

**2014 - 2015 Secure Rural Schools
Public Law 110-343
Title II Project Submission Form
USDA Forest Service**

Name of Resource Advisory Committee:
Project Number (Assigned by Designated Federal Official):
Funding Fiscal Year(s):

2. Project Name: Whistle Stop Trail Maintenance Project: Hands-on Work with the Student Conservation Association	3a. State: AK 3b. County(s): Kenai and Anchorage Peninsula Borough
4. Project Submitted By: The Student Conservation Association	5. Date: June 15, 2016
6. Contact Phone Number: (907) 771-8480	7. Contact E-mail: zbolick@thesca.org

8. Project Location:	
a. National Forest(s): Chugach National Forest	b. Forest Service District: Glacier Ranger District
c. Location (Township-Range-Section) Spencer Whistle Stop T7N R2E Sec 14 Grandview Whistle Stops T6N R2E Sec 2	

9. Project Goals and Objectives: The goal of the SCA Whistle Stop Trail Maintenance Project is to expand opportunities available for stewardship and outdoor recreation in collaboration with local Alaska youth and the Forest Service on the Kenai Peninsula. This project will help assist the Chugach NF in accomplishing a portion of its recreational trails maintenance needs, while simultaneously serving to increase leadership avenues, hands-on work experience, and job skills training for diverse high school youth across the state of Alaska.

More specifically, this project proposes to utilize leadership provided by the Student Conservation Association (SCA) to help the Chugach NF with important trail maintenance needs on the Whistle Stop Trail.

The SCA and Forest Service have a proven track record of success demonstrated by a variety of past partnerships. In 2012, SCA crews accomplished 3,840 hours of work on the Chugach NF, completing Bean North Integrated Management Project, Hubbard

2013: Spencer Whistle Stop SCA Youth Crew



Historic Cabin Restoration, Trail Maintenance on the Resurrection River and Carter-Crescent Trails and creating gabion barriers for fish habitat and invasive Species Removal near Seward and Cooper Landing. A standard crew is made up of eight members and two leaders.

Recently in 2013, the SCA worked with the Chugach NF to successfully complete a series of high priority watershed improvement projects on the Kenai. These included projects involving watershed vegetation restoration, invasive plant control, Kenai trails work, and other additional projects.

Objectives:

For this trails maintenance project SCA will recruit, train, and lead youth in completing several trail maintenance projects on the Whistle Stop trails. Short-term objectives and specific projects are in conjunction with and complementary to Forest Service priorities.

The requested proposal will focus on the maintenance of all Whistle Stop Trails including:

- > 1.5 miles of trail going North from Grandview north to Spencer.
- > 1.5 miles of Trail going South from Spencer to Grandview
- > 3 miles of trail leading to the heavily used Spencer Lake Overlook and then to the edge of Spencer Glacier.
- > 3 miles of trail going to the Spencer Bench Cabin.
- > Maintenance at the group campsite and two backcountry campsites.

The primary maintenance tasks would include brushing, surfacing, maintaining trail structures to control water runoff and reduce erosion.

10. Project Description:

a. Brief: (*in one sentence*) This project will assist the Chugach NF with a portion of its various trail maintenance needs between the Spencer and Glacier Whistle Stops by training a diverse crew of Alaska youth to partner with the Forest Service to maintain trails.

b. Detailed: The Whistle Stop program is a unique partnership between the US Forest Service (USFS) and the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) that provides world class recreation access and experiences in the Alaska backcountry through a series of Whistle Stops. Currently 2 of the 5 proposed Whistle Stops are constructed; Spencer and Grandview, both of which are located within the Chugach NF. Between the Whistle Stops exist a cabin, group site, backcountry campsites, ranger guided hikes, multiple outfitter and guide commercial operations, and a wealth of hiking.

At this point in time the Forest Service is constructing trail between the Spencer and Grandview Whistle Stops. The Whistle Stop partnership provides funds for operation, maintenance, and capital improvement through a portion of ticket sales from riders. Last season this partnership facilitated over 10,000 riders, which helped to generate upward of \$110,000 in ridership and facility reservations. This project will help support the work of the USFS to broaden its accessibility to visitors and assist the Chugach NF in ensuring that trail infrastructure is adequately maintained and safe to accommodate increased visitation and recreation demands. Moreover, this project will expand relationships between the communities of the Kenai and the Forest Service through training local Alaska youth to care for and steward their national forest while creating a potential future workforce for the Forest Service.

