



# Montana Conservation Corps

## **Strategy for Innovation, Sustainability, and Impact 2009-2014**

Adopted by the Board of Directors  
May 28, 2009

### **VISION AND MISSION**

Montana Conservation Corps has a vision of young people motivated to act as compassionate and active citizens engaged in serving for the greater good of their community and dedicated to conserving America's public lands.

Montana Conservation Corps inspires young people through hands-on conservation service to be leaders, stewards of the land, and engaged citizens who improve their communities.

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## INTRODUCTION



Founded in the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) has for eighteen years demonstrated excellence in launching young people forward in life prepared with skills and values to be leaders, stewards of the land, and engaged citizens. The Montana Conservation Corps' work in natural resources and communities has resulted in improvements in the environment and has strengthened community well-being across Montana and neighboring areas of the Northern Rocky Mountain region.

Today, as the Montana Conservation Corps looks ahead to the next five years, it is focused on creating a growing legacy of impact on the young adults and teens who join the Corps, and - through their crew work - on the lands and communities of the Northern Rockies and Plains region. The Montana Conservation Corps embraces the mystique that is Montana – the “Last Best Place” where wildness and a spirit of community make real and tangible the benefits of service and stewardship.

This plan was developed by the staff and board of the Montana Conservation Corps, with input from leaders of other corps throughout the U.S, partners from federal and state agencies and nonprofit organizations, MCC's founders, and funders. The plan draws upon comparative evaluation and benchmarking, peer reviews done of MCC by other corps directors, evaluation surveys completed by alumni, needs analysis of sponsor agencies, and review of organizational structure and capacity.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The purpose of a strategic direction is to provide context for decision making, program evaluation, and consideration of opportunities in the years ahead. It is a policy document that demonstrates priorities as determined by the board and staff.

Opportunities and challenges will constantly emerge. The purpose of the plan is not to pre-determine what to take on or change, but to provide clarity in goals, direction, values, and desired outcomes that allow the organization to assess how to progress. Particularly in times of rapid change, as at the present, a plan is acknowledgement of the importance of being strategic in responding to opportunities and issues, focusing on reaching desired outcomes.

## STRATEGY FOR INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY, AND IMPACT

The Montana Conservation Corps embraces a strategic direction for the next five years grounded in three primary goals. These goals set priorities to strengthen organizational capacity, guide program development, and cultivate the partnerships that sustain our operations and mission.

### **GOAL 1: SERVE THE MCC MISSION THROUGH STRENGTHENED ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND DIVERSIFIED RESOURCES**

In five years, MCC will be a strong organization, with an efficient organizational structure that has evolved to facilitate program growth throughout the service region. The management structure will have evolved allowing the senior management to focus more on building and maintaining partnerships with public lands agencies, state and local governments, nonprofit partners, and with foundations and corporations that value the Corps' work in traditional conservation as well as 21st Century clean energy services.

Middle management will be empowered to develop and operate more diverse work. Centralized recruitment and development will provide more freedom for regional offices to focus their energy on training and fielding outstanding crews, and working together with local partners on multi-year plans to meet top conservation goals.

By 2014, MCC will welcome entrepreneurial leadership of its regional offices, enabling place-based expertise in different skills and services to flourish within the context of its mission and desired outcomes. Its offices will grow in staffing to provide stronger supervision of programs, and demonstrate visible conservation leadership.

MCC will annually assess accomplishments in order to reach these desired outcomes by 2014. As needed, the organization will adopt additional strategies to ensure progress toward the goals and outcomes.



## STRATEGY FOR INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY, AND IMPACT

Within five years, the Corps will have achieved a diversified and scaled funding portfolio to support the strategic vision. Whereas AmeriCorps now makes up approximately 40% of annual income, it will then comprise 35% or less of the total funding. At the same time, MCC will work toward an expanded fund balance in keeping with nonprofit best practices to ensure working capital and unrestricted funds for sustainability. An active Board of Directors will strongly advocate and lend influence to strengthen the organization.

Technology will be at levels consistent with best practices for multi-site communications and information management

### **GOAL 2: LAUNCH TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS TOWARD SUCCESS THROUGH A STEPPED PORTFOLIO OF CONSERVATION-BASED SERVICE PROGRAMS**

By 2014, the Montana Conservation Corps envisions building on this capacity to benefit more young adults and teens, in more locations, and to do so year round. Its vision is to embody excellence as a Corps, preserving and teaching nearly lost traditional backcountry skills while at the same time leading the way with 21<sup>st</sup> century corps skill sets in clean energy conservation and green communities.

The Corps will maintain a leading role in shaping leaders for the future, as well as instilling a deep and lasting commitment to conservation and public service. During the next five years, the Corps will offer opportunities where young people may enter and progress through the Corps at any number of points through their teen and young adult lives, either as one-time Corps members seeking transforming experience or as returning Corps members coming back to learn enhanced leadership skills.

Members will come from all walks of life, from throughout Montana and the Corps' service region and from throughout the US, drawn by the Corps' reputation for excellence and unique areas of expertise.

### **GOAL 3: LEAD IN CONSERVATION SERVICE FOR PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAINS AND PLAINS REGION**

By 2014, the Corps will have established long term partnerships with agencies throughout a multi-state geographic region. It will be widely acknowledged as the Corps for the Northern Rocky Mountains and Plains, while prioritizing its Montana roots and legacy. When appropriate to support these partnerships, the Corps will offer longer term or potentially year round opportunities for members and partners.



# SUMMARY OF GOALS, OUTCOMES, AND STRATEGIES

<b>GOAL 1: Serve the MCC mission through strengthened organizational capacity and diversified resources</b>		
OUTCOME A: Maximize efficiencies and deepen community impact through effective organizational structure	Strategy	1: Evolve organizational structure 2: Modify areas of primary responsibility for senior staff 3: Ensure leadership capacity 4: Phase in new positions in state and regions
OUTCOME B: Ensure lasting strength by developing and diversifying revenue streams	Strategy	1: Strengthen existing partnerships and develop innovative collaborations 2: Expand centralized fund development capacity 3: Maximize board role as influencers 4: Strengthen net assets for working capital and unrestricted funds
OUTCOME C: Monitor programs, assess opportunities and evaluate results to guide program development and geographic expansion	Strategy	1: Create mechanism to develop, test, evaluate and pilot new programs 2: Use outcomes framework to insure consistent transformative results 3: Match areas of expertise with local needs to drive geographic reach 4 Complete external evaluation
OUTCOME D: Position MCC through effective marketing	Strat.	1: Launch marketing campaign around brand strategy 2: Expand recruitment capacity 3: Develop alumni network
OUTCOME E: Strengthen board leadership, resources, and governance to match organizational size, fiscal responsibility, and geography of service	Strategy	1: Activate board through increased size and member cultivation 2: Update committee structure 3: Implement new ways of communicating 4: Develop financial metrics for strength and sustainability
<b>GOAL 2: Launch teens and young adults toward success through a stepped portfolio of conservation-based service programs</b>		
OUTCOME A: Provide Montana teens with a range of community-linked, conservation-based service learning activities	Strategy	1: Separate supervision and management of youth and field crews 2: Expand youth programming beyond summer youth corps 3: Build community-linked partnerships with agencies and nonprofits 4: Recruit youth that reflect full social fabric and diversity of Montana
OUTCOME B: Provide young adults with a range of crew-based conservation programs that offer introductory and advanced learning in leadership, stewardship, and citizenship	Strat.	1: Maintain commitment to crew while piloting new crew structures 2: Build capacity for specialized crews & develop expertise in traditional skills 3: Advance leadership and citizen-service as hallmarks for MCC
<b>GOAL 3: Lead in conservation service for partners and communities in the Northern Rockies and Plains</b>		
OUTCOME A: Build mutual-benefit partnerships that yield long-term, high quality projects in public lands stewardship, green communities, and clean energy conservation	Strat.	1: Streamline/centralize project cultivation and support processes 2: Prioritize community-building and local partnership cultivation in regions 3: Create inventory of priority needs and projects
OUTCOME B: Excel in meeting partner priorities throughout the Northern Rocky Mountains and Plains	Strat.	1: Allocate staff and financial resources to ensure crews meet expectations 2: Develop specialized crews: public lands, green communities, clean energy 3: Respond to opportunities for geographic or seasonal expansion

# IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

## 2009 Implementation Priorities

- Revise organizational chart based on emerging structural needs
- Develop 5-yr development strategy
- Capitalize on ARRA to add crews and develop specialized crews
- Pilot multi-season, community-linked youth programs
- Clarify outcomes for each program
- Develop MCC brand and ad. strategy
- Recruit “Influencers” to Board
- Cultivate 2-3 multi-year partnerships



## 2010 Implementation Priorities

- Tailor positions to evolving structure
- Provide training for evolving roles
- Build partnership management capacity
- Development doubles private funds
- Expand youth programs to 4+ regions with multi-season services
- Deploy specialized crew models
- Design comprehensive external evaluation
- Coordinate marketing across media
- Launch 1+ private sector partnership



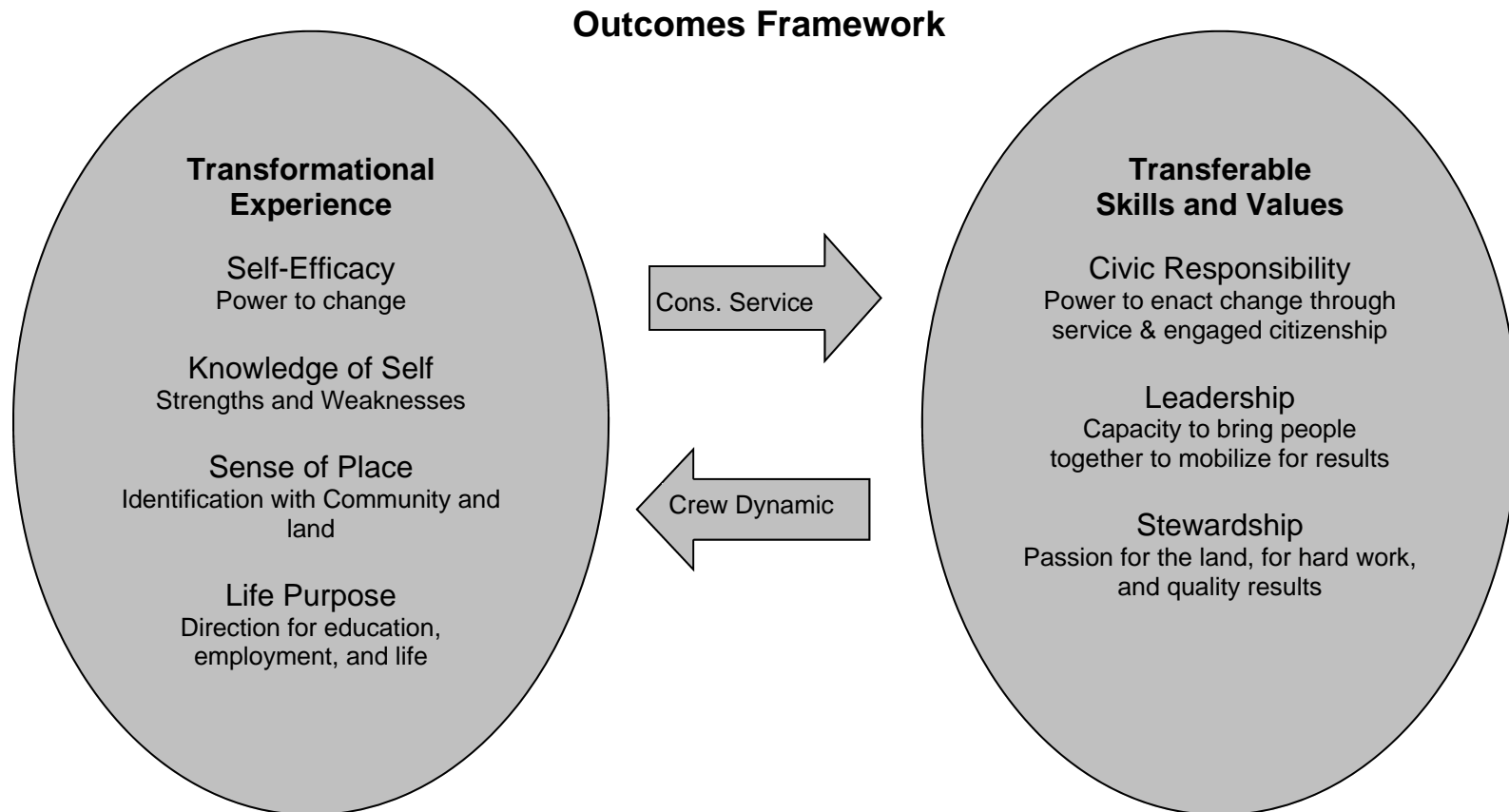
## 2011-2014 Priorities

- Organizational structure supports expanded programs, development functions, and operations
- Diversified funds enhance program priorities and limit AmeriCorps share
- Full-year youth programs in all regions
- Alumni network engaged
- Complete comprehensive evaluation
- Multi-year partnerships boost quality and sustainability of programs
- Strong brand identity
- Hold mid-way plan retreat

# FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

MCC is committed to providing youth and young adults with life shaping experiences that prepare them with transferable skills and values for leadership, stewardship, and citizenship. An inherent strength of the Corps is that the central characteristics of the program – crew-based learning and service on projects of real and lasting benefit to the community and environment - enhance each other. Meaningful and challenging projects ensure a setting in which young men and women discover their greatest strengths, define a purposeful direction in life, and learn the skills and values they need to accomplish the changes they seek for themselves, and for their community.

An outcomes framework provides a measure of our mission and serves as a standard for the character and quality of our programs. During the next five years, MCC will evaluate its impact on members around the following outcomes framework.



# FOUNDATION IN CONSERVATION-BASED SERVICE AND LEARNING

Historically, MCC has reacted to opportunities as they have come - from building houses and playgrounds to taking on complex backcountry projects. In the next five years, MCC will focus on strengthening its expertise and proven capacity in the following three areas: Public Lands Stewardship, Green Communities, and Clean Energy Conservation. Overall, MCC will become more intentional in the work that it takes on in order to create meaningful projects with lasting benefits that ground the MCC experience in conservation-based service and learning.

