



**2009-  
2012**

# State Service Plan

**Governor Brian Schweitzer  
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## **2009 – A Year in Transition**

The Governor's Office of Community Service and the Montana Commission on Community Service experienced many changes and consider 2009 to be a transition year. Rather than view these changes as challenges, these are opportunities to embrace new ideas, create new partnerships and expand service across Montana. Thus, the Montana Commission on Community Service plans to hold a strategic planning session in 2010 which will guide the state service plan for 2010 -2012. (Please refer to attached addendum for a listing of the activities, individuals and organizations involved in the development of a service strategy to date.)

## **Serve America Act**

President Obama signed into law The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act in April 2009, authorizing a dramatic funding increase for AmeriCorps and other volunteer programs. The Serve America Act necessitates the commission carefully review its current operations and the Montana Community Service Act to determine optimal design and delivery of service programs in Montana.

## **New Commission Members**

Nearly one-third of the Commission members were newly appointed by the Governor. State agency representation shifted from higher education and public health to Department of Military Affairs and Fish, Wildlife and Parks consistent with the corporation regulations and the Montana Community Service Act areas of interest.

## **New Commission Leadership**

The chair and vice chair, were elected in October 2009. The recently elected chair and vice chair both live in small rural communities, whereas the former chair had been the chair since the Commission's inception in 1993 and lived in an urban community; this change will help shape service strategies to reach across the entire state.

## **New Executive Director**

The new executive director, appointed June 2009, brings a strong background in business, nonprofits and state government, particularly in public health, public education and workforce agencies. As the former education advisor for the Governor, she has a strong relationship with the executive and cabinet, as well as with philanthropic, community-based organizations and business sectors.

## **New Programs/Funding**

Two (2) new AmeriCorps formula funded programs: Montana Legal Services Association for a Justice for Montanans Corps and the National Center for Appropriate Technology's Energy Corps. Montana Campus Corps and Montana Conservation Corps were recipients of funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). In addition, the Governor's Office of Community Service received a Homeland Security Grant to focus on special needs inclusion in disaster preparation and volunteer recruitment related to emergency management.

## 2009 Accomplishments:

### Internal Operations

There was a diligent focus this year on strengthening management and staffing to build a strong team in the Governor's Office of Community Service. Administrative operations were reviewed to develop a process to systematically prepare and build needed documentation to ensure grant compliance. Special attention was paid to fiscal oversight and training to ensure that our state programs are operating in a sound financial manner. The recently adopted risk monitoring tool emphasizes quality and ensures accountability by the Commission and its sub-grantees.

### ServeMontana

Launched a new ServeMontana brand to increase awareness, expand visibility, and promote volunteering and community service. Elements of the launch included:

-  Rebranded the Commission logo
-  Created an umbrella brand, ServeMontana, with a new logo that has a simple, action-oriented design
-  Built a new engaging website ([www.serve.mt.gov](http://www.serve.mt.gov)) that encompasses all forms of service
-  Incorporated a new, complementary web design ([www.ready.mt.gov](http://www.ready.mt.gov)) that is tied to the [serve.mt.gov](http://www.serve.mt.gov) site to support Citizen Corps service elements
-  Formed a partnership with the Department of Commerce to host the website and the Department of Labor for media expertise (both are considered in-kind support)
-  Developed a new media strategy with the Governor, which includes press releases, public service announcements and special events
-  Created a new media portal on the website for video news releases for press to download
-  Produced new rebranded promotional materials – stickers, lollipops, brochures, polo shirts—to distribute to the public

### Statewide Call to Service Campaigns

In 2009, the Governor asked the Office of Community Service to focus on service campaigns that address a broad statewide need. This has proven to be a good strategy to bring new partners to service, provide cost effective and efficient outreach to communities, involve all national service partners, and facilitate interest in AmeriCorps. In 2009, we implemented two successful campaigns, Fire Ready and Winter Ready, which will continue in future years. These initiatives brought together a wide variety of partners across the state, the Governor, the First Lady, community organizations, national service partners, and other state agencies to create these statewide service projects. A strong media component that drove the public to our new website was instrumental in getting public involvement in these service events. Media included press releases, radio and TV public service announcements (PSAs), online promotion, advertising in movie theatres and at college football games, and newspaper ads, including tribal papers.

