

**The Headwaters Fund
2010-11 Grant Fund Application
COVERSHEET**

For Office Use Only

App. #:
Org. #:

Date of application: October 1, 2010

Organization Name: City of Arcata Recreation Division

Address: 736 F St. Arcata, CA 95521

Telephone number: 822- 7091 Fax number: 825- 2118

Director/CEO: Randy Mendosa, City Manager

Organization Type: Gov't type: Local Nonprofit type: Municipality

Total current year organizational budget: \$595, 327 (Recreation Division)
of FTE employees: 3

Summarize the organization's mission (in the space provided):
The Arcata Recreation Division exists to create community, promote health and wellness, and foster youth development.

Project title: Adventure Training Jobs Program

Amount requested: \$25, 302 Total project cost: \$50, 577
Period covered: November 2010 to November 2011

Total match amount: \$25, 275 Match amount as % of project budget: 50%
(Required 50% match for implementation, 25% for planning or technical assistance)

Cash match: \$13, 375 In-kind match \$11, 900
Cash match as % of project budget: 26 %
(Required: 25% for implementation, 12% for planning or technical assistance)

Type of project (specify planning/technical assistance or implementation):
Implementation

Geographic focus of project: Humboldt County

Contact person name and title: Heather Leigh Stevens, Recreation Division Manager

Contact phone: Same as above Contact email: hstevens@cityofarcata.org
Contact address (if different from above): Same as above

Summary of Project/Grant Request

The City of Arcata Recreation Division and North Coast Adventure Centers (NCAC) request funds to expand their existing partnership, the Adventure Training Jobs Program. This program is designed to expand the capacity of the local workforce by training residents in outdoor adventure skills and to promote Humboldt County as an Adventure/Eco-tourism destination.

Project Description and Goals

The existing goals of the Adventure Training Jobs Program are:

- 1) To train and certify Humboldt County residents as Adventure Guides and Facilitators in core vocational areas
- 2) To facilitate job placement for these trained and certified residents
- 3) To market and promote Humboldt County Adventure Activities regionally and nationally to promote tourism in Humboldt County

In 2009, the City of Arcata Recreation Division and NCAC partnered to create the Adventure Training Jobs Program. We shared the goals of expanding the capacity of our local workforce, creating consistent training opportunities in the community, and promoting Humboldt County as an Adventure/Eco-tourism destination.

NCAC developed a core curriculum of vocational trainings. The core curriculum offerings are:

- Adventure Training Fundamentals: 2 days
- Canopy Tour Guide: 2 days
- CPR/Wilderness and Remote First Aid : 2 days
- Red Cross Standard First Aid and CPR: 1 day
- Leave No Trace Trainer: 2 days
- Mountain Bike Guide: 2 days
- Rope Course Level I (Assistant Guide): 2 days
- Ropes Course Level I (Lead Guide): 2 days
- River Guide School: 10 days
- Portable Rock Wall and Indoor Climbing Gym Management: 2 days
- Redwood Region Eco-Tour Guide: 2 days
- Rock Climbing Guide: 2 days
- Managing Difficult Behavior: 1 day
- Leading Youth Groups: 1 day

The City of Arcata Recreation Division and NCAC jointly hired and managed a Straight Up Americorps member to serve as an Adventure Trainer. The Adventure Trainer assisted in

the promotion and preparation of all trainings under the guidance of NCAC Program Directors. NCAC trained and certified the member in the above vocational areas; once trained, the member was also able to act as an Assistant Trainer.

From 2009-2010, the Adventure Training Jobs Program trained and certified 159 people. 63 of those participants reported job placement after completing the trainings (40%). Nine of those participants were hired directly by NCAC as Trainers and Guides. Five of those trainees were employed by the City of Arcata Recreation Division as Ropes Course and Canopy Tour Guides.