The overall approach to project development will be grounded in conservation-based service learning. Conservation-based service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful environmental conservation service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, foster land stewardship values, and strengthen communities.



## Public Lands Stewardship

- Trails
- Stream Restoration
- Weeds
- Wildfire Fuel Redux
- Fencing
- Reforestation
- Wildlife Inventories
- Historic Restoration



## Green Communities

- Community Garden
- Urban Forestry
- Park Improvements
- Neighborhood Trails
- Disaster Recovery
- Conservation Clubs
- Recycling
- Wetlands
- Volunteer Mobilization



## Clean Energy Conservation

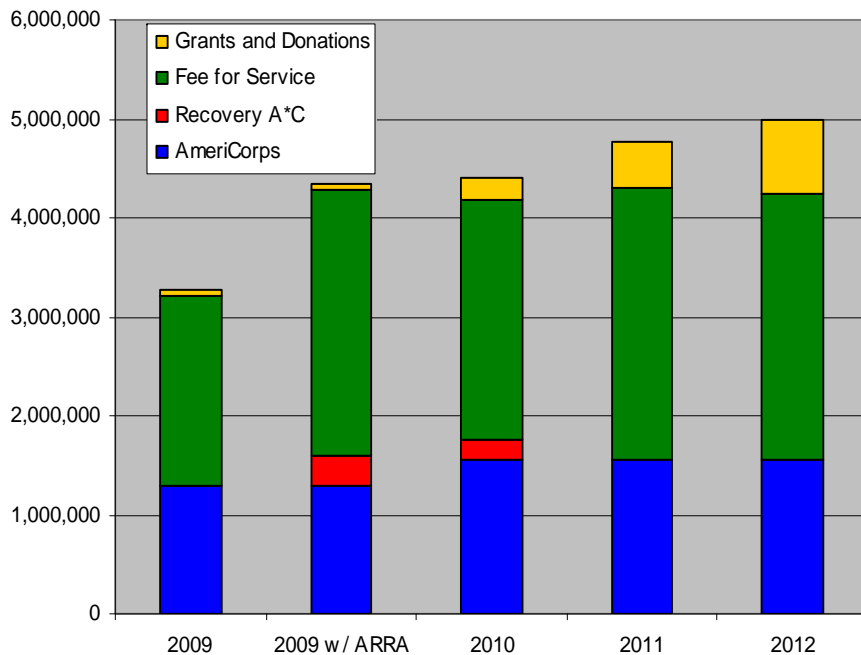
- Weatherization
- Energy Retrofits
- Solar Installations
- Wind Power
- Energy Audits
- Public Education
- Green Building
- Water Conservation

# BUDGET PROJECTION

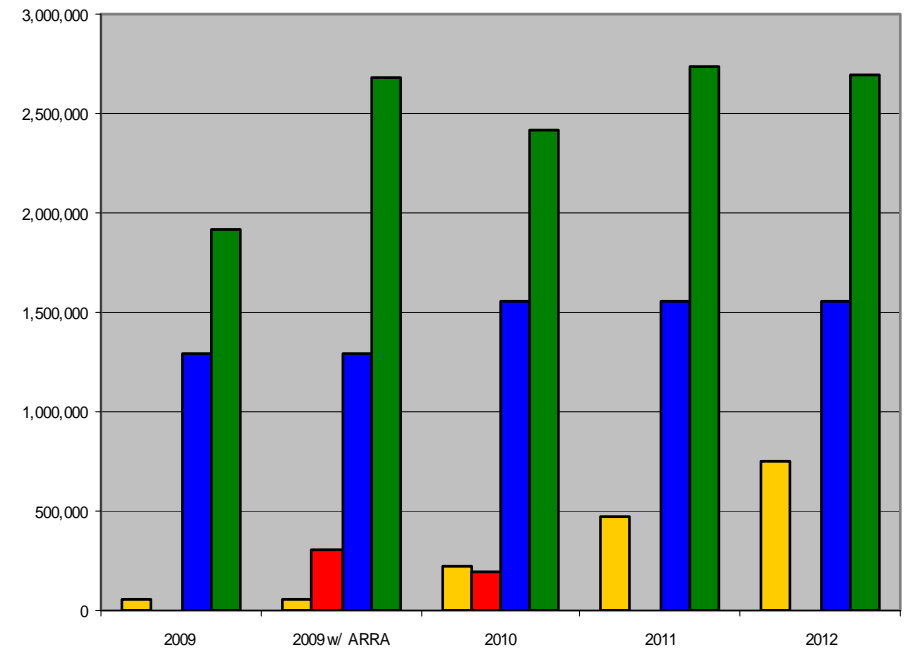
A conservative projection has MCC growing from \$3.3 million in 2009, to \$5 million by 2012. This model assumes continuation of the AmeriCorps grant at full funding through 2012. The projection supports 23 field crews (28 crews in '09 w/ AmeriCorps Recovery), with youth crews increasing from 8 to 12 by 2011. A Clean Energy/ Green Corps program starts with 2 crews in 2010, and grows to 4 in 2011 and 2012. This projection demonstrates an increasing diversification of funds with funding from private sources (grants, sponsorships, and donations) increasing from <2% currently to 15% in 2012. Private funds will support non-fee for service activities, including youth programs, community partnerships, curriculum development and participant training, and capital investments in vehicles.

Possibilities for more ambitious growth are within reach but uncertain at this time. Options include fielding additional crews within our current AmeriCorps grant, marketing non-AmeriCorps or specialized crew models, developing funds for in-school service-learning activities, pursuing partnerships with targeted agencies (State Parks, Conservation Districts), and aggressively expanding the Clean Energy Corps initiative with federal grants from Dept. of Labor or Dept. of Energy.

**Growth Projection**



**Revenues by Source**



# PLAN IN DETAIL

## GOAL 1: SERVE THE MISSION THROUGH STRENGTHENED ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND DIVERSIFIED RESOURCES