### Fire Ready Montana – Are You Ready?

The Fire Ready Montana campaign focused on helping Montana communities with fire mitigation and disaster preparedness. Fire Ready Montana allowed the Montana Citizen Corps to continue to increase the number of citizens prepared with regional trainings on community building, disaster specific to neighborhood response training, and volunteer recruitment.



Citizen Corps staff partnered with government and non-government organizations: AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, local Citizen Corps, Corporation for National and Community Service, FireSafe Montana, local fire departments, State Auditor’s Office, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Disaster and Emergency Services, local emergency officials and communities



Six (6) statewide community events that included information distribution and a 2-hour Map Your Neighborhood training, in which more than 200 people were trained across the state



Television and radio spots ran August through September



ServeMontana website featured a daily travel blog for each community event to recognize volunteers

## Winter Ready Montana – Are You Ready?

The Winter Ready Montana campaign is designed to increase the number of volunteers engaging in community service and build citizen winter preparedness.



Created a winter preparedness checklist to distribute to Montana citizens



Produced a radio public service announcement (PSA) on winter preparedness



Ran statewide newspaper ads to promote the campaign (including tribal papers) and direct citizens to the ready.mt.gov website for more preparedness information



Partnered with the First Lady of Montana and First Interstate Bank to conduct a statewide service project, Coats from the Capitols, a nationwide effort with the One Warm Coat organization



Distributed promotional personal hand sanitizer through the Montana Food Bank network and at community events for H1N1 and seasonal flu prevention awareness



Senior Corps and AmeriCorps members from the Montana Conservation Corps and the National Center for Appropriate Technology’s Energy Corps partnered with the Department of Public Health and Human Services’ Human Resource Development Councils to weatherize homes (the annual “Warm Hearts, Warm Homes” initiative), distribute blankets, and participate in NorthWestern Energy’s statewide community events



Produced special events with the Assistant Secretary for Department of Energy, the Governor and First Lady, to demonstrate “Warm Hearts, Warm Homes” campaign with AmeriCorps members weatherizing homes for low-income families

## Living Legacy

The state of Montana provides citizens the ability to become an organ donor and/or make a donation when obtaining or renewing their driver’s license. In April, with support from the Governor’s Office of Community Service, Campus Corps members across the state mobilized 372 friends and family members to donate life. This has proven to be a good means to reach a broad audience on an important topic, while promoting AmeriCorps.

## New Community Service Partners & Resources = Opportunities for 2010

In 2009, the Governor’s Office of Community Service brought together new partners and resources which will lead to increased opportunities for the Commission in 2010. The partners in place are:

-  National Service Partners – the Corporation for National and Community Service, AmeriCorps VISTA, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve
-  Philanthropy – monthly partnership calls with Northwest Philanthropy and communication with Indian Nonprofit Alliance
-  Business community – First Interstate Bank and NorthWestern Energy on statewide service projects
-  Montana Nonprofit Association (MNA) – to create and host a web-based outreach tool (“BuildMontana”) for volunteer recruitment (target 55+) and to build organizational capacity across the state
-  State Superintendent of Public Instruction – to explore support for Turnaround School and Learn and Serve programs
-  State agencies – State Auditor’s Office, Department of Public Health & Human Services, Department of Revenue, Department of Commerce, Department of Labor, Disaster & Emergency Services, on statewide service campaigns and service outreach
-  Secretary of State’s Office – to explore partnering on civic education
-  Higher education– Montana Campus Compact for assistance with “Living Legacy” organ donation campaign, and Montana State University Extension statewide network for outreach and service projects
-  Community and faith-based organizations – for outreach and statewide call to service campaigns
-  Statewide Montana Volunteers Active in Disasters (VOAD) – to engage volunteers in Citizen Corps programs
-  Department of Public Health and Human Services – to recruit, train, manage and deploy volunteers (medical and non-medical) to respond and recover from disasters
-  Department of Public Health and Human Services – to partner on a statewide food drive on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in 2010. More than 3,000 department employees, who work in every county in the state, will be invited to join their fellow AmeriCorps members to get out and volunteer on this significant national service day.
-  Department of Commerce and Montana Chief Information Officer on web-based strategies
-  Youth Service America – lead agency for Global Youth Service Day and grant recipient from partner State Farm for statewide service projects
-  Student Assistance Foundation and Montana Campus Compact (19 institutions of higher education) – for Community Service Award Scholarships program
-  Media organizations – for additional media coverage and in-kind donations
-  Areas on Aging – to develop a strategy to engage adults 55+ in service