These trainings and subsequent hirings expanded our capacity to run Ropes Courses and Canopy Tours in the Arcata Community Forest. In 2009, we had one certified Guide who was able to lead 16 tours serving 222 participants. After training, certifying, and hiring new Guides through the Adventure Jobs Training Program in 2010, we have already led 66 tours serving 404 participants.

In 2011, our goals are to increase:

- 1) The number of Humboldt residents trained in the core vocational areas by 25%
- 2) The number of job placements by 35%
- 3) The number of tours led by 150%

To achieve these goals, NCAC and the City of Arcata Recreation Division seek to increase our outreach to the local adventure recreation community, local high schools, community colleges and universities, Americorps programs, and social service agencies to recruit participants for training programs. This promotion will include online social networking, marketing materials, personal appearances, and in-services.

By increasing the number of tours we lead and the revenue we generate, we are better positioned to increase our advertising regionally and nationally. NCAC and the City of Arcata plan to expand our marketing efforts by devoting 10 staff hours per week to developing press releases, internet and print advertising, and social media networking that promote our Adventure Tours. Finally, we seek to hire a year-round Adventure Trainer (our former Adventure Trainer completed his term at Americorps and was hired by Far North Climbing Gym as a manager) to direct and promote the Adventure Training Jobs Program.

Economic Development

The City of Arcata Recreation Division and NCAC believe that tourism (Adventure/Eco-tourism specifically) is Humboldt County's most promising industry for new jobs and small businesses. The area's pristine beaches, scenic rivers, accessible hiking and biking trails,

rock climbing, and redwood trees make Humboldt a natural destination for outdoor enthusiasts. Dozens of small businesses (guiding services, equipment rental, gear shops) cater to these tourists, but few maintain a consistent workforce and none market themselves outside the region in any significant way.

The Adventure Training Jobs Program provides workforce training opportunities, which increase individuals' abilities to earn higher wages and expands their career opportunities. By developing Humboldt's tourism workforce, the Adventure Training Jobs Program supports existing local businesses in the tourism industry; supplying more well-trained workers means more tour availability, improved customer service, and the ability of local tourist businesses to grow and develop new programs.

In order for Adventure/Eco-tourism to thrive in Humboldt County, we need to access and promote to external markets, nationally and regionally. The Canopy Tour in the Arcata Community Forest was recently written up in Men's Health Magazine ("50 Guy Trips that will Change Your Life," August 2010), and we saw a significant increase in Canopy Tour bookings as a result. By increasing our advertising and media presence on national and regional levels, we can expect to see similar jumps in tour bookings, within NCAC, the City of Arcata Recreation programs, and across the county.

Number and Description of Jobs Created

In the first year of our program, 63 trainees reported job placement. These job placements included NCAC, City of Arcata, College of the Redwoods, Far North Climbing Gym, Redwoods and Rivers Rafting, summer camps, Big Foot Rafting, Humboldt State University, California Girl Scout Council, area restaurants, local schools and after-school programs. NCAC pays Lead Guides \$15/hour, and Assistant Guides \$10/hour. A survey of area adventure tourism companies found similar wage levels, all well above a living wage. In the second year, we project 85 job placements.

Environmental Benefits

Our partnership is rooted in the principles of Eco-tourism. Our programs minimally impact the environment, build environmental awareness and respect (in both our trainees and tourists), and benefit local people and community. By locating our tours in the Arcata Community Forest, we are supporting sustainable forest management and responsible use of natural resources.

The Adventure Training Jobs Program curriculum emphasizes environmental stewardship. A key course for trainees is a Certification in Leave No Trace Awareness, which teaches participants the principles of responsible recreation and trains them to lead Leave No

Trace Workshops across the country. The curriculum also includes a course on local ecology that prepares participants to lead quality “eco” educational tours in local wetlands and redwood forest environments.