Outcome A: Maximize efficiencies and deepen community impact through effective organizational structure				
Strategies	2-Year Action Steps	Who	When	Notes
<b>Strategy 1:</b> Evolve organizational structure with more vertical structure to facilitate statewide program growth, capitalize on processes that may be centralized, enhance regional management of youth and young adult programs, and deepen community presence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold work session w/ key staff</li> <li>• Develop revised structure and review with staff and board</li> <li>• Develop implementation strategy and phase in structure</li> <li>• Amend as appropriate</li> </ul>	CEO	July 09	Growth during 2009-2014 will require the CEO and senior staff to be able to evaluate the influx of new program opportunities and determine which are appropriate for MCC, and pursue avenues for sustained program and financial support. It is anticipated that these challenges will continue as MCC goes through what will likely be a two or three year period of rapid growth, after which MCC will need to stabilize and maintain operations at a continued higher capacity and financial level.  To address rapid growth and the need for flexibility, MCC may consider additional ways to have regional presence, including a hub and spokes approach to fielding crews, areas of expertise, and/or temporary offices.
		Exec. team	Sept 09	
		E-team	Oct. 09	
		CEO	TBD	
<b>Strategy 2:</b> Modify areas of primary responsibility for senior staff to reflect needs for new program development and implementation, partnerships support and management, and diversified funding streams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise org. chart (see above)</li> <li>• Revise senior management position descriptions based on chart and priorities</li> <li>• Explore possibilities to streamline and systematize contract administration</li> </ul>	CEO	Oct. 09	Consider ways to rotate senior executive responsibilities so that CEO has the time to evaluate the influx of new program opportunity areas and determine which are appropriate for MCC.  Streamline contract administration with sponsors, systematizing as many reporting tasks as possible
		CEO	Feb. 10	
		Account.	Dec 09	
<b>Strategy 3:</b> Ensure leadership capacity to support exceptional programs, efficient decision-making, and uncompromised accountability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create org. structure with dedicated youth supervision capacity</li> <li>• Utilize web and video conferencing for biweekly check-ins with regions</li> <li>• Identify and provide priority training for each staff during annual evals</li> <li>• Improve timeliness of “need to know” updates – email, phone, memos</li> <li>• Practice efficient decision processes</li> </ul>	Prog. Dir.	Oct. 09	Separate YES and field crew operations, staffing, programming, budgets, and ensure that regional offices can fully support both youth and adult crews, training, and field work. Establish thresholds for warranting additional staff for youth and field crews.  Enhance communication systems to maximize regional capacity, through internet conferencing and other electronic communications.  Utilize staff for MCC training, heightening technical skills in house and retention of primitive skills.  Promote organizational culture that supports rapid and deliberate decision-making; that acknowledges trust so that there is autonomy in developing new ideas, and that allows management to be immediately responsive to operational needs.
		Dir. of Operatns	Jul 09	
		All	Annual	
		E-team et all	Ongoing	
		E-team	Ongoing	
<b>Strategy 4:</b> Phase in new positions at state and regions based on needs and within approved budgets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop annual budgets or amendments as needed based on org. chart and needs</li> <li>• Create/Revise positions descriptions</li> <li>• Provide staff training for new roles</li> </ul>	D.O.	Annual	Identify areas for central and regional support and ensure that region and HQ staff size is appropriate to the number of crews and programs managed. Create position descriptions.  Provide staff training and development to assist with evolving responsibilities. Recruit graduates as crew supervisors.
		E-team	Annual	
		E-team	Annual	

**GOAL 1: SERVE THE MISSION THROUGH STRENGTHENED ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND DIVERSIFIED RESOURCES**

<b>Outcome B: Ensure lasting strength by developing and diversifying revenue streams</b>				
<b>Strategies</b>	<b>2-Year Action Steps</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Strategy 1:</b> Strengthen existing partnerships and develop innovative private and public collaborations to ensure the highest quality participant experiences and provide long-term sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ID top 3-5 partners/projects and initiate multi-year planning</li> <li>• Prepare Annual Report for lead partners and hold annual debriefings</li> <li>• Pilot specialty crews with low MCC match</li> <li>• Utilize fund development capacity to support public/private partnerships</li> </ul>	<p>CEO and Reg. Sups</p> <p>CEO, Acct Outreach Coord.</p> <p>PD, DO, RS's</p> <p>CEO</p>	<p>July 09</p> <p>Nov.</p> <p>May 10</p> <p>June 10</p>	Develop partnerships and funding streams so that by 2014 MCC has diversified revenue streams and AmeriCorps represents less than 35% of total annual revenue. This will include putting together new partnerships with public agencies utilizing non-AmeriCorps funding, and partnerships with private sector partners. For example, MCC may work with a nonprofit such as the Nature Conservancy, and together draw in third party funders such as Plumb Creek to fund conservation work. It is envisioned that the CEO will be increasingly involved in building these types of partnerships and new funding streams.
<b>Strategy 2:</b> Expand centralized fund development capacity with significant proposals for program support and diversification of funding sources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create 5-yr Development strategy</li> <li>• Seek capacity grant for Dev. Dir.</li> <li>• Per org. chart, add develop't staff</li> </ul>	<p>CEO, Bd.</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>CEO</p>	<p>Sept 09</p> <p>Fall 09</p> <p>TBD</p>	Build a development capacity that eventually includes negotiating multi-year work-plans with government agencies and nonprofit partners, and obtains multi-year grants from private or public foundations.
<b>Strategy 3:</b> Maximize Board's role/responsibilities as influencers in expanding and deepening MCC's reach and in developing new partners and funders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define "influencers"</li> <li>• Cultivate 2-3 "influencers" per year</li> <li>• Add 1-2 members/yr to support adequate size Board</li> <li>• Clarify annual goals for board devlmt.</li> </ul>	<p>Board</p> <p>Gov. com.</p> <p>Board</p> <p>Board</p>	<p>Sept. 09</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>Annual</p> <p>Annual</p>	In 1-2 years, maximize board's expertise in marketing, grantsmanship, funder networks, management experience in growing organizations, to assist MCC's launch of a development department.
<b>Strategy 4:</b> Strengthen net assets for working capital and unrestricted funds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Strategies 2 and 3 to increase donations to agency through development.</li> </ul>	Bd, CEO	Annual	Fund stability will be essential during this period of growth. MCC will diversify resources to achieve a scaled range between funding sources, and at the same time ensure that its financial reserves are commensurate with annual budget size. The standard MCC will use is the standard for the nonprofit field <sup>1</sup> : working reserves/fund balance should equal six months operating expenses.

<sup>1</sup> Based on Charity Navigator standards for nonprofits.

## GOAL 1: SERVE THE MISSION THROUGH STRENGTHENED ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND DIVERSIFIED RESOURCES

Outcome C: Monitor programs, assess opportunities and evaluate results to guide program development and geographic expansion				
Strategies	2-Year Action Steps	Who	When	Notes
Create mechanism to develop, test, evaluate, pilot, and monitor new programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize decision process model including mission/outcome filters</li> <li>Use model on test case (CEC)</li> <li>Test pilot program</li> <li>Modify model as needed</li> </ul>	CEO+PD  PD+CEO  PD+staff  PD	June, 09  July 09  Sept, 09  ongoing	Institute organizational approach of concept papers (addendum) to consider new activities. Systems serves to develop for executive and board consideration, build business plans, consider implementation timeframes, identify partners and funders, pilot new ventures, and evaluate.  Develop rapid response capacity within the board.  Examine real committed partners and funding sources. Explore if the venture duplicates what others are doing. Identify needs for permits and licenses, legal consultations.
Use outcomes framework to ensure consistent transformative experiences and outcomes in every program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refine outcomes framework to include 'transformative experiences'</li> <li>Use Framework to articulate outcomes and approach for each program</li> <li>Solicit input from professional evaluators to develop assessment instruments</li> </ul>	PD  PD+Prog Manager  PD+PM	Oct, 09  Oct, 09  Dec, 09	
Match program strengths with local needs to guide geographic expansion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen core programs and specialty crews</li> <li>Conduct bi-annual outreach to other commissions (ID, WY) and regional partners to assess interests and needs</li> <li>Propose expansions as needed</li> </ul>	:D+PM  CEO+PD  PD+CEO	ongoing  Nov & March  TBD	
Complete comprehensive external evaluation against primary program desired outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RFP for External Evaluator</li> <li>Work w/ Evaluator to develop evaluation plan</li> <li>Implement evaluation plan</li> </ul>	PD+OD  PD+CEO  PD+PM	May, 10  Sept, 10  2011	