## Build Citizen Corps

The Governor’s Office of Community Service receives Homeland Security funding designed to increase the impact of community disaster preparedness. Through continued statewide “Call to Service Campaigns” the staff will build statewide partnerships to assist community-based Citizen Corps Councils and community residents to have a plan:

-  to manage spontaneous volunteers

-  to mobilize Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs)
-  to include and prepare persons with disabilities and other special needs populations
-  for rural areas and persons living on farms and ranches
-  to form partnerships with community and faith-based organizations
-  to prepare schools (K-12 and higher education), families and children
-  for pets and animals
-  to increase the number of citizens trained in emergency response (Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Map Your Neighborhood training)

## Citizen Corps – Special Needs Program

In addition to serving as a focal point for Citizen Corps in the state, the Governor’s Office of Community Service is taking the lead in including and addressing special needs and disability preparedness programs. The office seeks to involve disability advocacy organizations and volunteer-based disaster preparedness experts to learn how to jumpstart community-based disability preparedness with a special needs tool kit under development in 2009.

In addition, the office is working with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (Divisions of Public Health & Safety, Disability and Senior and Long Term Care) on a special population’s disaster preparedness initiative that unites Citizen Corps, AmeriCorps, Aging Services, Disability Programs and local Public Health Departments to enhance communication and coordinate joint training.

## 2010 to 2012 – Looking to the Future

Involved citizens help make Montana a great place to live, work, recreate and raise a family. The Montana Commission on Community Service believes that volunteers are vital to making the state’s communities stronger. The State Service Plan intends to broaden the landscape of participation among government agencies, community organizations, businesses and citizens who want to be actively engaged in service across Montana. With a timeless tradition of neighbors helping neighbors, Montanans believe that more can get done when working together. From our first Montanans traveling the prairie in search of food to the homesteaders establishing small town main streets, the state has continued to survive the changing times because people pull together. It is because of this collaborative frontier spirit, we believe, that Montana ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation for volunteerism [Current Population Survey, U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009]. The Montana State Service Plan builds on a strong history and provides a focus for the future. This multi-year service strategy is designed to pull together the best of the past as we move into the future.

## What’s Next?

In October 2009 The Montana Commission on Community Service adopted for fiscal year (FY) 2010, AmeriCorps National priorities: Education, Healthy Futures, Opportunity, Clean Energy and Veterans. In addition the Commission identified; the Governor’s strategic initiative for clean energy and math and science education, rural, underserved or areas of extreme poverty that are not currently served by AmeriCorps programs, disability inclusion in the design and delivery of a program, and a collaborative approach to program planning, design and delivery as priorities for funding state AmeriCorps programs. In February 2010 the Montana Commission on Community Service will meet to strategically plan the steps to create a multi-year service plan for Montana. The plan will serve as a guide for Montana’s volunteer strategies, specifically how we can increase opportunities over the next three-year period to meet critical needs throughout the state.