Contributions to Quality of Life in Humboldt County

Our project will bolster Humboldt’s community identity as a hub of adventure and natural beauty. According to the Humboldt Lodging Alliance, local government funding for tourism marketing has not “kept pace with the growth of our tourism industry” (HLA website). This lack of promotion is evident in Humboldt’s web presence. A Google search for the phrase “Humboldt County” results in the following suggestions:

- Humboldt County marijuana
- Humboldt County weed
- Humboldt County movie
- Humboldt County Nevada

A similar search for “Lake Tahoe” results in these suggestions:

- Lake Tahoe camping
- Lake Tahoe skiing
- Lake Tahoe weddings
- Lake Tahoe hotels

It is a goal of our project to transform Humboldt’s national reputation to one akin to Lake Tahoe: a beautiful, rugged, pristine tourist destination and a desirable place to live. To date, our programs have served over 500 tourists into the region by introducing them to Humboldt’s outdoors. By devoting dollars and hours to marketing Adventure Tours, our project will reshape others’ perceptions of Humboldt County.

Our project targets local attitudes and bolsters local leadership. Family Days and Community Canopy Tours are examples of programs we have developed to increase community access to the Forest and increase awareness of local, desirable activities and resources. During both programs, scheduled twice monthly, local families pay reduced rates (\$10/ participant for Ropes Courses and \$49/ participant for Canopy Tours) in an effort to increase accessibility.

Of the 63 trainees who reported job placement last year, 55 found jobs locally. By remaining in the area, our trainees built community awareness of recreational opportunities and became leaders in the growing Adventure Tourism industry.

Qualifications of Organization, Staff and Project Partners

The primary focus of the Arcata Recreation Division is to enrich individuals, families, and the community through the provision of services, facilities, and programs that improve the quality of life in Arcata. The Recreation Division operates a variety of programs geared to all ages and interests ranging from traditional and nontraditional athletics to arts, science, music, and seasonal community events. The City of Arcata Recreation Division creates community, promotes health and wellness, and fosters youth development through our programs and partnerships. The Recreation Division is composed of three full-time staff, two three-quarter time staff, hundreds of part-time seasonal employees, contract instructors and volunteers. We are dedicated to strengthening community image and sense of place, supporting economic development, and protecting environmental resources.

NCAC is a small, socially responsible, employee-owned company. Its 20 employees are all actively involved in the local outdoor recreation community. NCAC manages the Ropes Courses in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. Jon O'Connor, the CEO, has a Masters Degree in Organizational Leadership and 15 years experience as an instructor in Swiftwater Rescue, Whiterwater River Guiding, and Ropes Course Facilitation. Other employee-owners are certified instructors for Leave No Trace, NOLS, REI, and Red Cross Wilderness and Remote First Aid. NCAC is authorized to offer courses for Extended Education credit through Humboldt State University. These courses include Adventure Training Fundamentals (2 units), Rock Climbing (3 units), Ropes Course Level 1 (3 units), Canopy Tour Level 1 (2 units), Mountain Bike Guide (2 units).

Work Already Completed

The partnership between the City of Arcata Recreation Division and NCAC began in 2008, when the City contracted with NCAC to build a ropes course in Arcata Community Forest. NCAC had the expertise and qualifications to build, maintain, and facilitate such a course, and the City was interested in expanding recreational opportunities for community members. All necessary planning, construction, and permitting were completed at that time. In 2009 the City and NCAC partnered yet again to plan, permit, and construct the Canopy Tour element as well as expand to include Mountain Biking Tours.

As previously described, NCAC and the City of Arcata have already created the infrastructure and curriculum for a year-round training program. We created a program budget and a job description for the Adventure Trainer position that includes measurable performance objectives. The former Adventure Trainer created a detailed budget for each training course, training operating procedures, and local marketing materials. The former Adventure Trainer also established contact with referral sources for trainees, which the program can expand upon in the coming year.

Expected Outcomes

We expect the outcomes of this project to be measurable in three forms:

1) Number of local residents trained in the vocational skills necessary to lead Adventure Tours in Humboldt County and placed in jobs.