**GOAL 1: SERVE THE MISSION THROUGH STRENGTHENED ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND DIVERSIFIED RESOURCES**

<b>Outcome D: Position MCC through effective marketing.</b>				
<b>Strategies</b>	<b>2-Year Action Steps</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Launch marketing campaign around an adopted brand strategy and graphic standards to create identity around the “transformative experience” and Montana mystique, and conservation legacy/legends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt brand strategy, tag line</li> <li>• Adopt email manager for e-pubs</li> <li>• Develop brand standards</li> <li>• Revise all media per brand</li> <li>• Annual Report mass-mailing</li> <li>• Update website</li> <li>• Host 20<sup>th</sup> celebration</li> </ul>	<p>CEO</p> <p>Recruit-Outreach Coord. ROC</p> <p>ROC</p> <p>ROC + CEO</p> <p>OD+ROC</p> <p>ROC</p>	<p>Sept ‘09</p> <p>Jun ‘09</p> <p>Oct ‘09</p> <p>Jan ‘10</p> <p>Mar ‘10</p> <p>Mar ‘10</p> <p>Sum ‘11</p>	<p>Evaluate all image, print, narrative, and electronic materials and redesign to ensure they convey the mission and MCC’s unique expertise, leadership, programs, and lands stewardship. Establish what separates MCC from other corps, including wilderness skills and science backing for habitat work.</p> <p>Document program accomplishments.</p> <p>Establish visual images and messaging that enhances the brand identity while responding to the full range of geography/public lands served. Effectively portray the accomplishments of the crews, the map of the lands served, the story of “building and restoring mans relationship to the environment.”</p> <p>Convey the sense of purpose – the legacy – and the scale of effort. Utilize the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary to tell the story of the legacy and legends. Convey the full range of lands stewarded with a tag line such as “The Corps for the Northern Rocky Mountains and Plains.”</p> <p>Find ways to ensure adequate staffing of marketing tasks and consider launching a board marketing committee.</p>
Expand recruitment capacity to attract qualified and targeted applicants to sustain program goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire Recruitment/Outreach Coord.</li> <li>• Write annual Recruitment Plan to reach desired number and diversity of apps.</li> <li>• Capitalize on “brand” to market MCC</li> <li>• Tap alumni network</li> </ul>	<p>OD</p> <p>PM+ROC</p> <p>All</p> <p>ROC</p>	<p>Mar ‘09</p> <p>Sep, Jan</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>	<p>During 2009-2014, MCC will position itself as unique among conservation corps. Themes that capture the legacy of the corps and build on the “Montana mystique” will promote the Corps to recruits, sponsors, and funders, and will reflect corps accomplishment.</p> <p>Establish centralized recruitment and alumni coordination capacity and establish a coordinated recruitment plan and approach to streamline and expand recruitment capacity.</p>
Develop alumni network that expands MCC’s reach by exhibiting role models and establishing a contact base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build alumni network thru reg. contacts, appeals, volunteer days, etc.</li> <li>• Hire alumni as crew supervisors</li> <li>• Use web-based system to enhance communications and connection to MCC</li> </ul>	<p>Dev Dir</p> <p>RS</p> <p>ROC</p>	<p>ongoing</p> <p>Annual</p> <p>Sept 09</p>	<p>Create a strong alumni network of program ‘graduates’ from all tiers, and identify how alumni have utilized the leadership and skills training gained through MCC as a foundation for better communicating the unique aspects of MCC. Hold alumni gatherings or reunions and build institutional loyalty and support among alumni.</p>

**GOAL 1: SERVE THE MISSION THROUGH STRENGTHENED ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND DIVERSIFIED RESOURCES**

<b>Outcome E: Strengthen board leadership, resources, and governance to match organizational size, fiscal responsibility, and geography</b>				
<b>Strategies</b>	<b>2-Year Action Steps</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Activate board through increased size, strategic cultivation and recruitment of new members, clarification of purpose and structures, and enhanced decision and leadership capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve strategic plan with emphasis on 1-2 years and plans for revisions in out years.</li> <li>• Complete board recruitment of at least 3 new members by fall 2009.</li> <li>• Consider revisions to mission statement.</li> <li>• Have regular meetings of Executive Committee to build leadership on board.</li> </ul>	Board  Gov. Comm.  Board  Exec. Comm.	May 09  Fall 09  May 09  Mnthly	Evaluate ways to create a more active and engaged board and implement changes. Consider expanding the size of the board to ensure enough members to participate in all committee functions. On regular cycles, review and consider revisions to the mission, key policies, bylaws and review all fiduciary responsibilities to ensure that the organization is fully protected. As needed, revise protocol for decision making concerning programs, including cost benefit analyses, and evaluations
Update committee structure to enhance functions and efficiencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate purpose/function of existing committees. Align with needs of MCC.</li> <li>• Consider new committees.</li> <li>• Develop committee responsibilities and tasks. Executive Committee outline.</li> </ul>	Exec. Comm.  Exec. Comm.  All Comm.	Fall 09  Fall 09  Fall 09	Ensure that the board as a whole has fiduciary oversight, in evaluating programmatic and operational decisions that go beyond established budgets, in considering annual budgets, and in setting policy.  Consider new standing committees on the board, including a new ventures committee, marketing/recruitment/development, and partnerships.  Develop committee responsibilities and tasks.
Implement new ways of communicating to keep board fully informed and engaged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement usage of Sharepoint for online website file storage.</li> <li>• Monthly Enews, periodic updates</li> <li>• Investigate and implement web based video conferencing programs</li> </ul>	OD + IT  CEO  Admin Asst & OD	June 09  Mnthly  May 09 Sept. 09	Evaluate and implement concepts such as gotomeeting.com or Skype conferencing.
Develop financial metrics to monitor organizational strength and ensure sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research various financial metrics</li> <li>• Include selected metrics on monthly financial reports to CEO and Board</li> <li>• Annually review metrics when approving annual budget</li> </ul>	OD  OD  Board	June 09  June 09  Annual	

## GOAL 2: LAUNCH TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS TOWARD SUCCESS THROUGH A STEPPED PORTFOLIO OF CONSERVATION-BASED SERVICE PROGRAMS