The following considerations will be made when drafting a plan:

-  Support Governor Schweitzer's priorities for Montana, including the Governor and First Lady Math and Science Initiative, Call to Service Campaigns, 20 x10 energy conservation initiative and Living Legacy
-  Assess the service needs in Montana
-  Evaluate national service delivery and capacity in Montana to identify benefits and gaps
-  Utilize service as a strategy to address critical needs throughout the state
-  Seek out new partnerships and creative collaborations for more efficient design and delivery of service strategies.
-  Identify ways that baby boomers and individuals over 55 can play an active role in addressing community needs
-  Facilitate cross stream training and planning with annual "Service Symposiums"
-  Demonstrate best practices to bridge the distances
-  Research and implement innovative ideas and quality practices from other states
-  Integrate emerging technologies for program development, service outreach and Commission efficiencies (social media, e-news, flip cams, etc.)
-  Inclusive strategy with AmeriCorps and Citizen Corps working together (not in funding silos)
-  Understand Montana's demographics, including the economic impact and roles of workers age 55 or older in the economy and benefits of utilizing skills and experience in service strategies
-  Offer and facilitate training and professional development opportunities
-  Market to businesses, nonprofits, education and state agencies the benefits of volunteering and community service, including retirees
-  Award/recognition process to celebrate achievement in community and national service
-  Incorporate multi-generational service opportunities
-  Create a bi-annual training event to broaden the training opportunities across all national service programs and foster more involvement of nonprofit and community organizations in our training and program development plans
-  Expand service in rural and underserved areas of the state
-  Continue to focus on state operations to build a strong team that promotes quality and ensures accountability

## Corporation Assistance

The Montana Commission on Community Service requests assistance from the Corporation on National Service in the following areas:

-  A unified electronic data system for use by all states would lead to enhanced functionality, reduce the opportunity for error, and eliminate redundant reporting systems
-  Re-organize the Corporation's website to keep it current and make information easier to find
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Support regional or web-based meetings to reduce travel expenses and facilitate best practices by the states



Develop an inclusive national strategy with AmeriCorps and Citizen Corps to achieve service results

## Sustainability

The Montana Commission on Community Service was created by the 1993 Legislature at the request of the Governor (MCA 90-14-101 f), in an effort to support community-based volunteer programs focused on addressing critical community needs. The Montana Community Service Act creates an office of community service in the office of the Governor. The purpose of this office is to: (a) renew the ethic of civic responsibility in the state; (b) encourage the citizens of the state, regardless of age or income, to engage in full-time or part-time service to the state; (c) call young people to serve in projects that will benefit the state and improve their life chances through the acquisition of literacy, job skills, and interpersonal skills; (d) build on the existing organizational framework of state and local governmental entities to expand full-time and part-time service opportunities in a wide variety of programs for all citizens, particularly youth and older Montanans; (e) involve participants in activities that would not otherwise be performed by employed workers; and (f) establish programs to accomplish labor-intensive improvements to public or low-income properties or to provide services for the benefit of the state, its communities, and its people through service contracts that specify the work to be performed.

Governor Schweitzer has appointed Commission members who represent a diverse, non-partisan, broad cross-section of community service interests and statewide leadership in Montana. These individuals are actively involved in promoting the work of the Commission and promoting a culture of caring and accountability for positive change that makes a sustainable difference.

Governor Schweitzer truly understands the power of "*neighbors helping neighbors*". The Schweitzer administration exemplifies our state's long tradition of community service and giving back to others knowing that it will build strong, vibrant communities in Montana. The Executive Director is Governor-appointed and serves as a member of the cabinet. In addition, the Governor's and First Lady's initiative for math and science education includes a strong volunteer component and she actively participates in service projects.

In 2007, the Governor included in the budget a request for a general fund appropriation match of \$125,000 for the Office of Community Service, which the legislature supported. Even in tough economic times, the Governor's Office of Community Service will have a strong financial base for 2010. In addition, we actively seek in-kind support which has led to free media outreach, website assistance, free meeting spaces, database development, and donations for AmeriCorps programs. Our continued focus on philanthropy opens the door for even greater participation in service statewide.