From Fall 2009-Spring 2010, the Adventure Training Jobs Program trained 159 residents in 19 separate trainings. In the coming year, we plan to offer 30 training sessions with the goal of training 200 participants. With additional outreach and marketing, we expect to increase the number of trainees placed in jobs to 85.

2) Revenue generated from local families/individuals participating in local adventure activities at a discounted rate.

We have scheduled six Family Days and Community Canopy Tours in the Arcata Community Forest between August and October 2010. These programs are not designed to be profitable, but measuring revenue generated from the events will be used to track resident participation and program sustainability. With assistance from the Headwaters Fund, we seek to extend these activities for local community members throughout the year, serve 225 participants, and generate \$6,000 in revenue.

3) Revenue generated from out-of-area tourists participating in local adventure activities at the full rate.

Based on NCAC budget projection for 2011, we project an Adventure Tours sales increase from \$30,575 in 2010 to \$50,000 in 2011.

Change in Community

If our project is successful, we will train local residents in a variety of adventure skills that will prepare them to secure long-term and sustainable employment in Humboldt County. When NCAC first built a Ropes Course in Arcata Community Forest for the City, we hired out-of-area builders and trainers because we could not find enough qualified and certified staff locally. Since instituting the Adventure Job Trainings Program, NCAC has been able to hire nine additional trainees to staff the Ropes Course and Canopy Tours and the City of Arcata Recreation Division has been able to hire five Guides to assist with summer camp utilization of the Ropes Course, Family Days, and Community Tours. To meet demand, NCAC and the City of Arcata Recreation Division still hire Humboldt State University and College of the Redwoods students on a seasonal basis to staff our programs during the high seasons (late spring to early fall).

By expanding our training program next year, we expect to be able to fully staff the Arcata Community Forest Adventure Programs with newly certified year-round employees. This consistent workforce will be a stabilizing force in the local economy and community. This year's trainees will be next year's guides, naturalists, and mentors.

The marketing and publicity connected to this project will attract more tourists to come to our area and extend their stays by offering dynamic and unique outdoor tours and adventure. The increased adventure tourism will increase revenue for local lodging, eateries, and cultural tourist attractions. The Humboldt business community as a whole will benefit. As tourist perceptions of the region shift, so will local perceptions. Residents' sense of pride in Humboldt County will increase.

Risks and Challenges to Successful Implementation

The main challenge to successful implementation of our project is the current lack of tourism resources in Humboldt County for our tours' target demographic. Our project's marketing plan is based on promoting Humboldt as a unique tourist destination with an emphasis on outdoor adventure and ecology. There are currently no lodging options in Humboldt that are actively marketing themselves as "green." There are several high-end hotels and many chain motels, but no boutique hotels or hostels that would be the natural fit for adventure or eco-tourists. This lack of infrastructure will limit tourism growth.

To meet this challenge we will work with local hotels to create "green" tour packages that combine room, dining at a local organic eatery, and one or more Adventure Tours.

Another challenge will be supporting participants through the Adventure Training Jobs Program who are not seeking employment in the outdoor industry. From 2009-2010, in addition to the 159 Adventure Job Trainees, the City of Arcata and NCAC opened their trainings up to 62 Straight Up Americorps members and 51 Court and Community School students. These participants sought general job skills but did not seek job placement or full certifications after the trainings.

The Adventure Training Jobs Program will always serve both would-be Adventure Professionals and those pursuing a hobby or fulfilling an academic or legal requirement. To meet the needs of this diverse population and their goals, we are adding questions on training course enrollment paperwork related to participants' reason for seeking the trainings. We are diversifying our curriculum so that we can offer meaningful coursework, be it vocational or purely recreational, for all participants. We also seek to partner with area charter schools and social service agencies to further develop our ability to serve these trainees.