Outcome A: Provide Montana teens with a range of community-linked conservation-based service learning activities.				
Strategies	2-Year Action Steps	Who	When	Notes
Separate supervision and management of youth programs from field crews in each region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate current structure &amp; future options to inform org. chart in light of financial capacity</li> <li>Make staffing/structure changes based on evolving program needs &amp; financial considerations (see Goal 1)</li> </ul>	E-team  E-team	Oct 09  2010	
Expand youth programming beyond summer youth corps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate 09 model/ outcomes</li> <li>Explore opportunities for fall/spring programming</li> <li>Clarify funding plan to support expansion</li> </ul>	PD+PM  PD+RS's  CEO+OD	Oct, 09  Dec, 09  2010	
Build community-linked partnerships with public agencies and nonprofits to increase number of youth crews and/or Expedition crews and allowing for variations of program model as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver high quality services to existing partners</li> <li>Provide staff training on community partner development/benefit of community linkages (refer to org. chart)</li> <li>Develop alternative program models that address local needs</li> </ul>	RS+CEO  PD  PD+PM	Aug, 09  2010  2011	MCC will work to develop sustained partnerships with Montana local governments, State Parks, BLM, and education systems. By providing more trained crews that are working with MCC year-round, it will be able to charge more for youth crews.
Recruit youth that reflect the full social fabric and diversity of Montana's communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and broaden existing recruitment strategies</li> <li>Insure annual recruitment plan addresses diversity issues</li> <li>Consider alternative program models to incorporate diverse populations</li> </ul>	ROC  ROC+PM  PD+PM +ROC	Dec, 09  Dec, 09  2010	Expand recruitment efforts throughout Montana communities.  Study the feasibility of charging a sliding scale of tuition for youth Expedition members, based on capacity to pay, and to in turn provide increased pay to youth based on their successful completion of various steps in the program.

## GOAL 2: LAUNCH TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS TOWARD SUCCESS THROUGH A STEPPED PORTFOLIO OF CONSERVATION-BASED SERVICE PROGRAMS

Outcome B: Provide young adults with a range of crew-based conservation programs that offer introductory and advanced learning in leadership, stewardship, and citizenship.				
Strategy	2-Year Action Steps	Who	When	Notes
Maintain commitment to crew experience while piloting new crew structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview or survey members and graduates to identify ‘transformational elements.’</li> <li>Utilize outcome framework as considering new programs and crew structures (CEC, Weeds, Primitive skills, wildlife inventory)</li> </ul>	<p>PD+PM</p> <p>PD+PM+RS</p>	<p>Dec 09</p> <p>2010</p>	MCC will work with members to define the important elements of all crew/types of projects, to ensure that each experience and each area of potential crew specialty contains transformative experience opportunities.
Build capacity for specialized crews and develop expertise areas in wilderness traditional skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize decision process model (Goal 1, Outcome C)</li> <li>Match program strengths to geographic opportunities</li> <li>Build program model and staffing structure for becoming repository of traditional primitive skills</li> <li>Develop alternative program models that address specialized needs</li> <li>Identify institutional partners to enhance specialized skills (Carhartt Center, Wild. Institute @ U.M.)</li> </ul>	<p>CEO+PD</p> <p>CEO+PD+RS’s</p> <p>PD+CEO+OD</p> <p>PD+PM+RS’s</p> <p>CEO+PD+Bobby+RS’s</p>	<p>June 09</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010 Ongoing</p> <p>Oct. 09 Ongoing</p>	<p>MCC will welcome entrepreneurial development of new concepts by its regional offices and program staff. To expedite decision-making and allow for rapid response to emerging opportunities, MCC will employ a decision matrix to develop and test new ideas. Whoever comes up with the concept is encouraged to steward the idea through a planning and pilot phase.</p> <p>Throughout its history, MCC has debated where it should be operating. This plan recognizes that geographic reach isn’t a goal in and of itself. MCC will pursue geographic growth into new places that have needs where MCC has program assets to offer.</p> <p>Smaller, three person “weed” crews may be added, and specialty crews who receive advanced training in traditional backcountry skills will be developed. Other specialization will be developed in response to needs.</p> <p>MCC will increasingly organize its field crews around competencies and programs: (i.e.: Traditional Wilderness Skills, Weeds, or a Clean Energy Corps.”) In all, there will be the common transformative experience. Competency requirements and outcomes will be used in developing new programs, shorter programs, ensuring consistency whether a member is involved for two days or 1700 hours.</p>
Advance leadership and citizen-service values as hallmarks of the MCC experience and advance MCC as a nation-leading conservation corps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance PLACE and other citizenship development program elements</li> <li>Position Leadership Development Program &amp; citizenship focus strategically in marketing/outreach</li> <li>Seek opportunities to share best practices (Rendezvous, Forum, ECO, regional/national conferences)</li> </ul>	<p>PM+PD</p> <p>CEO+PD</p> <p>CEO+PD</p>	<p>2010</p> <p>2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>MCC models leadership and builds leaders. It is not simply a work corps, and not simply skilled in working in the wilderness. The skills it teaches include leadership along with unique areas of expertise that will provide life-long as well as career benefit to members. MCC believes that leadership is not exclusive to leaders at the top of crews. The leadership value pervades every crew and every program, and MCC gives all members and staff the responsibility to exercise their leadership.</p> <p>Expand program curriculum as called for, including learning by doing and evaluation.</p> <p>Use general outcomes measures as guides to program design. Create outcomes competencies to measure success for each specialized crew program. Evaluate outcome and competency for each program.</p>

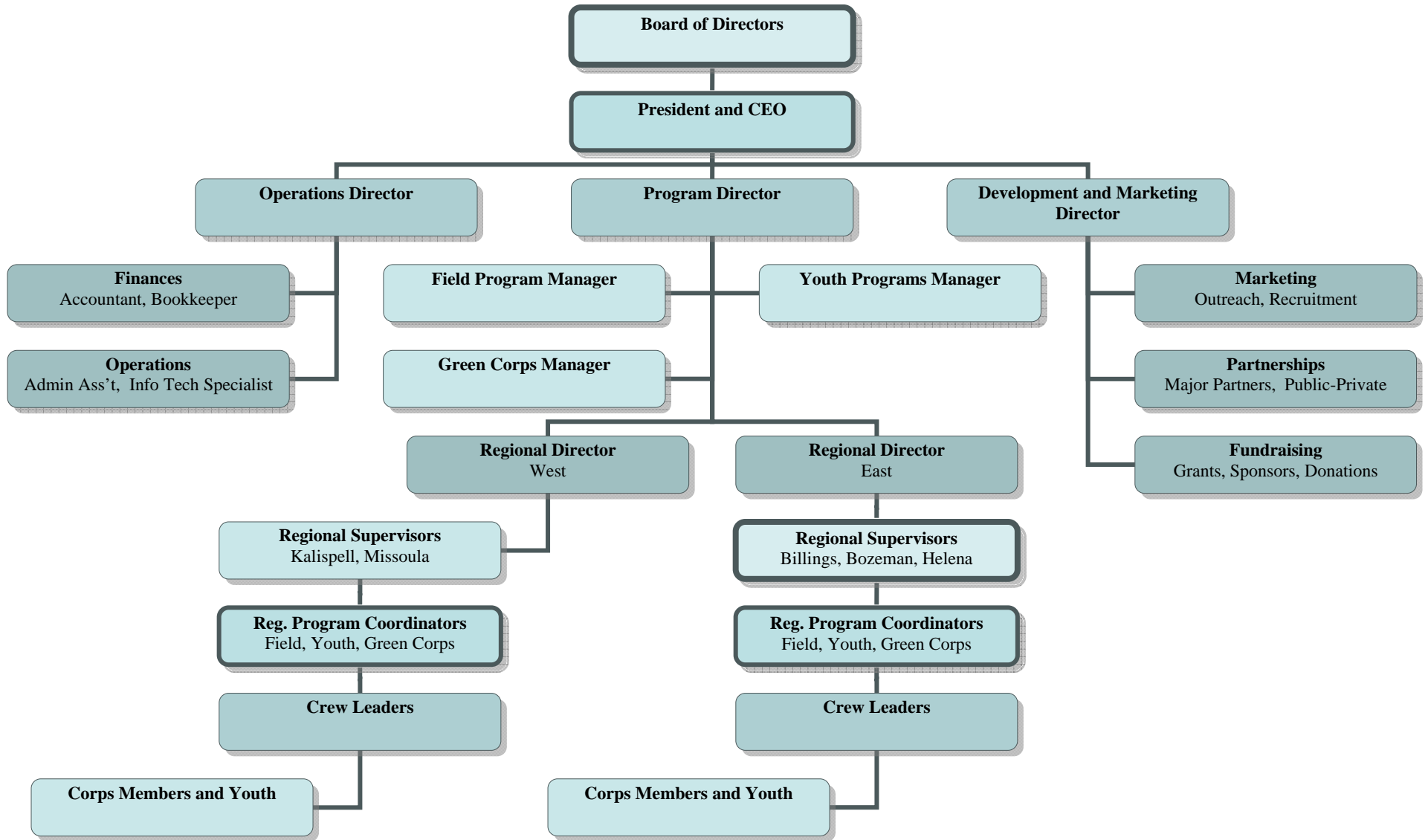
## GOAL 3: LEAD IN CONSERVATION SERVICE FOR PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTHERN ROCKIES AND PLAINS

