparsely developed country settings and undeveloped woodland areas.

### **4. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:**

The Saco Bay trail organization has already successfully completed and partially completed several trails within the Saco Bay Area. The organization has done work on the Eastern Trail and has been diligently working to initiate and work on numerous trails in the Saco Bay area. The organization has secured all the necessary permits, easements and authorizations from the City of Saco.

During the course of the projects, if the AmeriCorps team needs the assistance of other volunteers or City Department of Public Works assistance, it will be provided. We do ask for reasonable notice.

The Industrial Park Trails will be maintained by the Saco Bay Trails organization as are other trails. Periodically, volunteer work parties are assembled for maintenance. The City Park trails will be maintained by City personnel or by volunteer help from organizations such as the Boy Scouts, school environmental and hiking clubs and Saco Bay Trails.

### **5. ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Corp volunteers will be housed at a local fire sub-station on Bay View Road. The previous Americorps teams seem to have found the facility satisfactory. These facilities were also viewed by Joe Cook and found to be satisfactory. Sanitary facilities are present as is a kitchen area and more than ample sleeping area. Cots have also been furnished as have some partitions for privacy. A separate room/office is available for the team leader.

The fire sub-station is a secure facility. Travel time to the actual sites or to the operations area for the surveys is less than ten minutes.

The facility is located in a quiet suburban setting within walking distance of a public beach in a prime beach resort area. It is also located within ten minutes of the downtown area of the City of Saco and within ten minutes of the Route One commercial district. Fun Town and Splash Town, both major amusement parks, are also within 15 minutes from the corps housing. Numerous other entertainment and recreational opportunities are located within a short drive from the facility. Phone and fax facilities are available at the corp housing facility.

## **6. CORP MEMBER DEVELOPMENT:**

Pre project training is probably not necessary for these projects. We have been advised that these are typical projects for the corp.

Members of the Saco Bay Trail Commission as well as the City Department of Public Works and Code Enforcement Department will provide orientation and training where required.

Learning and using GPS equipment and the GIS system will be a unique opportunity for the AmeriCorps team.

## **7. SAFETY AND MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

It is not anticipated that there will be any exposure to hazardous chemicals, pesticides or other material. There may be exposure to the usual woodland hazards that one would expect including poison ivy, hornets, and ticks. At this time of year, ticks may be the most acute problem in the trail building project areas. There are no poisonous snakes in Maine. There should be no need for special immunizations.

If medical assistance is needed, the City of Saco is prepared to render whatever assistance is needed.

## **8. PROJECT/PERSONAL EQUIPMENT**

The City of Saco Department of public Works can and will provide any tools or power equipment needed by the AmeriCorp in excess of that which they normally bring. Additional hats, gloves and foul weather gear may be obtained from the City. As we have while working with prior Americorps teams, the City will help in every way possible to make work on the projects easier and more enjoyable for the team members. In all cases, safety of the team is our prime consideration.

## **9. PERMITS**

All necessary permits and licenses have been obtained or will be in hand prior to the commencement of the work. As most of the project, including the housing, will be within City owned property, there are few obstacles.

## **10. PROJECT SUMMARY**

The trail projects will accomplish the establishment of a vital woodland trail links between the multi state coastal Eastern Trail, the U.S. Route One recreation area and other sections of the multi-trail Saco Bay Trail system in service and proposed. It will also establish the first phase of an ambitious City Park designed to serve the entire City. Eventually, these trails will also provide bike commuter access from among the various trails described above. Local residents as well as tourism is anticipated to be served by these trails. The need for outside assistance relates to the magnitude of the project. The Saco Bay Trails can muster volunteers readily for small and maintenance projects. A project of this magnitude could not easily be undertaken by the organization and would need to be accomplished over a long period of time in parts. The trail projects will serve as a vital link between existing and proposed trails in a growing system serving the City and outside interests.

The GPS surveys will serve to establish programs of identification, inventory and condition of specific safety related systems in the City of Saco. These surveys and resultant databases incorporated into the new City GIS system will allow and enhance the establishment of pro-active maintenance and replacement programs that will improve safety for the citizens of the City of Saco.

## **11. PERSONNEL:**

The following persons will be available periodically and as needed to supervise, coordinate, give direction, and act as liaisons with the City with regard to the proposed projects:

John Gold, Chairman, Saco Bay Trails, Inc.

Jim Burnell, Vice Chair, Saco Bay Trails, Inc.

Joe Hirsch, Saco Parks & Recreation Dept. & Saco Bay Trail Advisory Trustee

Larry Nadeau, Saco Department of Public Works Director and Saco Bay Trail Advisory Trustee

Ronald Kiene, Saco Department of Public Works, Engineer

Phil Labbe, Saco Department of Public Works, General Superintendent

Charles LaBonte, Saco Police Department, Deputy Chief

John Duross, Saco Fire Department, Deputy Chief

The above named persons will work with the Americorps team to lay out routes, procure materials and equipment, arrange for supplemental assistance if needed, provide training and generally be available to respond to needs and situations as they may arise to accomplish the projects.