Project Sustainability after the Grant

The City of Arcata Recreation Division and NCAC are seeking funds to hire a year-round Adventure Trainer who will help us promote, expand, and facilitate the Adventure Training Jobs Program. The former Adventure Trainer was a Straight Up Americorps member, a program that lost funding this year. At present, the City of Arcata does not have the funds to support this position, nor does NCAC have the revenue to do so. But by training more Guides, NCAC and the City will have expanded capacity to run programs, which will generate more revenue. Additionally, the Adventure Training Jobs Program plans to devote 10 staff hours per week to marketing the Adventure Tours, which will support increased sales to tourists. If we are granted funds from the Headwaters Fund, we project the Adventure Trainer activities will generate enough revenue for the position to be self-sustaining in one to two years.

If we do not receive Headwaters Funding

If this project does not receive Headwaters Funding to expand, NCAC and the City of Arcata Recreation Division will continue to collaborate on a more limited basis on programming. NCAC will continue to train City staff to run local activities in the Community Forest and will market its skills trainings on its website, list-serves, and in local papers. With limited dedicated marketing resources, the programs will grow more slowly, relying on word-of-mouth and write-ups in the national and regional media. The City of Arcata and NCAC believe that the reshaping of Humboldt's image as an Adventure/Eco-tourism destination is possible. We are dedicated to creating that change, but the pace of the change depends upon the Headwaters Fund.

Project Expense Item	Total Cost	Amount Requested	Matching Funds	In Kind Match	Source of Match
<u>Direct Salaries and Wages</u>					
Staff 1: Adventure Trainer, 20 hrs/wk @ \$17.25/hr	\$17,940	\$9,340	\$8,600		NCAC
Staff 2: Marketing, 10 hrs/wk @ \$15/hour	\$7,800	\$6,300	\$1,500		NCAC
Benefits and Payroll Taxes (25.3%)	\$6,512	\$6,512			
<u>Other Direct Costs</u>					
Rental Redwood Lodge Trainings (25 days at \$380)	\$9,500			\$9,500	City Arcata
Travel: Industry Convention and Conference	\$1,250	\$750	\$500		NCAC
Professional Memberships	\$725		\$725		NCAC
Brochures, Rack Cards, Posters	\$2,000	\$1,200	\$800		NCAC
Targeted Internet Advertising	\$2,000	\$1,200	\$800		NCAC
Equipment: Smart Phone for Adventure Trainer	\$450		\$450		NCAC
Subtotal	\$48,177				
<u>Overhead Costs</u>					
City Website Support	\$750			\$750	City Arcata
City Marketing Supplies (copies, paper, printer)	\$1,650			\$1,650	City Arcata
Subtotal	\$2,400				
Overhead as % of Total Project Cost	5.0%				
Total Project Cost	\$50,577	\$25,302	\$13,375	\$11,900	

2010
City of Arcata
Parks and Recreation Committee

Name and Address	Occupation	Phone Number	Date Appointed
Brittain, Bill 2540 Davis Way Arcata, CA 95521	Retired Maintenance Supervisor	822-1075	February 1992
Coles, Deborah 722 Patrick Court Arcata, CA 95521	Housing Assignments Coordinator	822-9397 wk: 826-5512 wk: 826-3451	May 1984
Heath, Sheldon 1245 Chester Avenue Arcata, CA 95521	Operations Manager	826-0268	May 2009
Kelsey, Harvey 1778 Golf Course Road Bayside, CA 95524	Geology Professor & Research Associate	822-8732	March 2002
Lundberg, Mel H.M. Jr. 850 Wiley Court Arcata, CA 95521	Retired State Employee	822-3787	August 1999
Martin, Steven 2511 Maple Lane Arcata, CA 95521	College Professor	822-7196 wk: 826-5637	July 2000
Starck, Nancy 725 Bayside Road #2 Arcata, CA 95521	State Assembly Field Representative	822-6921	February 2008

ARCATA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



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Mark Ritz,
Kinetic Koffee

1st Vice President:

Jeff Schmitt,
Arcata ProFloor

2nd Vice President:

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Todd Peterson
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David Reed
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Ross Welch

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Shane Brinton

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Executive Director:

Brenda Bishop

Office Manager:

Bill Wenham

Dawn Elsbree, Coordinator
Headwaters Fund Committee
520 E Street
Eureka, CA 95501
Re: Adventure Training Jobs Program

September 29, 2010

Dear Headwaters Fund Committee:

It is my pleasure as the executive leadership for the Arcata Chamber of Commerce (ACC) and it California Welcome Center (CWC) to write a letter of support for the City of Arcata and North Coast Adventure Centers (NCAC) requesting Headwater Funds to expand their existing partnership, the Adventure Training Jobs Program.

The Arcata Chamber of Commerce and the California Welcome Center has had the privilege of working in partnership with the City of Arcata on several projects, and NCAC since it inception. The positive efforts of these two organization has provided services to hundreds of visitors to the North Coast, university students, at-risk youth and a variety of non-experienced adventure seekers. The development training has been essential in assisting in the promotion and preparation of all trainings under the guidance of NCAC program directors.

This year the ACC and CWC will have greeted over 18,000 visitors to our area — the Adventure Training Jobs Program would continue to insure and promote tourism regionally and nationally in Humboldt County by marketing our community as a one-stop adventure destination for everyone. In addition, this partnership shares the mutual goals of expanding the capacity of our local workforce, creating consistent training opportunities in the community, and promoting Humboldt County as an adventure eco-tourism destination.

The Arcata Chamber of Commerce and California Welcome Center supports the involvement and efforts of the City of Arcata and North Coast Adventure Centers to improve our local economy and community my providing, safe, eco-educational and fun recreational options and job opportunities along the North Coast. I encourage you to strongly give full consideration to this proposal and fund its request.

Sincerely,

Brenda Bishop
Executive Director

Dear Headwaters Fund Review Committee,

This letter is in support of Headwaters Funding going towards the City of Arcata (in partnership with North Coast Adventure Centers for use in the expansion of their Adventures Jobs Training Program. As owner of Far North Climbing gym in Arcata, I have hosted and co-led several NCAC climbing trainings and programs. I've also worked many programs in collaboration with the City of Arcata. I am excited about the possibility of Headwaters Funding that will help them grow this great program.

I am always impressed with the City of Arcata's ability to get the word out about programs. The City's staff are dedicated to drawing kids, adults, families, and even people who never thought they could climb a tree or a mountain up into the canopy or up a climbing wall in our gym. Combine that with NCAC's staff's expertise, and you've got a team that is perfectly matched to ability to get tourists and locals out and up into Humboldt's beauty.

I've been a climber for six years and a small business owner for three, Humboldt's outdoor adventure community needs a program like NCAC/City of Arcata's training program to help people make the leap from enjoying the outdoors to being able to make a living helping other people enjoy it.

I urge you to fund this grant for the expansion of Adventure Jobs Training program. This beautiful area deserves the chance to teach people how to immerse themselves in the environment around them.

Sincerely,



Matt Deshazo

Far North Climbing Gym

Owner



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Six Rivers
National Forest

1330 Bayshore Way
Eureka, CA 95501-3841
(707) 442-1721 Text (TTY)
(707) 442-1721 Voice

File Code: 2300

Date: October 1, 2010

Headwaters Fund Coordinator
Headwaters Fund
520 E Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Headwaters Fund Coordinator:

This letter is in support of the Headwaters Fund Grant being submitted by the City of Arcata Recreation Division and the North Coast Adventure Centers. The Six Rivers National Forest has partnered with the Arcata Recreation Division for the last three years through its Natural Resources Science Camp. For the last two years, a highlight of the camp for the kids has been the use of the Ropes Course at Redwood Park. On two occasions one of my staff, Lucy Salazar, was visited the camp during the Ropes Course. Throughout the activity the campers were exposed to safety requirements, teamwork, cooperation, critical thinking, along with the main adventure of being up in the forest canopy. This was a highlight of the camp and having trained leaders in these activities was a main reason for its success. This grant will provide more well trained personnel for the Recreation Division to draw from.