Outcome A: Build mutual benefit partnerships that yield long-term, high quality projects in public land stewardship, green communities, and clean energy conservation.				
Strategies	2-Year Action Steps	Who	When	Notes
<p>“Build partnerships not just trails.” Streamline and/or centralize processes to support, build and nurture strategic partnerships with long-term benefits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise org. structure to allow focus on multi-year grants and partnership cultivation and management</li> <li>• Systematize approach to manage partner cultivation, support, and reporting</li> </ul>	<p>CEO</p> <p>Partnership Manager</p>	<p>Nov ‘09</p> <p>2010</p>	<p>During 2009-2014, MCC will develop and implement multi-year programs and signature projects that provide long-term stewardship to specific public lands. The intent is to move away from “projects” into more multi-year programmatic partnerships with key agencies, including the Forest Service, State Parks, National Parks, HRDC’s, communities, and conservation-oriented nonprofit organizations.</p>
<p>Prioritize community-building and local partnerships cultivation at the regional level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify RS role in community building</li> <li>• Provide training (CBI, collaborations)</li> <li>• Set annual goals for community projects</li> <li>• Ensure funding to allow for community collaborations that may not generate revenue.</li> </ul>	<p>CEO</p> <p>PD</p> <p>OD+PD</p> <p>CEO and Dev Dir</p>	<p>Jan ‘10</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annual</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Create inventory of priority needs and projects to build multi-year workload of corps legacy services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with lead partners to develop 3-5 year project inventory</li> <li>• Develop community group contacts to identify 2-3 years of community needs projects inventory</li> </ul>	<p>Partnership Manager and RS</p> <p>RS</p>	<p>2010</p> <p>2010</p>	<p>In recent years, MCC regional offices have devoted considerable time to seeking projects to fill crew time. MCC will work to centralize the revenue generation and regionalize the community linkages of major projects, thereby freeing regional personnel to develop place-specific and community grounded ventures of significant scope</p>

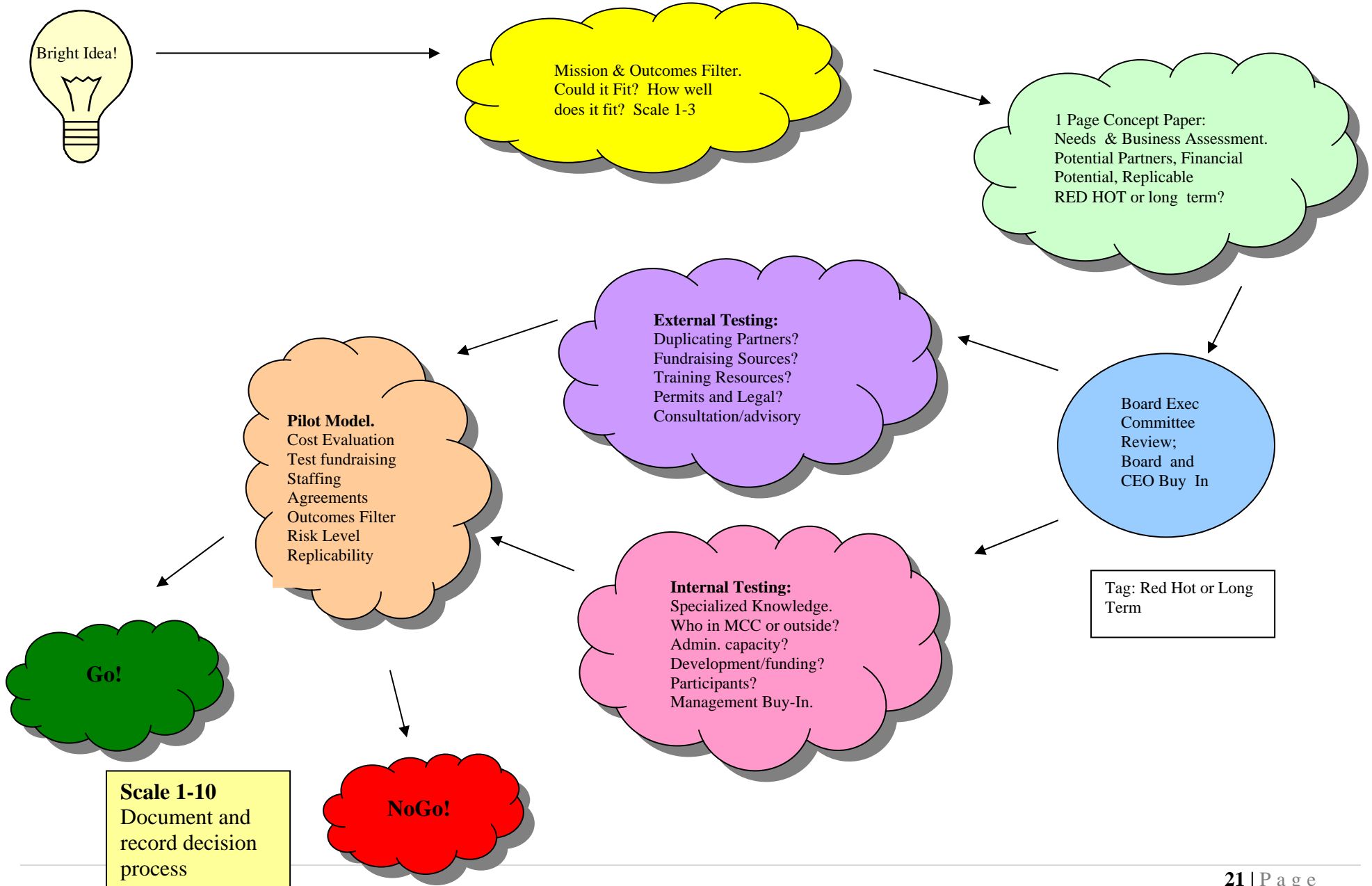
**GOAL 3: LEAD IN CONSERVATION SERVICE FOR PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTHERN ROCKIES AND PLAINS**