2014: Train at Grandview



The proposed Whistle Stop trail maintenance projects will be completed during the summer of 2017 with one 10 person crew consisting of two leaders and 8 youth working for 3 weeks. For this duration of time, one crew will work, camp, and live on the Chugach NF. In addition to focusing on completing maintenance projects, these work responsibilities and duties will integrate greater understanding of public lands and conservation issues, leadership skills, Leave No Trace knowledge, and healthy lifestyles. Students involved in this trails project will be recruited from the greater Kenai area, as well as the rest of Alaska if vacant slots need filling. Recruitment of these students will focus on ensuring that a full diversity of the aforementioned communities is represented, with an emphasis placed Alaska Native youth participation.

Key personnel include:

- Zachary Bolick, Conservation Program Manager for Alaska and Hawaii, SCA
- Eileen Kazura, Alaska Conservation Program Manager and 2 crew leaders, SCA
- David Ilse and William Brennan, Chugach National Forest

All of the proposed Whistle Stop trail maintenance projects are planned by the Chugach NF. Any required environmental compliance documentation is either completed or planned for completion prior to the project start date.

11. Types of Lands Involved?

State/Private/Other lands involved? Yes No

Land Status:

If Yes, specify:

12. How does the proposed project meet purposes of the Legislation? (Check at least 1)

Improves maintenance of existing infrastructure.

Implements stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems.

Restores and improves land health.

Restores water quality

13. Project Type

a. Check all that apply: (check at least 1)

Road Maintenance

Trail Maintenance

<input type="checkbox"/> Road Decommission/Obliteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trail Obliteration
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Infrastructure Maintenance (specify):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Soil Productivity Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Forest Health Improvement
<input type="checkbox"/> Watershed Restoration & Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Habitat Restoration
<input type="checkbox"/> Fish Habitat Restoration	<input type="checkbox"/> Control of Noxious Weeds
<input type="checkbox"/> Reestablish Native Species	<input type="checkbox"/> Fuels Management/Fire Prevention
<input type="checkbox"/> Implement CWPP Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Project Type (specify):
b. Primary Purpose (select only 1): Trail Maintenance	

14. Identify What the Project Will Accomplish
Miles of road maintained:
Miles of road decommissioned/obliterated:
Number of structures maintained/improved:
Acres of soil productivity improved:
Miles of stream/river restored/improved:
Miles of fish habitat restored/improved:
Acres of native species reestablished:
Acres of hazardous fuel treatment
Miles of trail maintained: 9
Miles of trail obliterated:
Acres of forest health improved (including fuels reduction):
Acres of rangeland improved:
Acres of wildlife habitat restored/improved:
Acres of noxious weeds controlled:
Timber volume generated (mbf):
Jobs generated in full time equivalents (FTE) to nearest tenth. One FTE is 52 forty hour weeks: 0.7
People reached (for environmental education projects/fire prevention):
Direct economic activity benefit: Trails associated with the Whistle Stop program provide economic benefit to tourism in the state through the Alaska Railroad, FS permitted outfitter and guides, travel companies, gear and equipment retailers, and numerous other associated business throughout the state and industry.
Other:

15. Estimated Project Start Date: July 2017	16. Estimated Project Completion Date: August 2017
--	---

17. List known partnerships or collaborative opportunities. At its core this project is a collaborative initiative between the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and Chugach National Forest (Chugach NF) with the goal of collaborating with surrounding Kenai and other Alaska communities to provide Alaska youth from across the state with hands-on conservation work experience that assists the Chugach NF in its Whistle Stop trail maintenance. It should be noted that the SCA currently has a standing cooperative agreement with the Forest Service. Additionally the Whistle Stop program is a partnership with the Alaska Railroad and the US Forest Service. Maintenance of the noted trails will also be assisted by State Chugachmiut Crew.

18. Identify benefits to communities.

- Increase safety, accessibility, and length of trails systems.
- Grow opportunities for local and Alaska youth through valuable skills training and connection to future opportunities with the Forest Service and other land management agencies.
- Advance collaboration, understanding, and trust between the greater Kenai and Anchorage communities and USFS.
- Promote student achievement and engage students in volunteer and employment opportunities.
- Improve healthy lifestyles and quality of life for local and greater Alaska youth through outdoor skills, leadership, and career training.