## **Addendum A**

### **2009 – Key Partnerships**

In 2009, meetings were held with a variety of constituents to develop a state service plan for Montana. The following represents many of the targeted organization and individuals with whom the Governor's Office of Community Service met with to garner suggestions for consideration in a 2010-2012 service plan:

Corporation for National Service

National Service – Learn and Serve, Senior Corps, AmeriCorps VISTA

Commission Members

Office of Public Instruction – State Superintendent and K-12 public schools

Governor's Cabinet

Governor and First Lady

Montana Nonprofit Association

Montana State University – Extension Service

Philanthropy Northwest

Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation

Disability Community

Montana Campus Compact – higher education institutions

Indian Nonprofit Association

Hopa Mountain

Department of Military Affairs, Department of Emergency Services

Gallatin County community emergency responders

Many local community-based organizations

FireSafe Montana

Prevention Resource Center

Career Training Institute

Philanthropic Funders Tour



**Addendum B – 2010**

January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
<b>Winter Ready MT</b>	Commission Planning Retreat		Disaster & Emergency Service Conference		<b>Fire Ready MT</b>			<b>Winter Ready MT</b>			
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day January 18	ServeMontana Symposium		National Volunteer Week April 18-24	AmeriCorps Week	Commission Meeting	Statewide Independent Living Council Conference	K-12 Learn & Serve Conference	9/11 Day of Remembrance	Commission Meeting		
	FireSafe MT Conference		Living Legacy/Organ Donation	Governor's Conference on Aging	CNCS National Conference			ServeMontana Symposium	MT Youth Transition Conference		
			Global Youth Service Day April 23-25					Montana Nonprofit Assoc. Conference	MSU Extension 4H Conference		
			Earth Day April 22 (40th anniversary)					Disability Inclusion Service Day	Make a Difference Day Sat. Oct. 24		
								National Preparedness Month	MT Teachers' Conference		

## Addendum C

### Montana State Service Plan 2006

#### Ongoing Collaborative Efforts and Special Initiatives

In partnership with the Montana Campus Compact, the Office of Public Instruction, the CNCS State Office, various state agencies and community-based organizations, the Montana Commission has identified disadvantage youth as a statewide initiative. A newly developed partnership with Jobs for Montana's Graduates (JMG), a program aimed at supporting disadvantaged youth by using community service to remove barriers to stay in school and acquire the academic, personal and leadership skills necessary to become successful, productive members of their community, will begin operating an AmeriCorps program this fall. JMG's will work with volunteers in community service organizations to identify teachers that will include in their school curriculum work readiness skills, form a career association for students, and have a employer marketing and job development track. They will also be identifying students at risk, and disadvantaged with disabilities. JMG has a four-year curriculum built on 37 work-based competencies. Last year JMG partnered with the Montana National Guard to assist high school dropouts enrolled in the Montana Youth Challenge Program, to gain their GED and successfully transition to meaningful careers. This program is associated with the national program, Jobs for America's Graduates, the nation's longest-running, most consistently applied school-to-work transition model. JMG will have an active partnership between state government, labor, business, and community organizations. Students actively engaged in community service will become the next generation instilled with a sense of social responsibility and civic engagement. The addition of an education award will provide modest funds for the next step in career planning in the form of college or trade school education.

Existing Commission programs also provided critical services to disadvantaged youth in the state. The Montana Campus Corps program currently mentors youth of incarcerated parents; the TechCorps Connects program bridges the "digital divide" and as part of its activities provides opportunities for youth to access computers and receive technology training to those who have limited access; the Literacy Support Corps program increases parent's opportunities and abilities to support their children's education by planning and facilitating literacy-based parent-child learning activities to prevent poor attendance in school and decreased achievement for their children; and the Montana Conservation Corps is successful in the "Montana Yes" Program, Youth Engaged in Service. Youth Engaged in Service provides an outdoor experience that takes youths at risk and provides a unique learning atmosphere. Members are given life-training skills and develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments.