<b>Outcome B: Excel in meeting partner priorities throughout the Northern Rocky Mountains and Plains.</b>				
<b>Strategies</b>	<b>2-Year Action Steps</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Allocate staff and financial resources to ensure MCC crews meet or exceed partner expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current data from partners, consider additional survey information</li> <li>• Ensure funding and budget for regional support staff annually</li> <li>• Continue development of alternative crew models as indicated by partners and communication with Regional staff</li> <li>• Develop strategic partner survey for additional information</li> </ul>	PD+CEO OD+PD PD+OD OD+PD+RS	Sept 09 Annual Ongoing Fall 09	
Develop specialized crews to respond to partner priorities and capitalize on local resources and expertise in areas of public lands stewardship, green communities, and clean energy. Clean Energy Corps crews may operate through winter season.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore feasibility of Clean Energy/Green Corps and Wilderness Primitive Skills program models</li> <li>• Assess need to hire CEC/Wild. Skills staff person to focus on program development</li> <li>• Develop necessary funding to sustain programs and meet mission outcomes</li> </ul>	E-team E-team CEO+ RS & Dev. Dir	Aug, 09 Aug, 09	
Respond to opportunities for geographic and seasonal expansion where MCC has assets to share.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct bi-annual outreach to other commissions (ID, WY) and regional partners to assess interests and needs</li> <li>• Propose expansions as needed</li> </ul>	CEO+PD PD+CEO	Nov & March TBD	MCC's unique skills have enabled it to serve public lands in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, North and South Dakota. During 2009-2014, MCC will work to strengthen its capacity in serving these public lands, striving for a deep and sustained stewardship role wherever it works.

# ADDENDUM 1: ORGANIZATIONAL CHART CONCEPT



# ADDENDUM 2. DECISION PROCESS MODEL



## DEALING WITH GROWTH: THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

MCC is on the national stage in 2009. This plan was developed during a time of potential exceptional expansion, but as the planning process was completed, the scale of opportunity from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is not known. MCC has the opportunity to compete for Recovery funding to increase the number of AmeriCorps members serving with MCC – with scaled expansion for increased staffing needs. Recovery Act funding to federal lands agencies, and the “corps priority” language included in the Act, may result in rare opportunities to widen and deepen longstanding partnerships. \$53 million was allocated toward weatherization and clean energy. However, the impact of all these funds on Montana and MCC cannot yet be determined.

More opportunity is on the horizon. Additional federal legislation may be forthcoming to create more public lands within the Corps’ service area. Private sector needs and opportunities may also be growing. The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited and other nonprofits, as well as lumber companies and foundations interested in conservation and clean energy are all sources for partnerships, grants and contracts.

Passage of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, makes the expansion of national service a leading priority in the nation.

Wise growth is imperative. MCC will respond to the diverse opportunities it sees ahead by working within its areas of primary expertise - fielding more crews and taking on more partnership projects. It will work to turn potentially competitive situations with multiple corps and organizations into opportunities for partnership and collaboration. At the same time as it responds to the many needs and opportunities presented through the Recovery legislation, MCC will focus on increased efficiency, strengthened headquarters capacity, strong communications and functions throughout its regions, and new systems for making decisions.

Flexibility will be important during these next five years. It is likely that some of the expansion required to meet federal Recovery goals will not be lasting, as much of the stimulus work is viewed as short term, one time work. MCC may find new ways to operate in this environment, potentially contracting positions rather than adding permanent staff or utilizing “hubs and spokes” locations that can be changed as needed. At the same time, MCC will work with its long term partners such as the Forest Service and State Parks to project multi-year projects that in turn will allow MCC to plan its operating budgets and infrastructure longer in advance, which will maintain stability. It will be important for MCC senior staff to devote the time needed to building these lasting partnerships – even during a time of rapid growth – so that MCC will continue to flourish after the stimulus funding program.





# MONTANA CONSERVATION CORPS

## Strategy for Innovation, Sustainability, and Impact

### GOAL 1: Serve the MCC mission through strengthened organizational capacity and diversified resources

OUTCOME A: Maximize efficiencies and deepen community impact through effective organizational structure	Strategy	1: Evolve organizational structure 2: Modify areas of primary responsibility for senior staff 3: Ensure leadership capacity 4: Phase in new positions in state and regions
OUTCOME B: Ensure lasting strength by developing and diversifying revenue streams	Strategy	1: Strengthen existing partnerships and develop innovative collaborations 2: Expand centralized fund development capacity 3: Maximize board role as influencers 4: Strengthen net assets for working capital and unrestricted funds
OUTCOME C: Monitor programs, assess opportunities and evaluate results to guide program development and geographic expansion	Strategy	1: Create mechanism to develop, test, evaluate and pilot new programs 2: Use outcomes framework to insure consistent transformative results 3: Match areas of expertise with local needs to drive geographic reach 4 Complete external evaluation
OUTCOME D: Position MCC through effective marketing	Strat.	1: Launch marketing campaign around brand strategy 2: Expand recruitment capacity 3: Develop alumni network
OUTCOME E: Strengthen board leadership, resources, and governance to match organizational size, fiscal responsibility, and geography of service	Strategy	1: Activate board through increased size and member cultivation 2: Update committee structure 3: Implement new ways of communicating 4: Develop financial metrics for strength and sustainability

### GOAL 2: Launch teens and young adults toward success through a stepped portfolio of conservation-based service programs

OUTCOME A: Provide Montana teens with a range of community-linked, conservation-based service learning activities	Strategy	1: Separate supervision and management of youth and field crews 2: Expand youth programming beyond summer youth corps 3: Build community-linked partnerships with agencies and nonprofits 4: Recruit youth that reflect full social fabric and diversity of Montana
OUTCOME B: Provide young adults with a range of crew-based conservation programs that offer introductory and advanced learning in leadership, stewardship, and citizenship	Strat.	1: Maintain commitment to crew while piloting new crew structures 2: Build capacity for specialized crews & develop expertise in traditional skills 3: Advance leadership and citizen-service as hallmarks for MCC

### GOAL 3: Lead in conservation service for partners and communities in the Northern Rockies and Plains

OUTCOME A: Build mutual-benefit partnerships that yield long-term, high quality projects in public lands stewardship, green communities, and clean energy conservation	Strat.	1: Streamline/centralize project cultivation and support processes 2: Prioritize community-building and local partnership cultivation in regions 3: Create inventory of priority needs and projects
OUTCOME B: Excel in meeting partner priorities throughout the Northern Rocky Mountains and Plains	Strat.	1: Allocate staff and financial resources to ensure crews meet expectations 2: Develop specialized crews: public lands, green communities, clean energy 3: Respond to opportunities for geographic or seasonal expansion