19. How does the project benefit federal lands/resources?

- Maintain and repair Whistle Stop trails for current and future recreational use.
- Encourage trust, collaboration, and stewardship of the Glacier Ranger District.
- Expand and diversify the future USFS workforce and pool of qualified local candidates for USFS positions through skills training and hands-on field experiences.

20. What is the Proposed Method(s) of Accomplishment? (check at least 1)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Contract	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal Workforce
<input type="checkbox"/> County Workforce	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers
<input type="checkbox"/> Grant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agreement
<input type="checkbox"/> Americorps	<input type="checkbox"/> YCC/CCC Crews
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Corps	<input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship Contract
<input type="checkbox"/> Merchantable Timber Pilot	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): SCA youth crew

21. Will the Project Generate Merchantable Timber? Yes No

22. Anticipated Project Costs
a. Title II Funds Requested: \$35,000.00
b. Is this a multi-year funding request? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

23. Identify Source(s) of Other Funding: The Whistle Stop Program is a unique partnership with the Alaska Railroad (ARRC) and the US Forest Service. Funds from ticket sales are contributed from ARRC to the operation, maintenance and development of infrastructure. ARRC will be providing transportation, and ridership funds will be paying for the FS employees that will be working and mentoring SCA youth. Forest Service funds are matched to fund the State Chugachmiut native crew for their contributions. Forest Service funds staff time, employee training, and equipment. In addition, SCA itself will be contributing in the form of volunteer service as valued at the Independent Service Rate at 40 hours per week, as well as in the form of additional private support.

24. Monitoring Plan (provide as attachment)

- a. Provide a plan that describes your process for tracking and explaining the effects of this project on your environmental and community goals outlined above.
 - The nature of this project does not lend itself to the need for a monitoring plan. However, the success of high school member engagement and improving the condition of trails will be measured by USFS professionals and SCA crew leaders during the duration of the project.
- b. Identify who will conduct the monitoring:
 - USFS and SCA professionals – though as stated earlier this sort of project doesn't necessarily lend itself to the need for a monitoring plan.
- c. Identify total funding needed to carry out specified monitoring tasks (Worksheet 1, Item k):

25. Identify remedies for failure to comply with the terms of the agreement.

If project cannot be completed under the terms of this agreement:

Unused funds will be returned to the RAC account.

Other, please explain:

Project Recommended By:

/s/ (INSERT Signature)

Chairperson

Resource Advisory Committee

Project Approved By:

/s/ (INSERT Signature)

Forest Supervisor

National Forest

Project Cost Analysis Worksheet

Worksheet 1

Please submit this worksheet with your proposal

Item	Column A Fed. Agency Appropriated Contribution	Column B Requested Title II Contribution	Column C Other Contributions	Column D Total Available Funds
a. Field Work & Site Surveys				
b. NEPA/CEQA				
c. ESA Consultation				
d. Permit Acquisition				
e. Project Design & Engineering	\$3,750			\$3,750
f. Contract/Grant Preparation				
g. Contract/Grant Administration				
h. Contract/Grant Cost				
i. Salaries, Training, Safety, Travel				
USFS	\$1,000			\$1,000
ARRC			\$5,250	\$5,250
SCA		\$30,400	\$23,283	\$53,683
j. Materials & Supplies				
USFS	\$500			\$500
ARRC			\$1,000	\$1,000
SCA		\$4,600		\$4,600
k. Monitoring				
l. Other	1. \$500	1.	1. \$2,610	\$3,110
1. Transportation		2.		
2. Partner Indirect Cost				
m. Project Sub-Total				
n. FS Indirect Costs				
Total Cost Estimate	\$5,750	\$35,000	\$32,143	\$72,893

NOTES:

i. Includes SCA/Partner in-direct salary costs

1. These SCA costs are already included in "salary and related costs" Column C. \$27,068 is a combination of a cash match of \$5,980 and \$17,303 in the value of the service hours provided by the volunteer youth crew, 768 hours at \$22.53 an hour as established by the Independent Sector.