In addition, any undertakings that promote sustainable recreation through ecotourism in Humboldt County could increase the visitation to our national forest and adjacent public lands. Tourists who experience these adventures with the City of Arcata might also want to pursue other outdoor recreation opportunities within the Six Rivers National Forest, which is within driving distance of Arcata.

The forest is truly a backyard for coastal towns and valley communities. Within an hour's drive, coastal residents can be out of the fog and into the warm sun. Six major rivers intersect one million acres and flow from the coastal mountains to the ocean. Specially designated areas celebrate the uniqueness of Wild and Scenic rivers and the botanic, geologic and wildlife diversity of the forest. Large land areas offer hunting, driving for pleasure, viewing wildlife & scenery, fishing, hiking, group areas, dispersed camping, gathering of forest products, mountain biking.

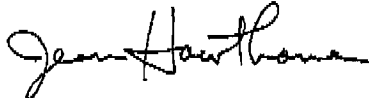
Connecting people with their natural environment is a vital thread in the fabric of society. It contributes to the American identity and reminds people of the resources that sustain life – water, soil, food, and fiber. Moreover, outdoor recreation is the portal for understanding and caring for natural resources and public lands. It provides opportunities and motivation to advance from fun and attraction, through awareness, education and understanding, to a role of citizen stewardship –



one of "giving back" and supporting sustained management of natural resources.

We fully support a grant that will train more community members in ecotourism and related skills, and we encourage you to fund this grant.

Sincerely,


for TYRONE KELLEY
Forest Supervisor

cc: Lucy Salazar
Jean Hawthorne
Nancy J Gibson

YouthServe AmeriCorps

1660 Central Avenue Suite C
McKinleyville, CA 95519
(707) 839-9892 FAX (707) 839-9874
Cindy Porter, Program Director Cindy.Porter@ccc.ca.gov
Mark Allee, Member Supervisor Mark.Alee@ccc.ca.gov



Dear Headwaters Fund Review Committee,

As Program Supervisor for YouthServe AmeriCorps, it is with great pleasure and confidence that I write this letter to express my support for a Headwaters Fund for the City of Arcata to expand their Adventure Jobs Training Program with North Coast Adventure Centers. YouthServe AmeriCorps has partnered with NCAC for the past four years with great success. Over 100 AmeriCorps members have built skills and gained unique experience through NCAC adventure programs and trainings. This has made our program stronger and our AmeriCorps members more dynamic and employable individuals and citizens. They have gone on to become teachers, educators, and leaders-many of them right here in Humboldt County. Further, through our partnership we have shared these skills and experiences with the many at-risk high school students throughout Humboldt County whom we serve.

I am excited to hear that the program may be expanded through a grant from Headwaters, as it would mean more opportunities for my members to learn valuable job skills that would offer them unique career opportunities. Many AmeriCorps members would like to remain in Humboldt County after they complete their commitment to us, but are not able to find steady employment. The opportunity to learn skills that would make them hireable at a ropes course, environmental program, rafting company, or school can be a big incentive for them.

Funding an expansion of the Adventures Jobs Training Program is a clear benefit to this community. The North Coast is poised to become a world renowned adventure destination. We need to be ready with a well trained and well educated workforce to support this dynamic economic possibility. The Adventure Jobs Training Program can meet that challenge with help from the Headwaters Fund.

On a personal note, I myself have benefited directly from NCAC's training program and was selected for my current position based upon skills learned through their trainings. Thus it is with confidence that I encourage you to fund this grant for the expansion of the Adventure Jobs Training Program. The next generation of guides, educators and trainers is waiting for the opportunity.

Sincerely,

Mark Allee
Program Supervisor
Youth Serve AmeriCorps