In the next year there will be an active recruitment in program activity to increase service learning opportunities. Montana Learn & Serve currently uses academic achievement, school dropout rates and discipline problems to connect volunteers with community mentors.

Learn and Serve has fostered the effort to mentor youth in various models. The CPTYL (Citizen Preparedness Through Youth Leadership) has given disadvantaged youth a sense of community by providing youth-lead projects with direct ties to school curriculum. CPTYL will be developing a best practices manual that can be replicated by other schools. A major factor of success with this model is a community or a community organization willing to let youth lead and who value the contributions of youth. When community leaders in partnerships acknowledge that K-12 youth are often more skilled in certain areas (technology for example) than adults, young people build self-esteem from that affirmation. Learn & Serve has partnered with the University of Montana Division of Education Research Services and has three major service areas helping identified disadvantage youth. These areas, Disaster Preparedness, Community Safety and Conflict Resolution are life

skills. Any society improves when its disadvantaged youth gain skills to become leaders in their community.

All programs seek to create an atmosphere where individuals with disabilities are included and welcomed. The Montana Commission on Community Service values diversity and promotes inclusion at all levels. Programs are continually encouraged to provide inclusive service environments with on-going support, resources and disability inclusion training. The Commission supports the role of the Disability Coordinator to maximize the number of individuals with disabilities engaged in volunteerism.

Programs of the state office of CNCS, the Montana Commission on Community Service and Learn & Serve will be working toward increasing the number of volunteers in each community across the state. It is our hope to continue to be at the top of the nation in the spirit of volunteerism.

The Montana Office of Community Service currently provides excellent training for AmeriCorps, Learn & Serve and AmeriCorps/\* Vista members. This cross-stream effort between the state office of CNCS, Learn & Serve and OCS has produced a model for other entities. Community Building Institute offers members a wide range of skills to work with project supervisors in this most successful model. The All Member Gathering also provides cross-stream training, statewide media to encourage member recruitment, and networking opportunities for programs and members. The All Member Gathering also creates the opportunity for programs, members, and Commissioners to meet and recognize state leaders during a legislative session. The Governor supports and encourages the partnership between community service and government with full state funding as a National Corporation match for the Montana Commission.

The Montana Commission has recently formed a Foundation. The foundation will primarily be a fundraising organization utilizing its funds to support the Montana Community Service Commission in serving its own charitable and educational purposes.

The Office of Community Service is also involved in the Governor's Conversation on Endowments and Philanthropy. This event brings together foundations, individual donors, and statewide leaders to look for solutions around the lack of national funding in Montana. Started ten years ago, the Governor's Task Force created the Endowment Tax Credit. The current conversation has a goal of bridging the Philanthropic Divide. The Philanthropic Divide is the term for the ten states that receive the least amount of national support from foundations. The Montana Office of Community Service will be working with nine other state commissions to find creative ways to work with national funders to highlight the work of non-profits in Montana. These are the same non-profits that play a very important role in the infrastructure of our National Corporation sub-grantees.

The Montana Commission will be organizing the Governor's Conference on Volunteerism and Civic Engagement this year with the recruitment and retention of volunteers as a primary focus.

The Montana Commission had pledged to continue the tradition of the Presidential Freedom Scholarships by committing to raise the necessary funds to meet a match provided by a local business partner. This program, started by the Corporation, will be an in-house project to continue educational awards for high schools students engaged in community service.

### **Non-Monetary Support for State Service Plan**

The Corporation has helped advance the goals of the Montana Community Service Commission with assistance in retreat planning, Commissioner training, new Executive Director training, availability of specific trainers to answer questions, a national conference with training and networking opportunities and direction on long range planning incorporating the Corporations Strategic Plan. The availability of any type of assistance is on the website, and there are great mentoring opportunities. The Montana Commission

appreciates the responsiveness of CNCS technical assistance. If after the review of this plan CNCS identifies any assistance that would enhance our above efforts, we ask that our program officer get in touch with us. We look forward to a continuation of our solid working relationship with CNCS.