Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on October 23, 2026

M.L. 2023 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2026

Project Title: Community Forestry AmeriCorps

Project Manager: Jessica Ayers-Bean

Affiliation: ServeMinnesota

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Website: https://www.serveminnesota.org/

Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

Legal Citation: M.L. 2023, Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 07a

Appropriation Amount: $1,500,000

Amount Spent: $1,500,000

Amount Remaining: -

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

With LCCMR support, 150 AmeriCorps members helped communities across Minnesota protect and expand tree cover, respond to environmental threats, and strengthen local capacity for tree care. Members planted and inventoried more than 200,000 trees, supported pest management, responded to natural disasters, and engaged communities in environmental stewardship.

Summary of Project and Outcomes

Minnesota's tree canopy provides important benefits to people and the environment. Trees help clean the air, manage stormwater, reduce erosion, provide shade and wind protection, and support healthy communities. But Minnesota's trees face growing threats, including emerald ash borer, putting ash trees at risk. Communities need additional resources and trained workers to protect trees and respond to these threats.

ServeMinnesota meets this challenge by leveraging the people power of AmeriCorps to strengthen local capacity for tree care and environmental stewardship across Minnesota. LCCMR funding also unlocked additional federal funding to support our communities, this work, and the Minnesotans who carried it out.

Over the three-year grant period, 150 AmeriCorps members served at partner organizations in communities across the state. Members planted and inventoried 201,520 trees, developed and implemented 45 pest management plans, created 18 gravel bed nurseries to support tree planting, and organized 907 community engagement opportunities focused on environmental stewardship. AmeriCorps members also supported emergent needs including tree and debris clearing after a devastating storm in Bemidji.

The project also helped strengthen Minnesota's environmental workforce. Through their service, AmeriCorps members gained hands-on experience, training, professional connections, and industry certifications that help prepare them for careers in forestry and other environmental careers. In turn, communities have a stronger pipeline of workers for the future.

Together, these efforts expanded communities' ability to care for the critical tree canopy, respond to environmental issues, and protect Minnesota's natural resources. The project demonstrates how AmeriCorps can complement local environmental efforts by providing both people power and the training needed to address natural resource challenges across the state.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The ENRTF continues to be acknowledged on ServeMinnesota's website and annual report. (https://www.serveminnesota.org/program/conservation-corps/)

ServeMinnesota highlighted our ENRTF and LCCMR work in collaboration with Conservation Corps Minnesota and Iowa on social media and in our newsletter. We will continue to explore storytelling opportunities to showcase the impact of this project to Minnesota's communities.

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2023 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: October 28, 2026

ID Number: 2023-013

Staff Lead: Tom Dietrich

Project Title: Community Forestry AmeriCorps

Project Budget: $1,500,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Jessica Ayers-Bean

Organization: ServeMinnesota

Office Telephone: (612) 812-1736

Email: Jessica@serveminnesota.org

Web Address: https://www.serveminnesota.org/

Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: October 23, 2026

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: October 23, 2026

Project Completion: June 30, 2026

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2023, Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 07a

Appropriation Language: $1,500,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with ServeMinnesota to preserve and increase tree canopy throughout the state by training, supporting, and deploying AmeriCorps members to local agencies and nonprofit organizations to plant and inventory trees, develop and implement pest management plans, create and maintain nursery beds for replacement trees, and organize opportunities for community engagement in tree stewardship activities.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2026

Narrative

Project Summary: Over three years, we will train, deploy, and support 150 members to build more resilient ecosystems in communities statewide. Members will focus on planting trees and conducting tree inventories.

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

Healthy trees provide numerous economic benefits: they slow and filter storm water, capture air pollution, provide windbreak, and offer shade; in contrast, decaying trees threaten human safety, property, and infrastructure. Minnesota contains over 1 billion ash trees, which are increasingly threatened by emerald ash borer (EAB). As northern Minnesota records many fewer days each year below -35°F, EAB is aggressively spreading to more communities in the state. 98% of emerald ash borer larvae die at -30°F, whereas only 79% die at -20°F. EAB jeopardizes the benefits of a healthy tree canopy and creates burdensome new costs to local communities. Facing a worker shortage, local agencies need support to adequately respond to the EAB infestation and manage care for the trees in their communities.
Community Forestry AmeriCorps directly addresses this challenge by training and strategically placing AmeriCorps members at partner organizations across the state. We measure impact across three related areas: (1) increases in tree canopy management activities across local agencies, (2) the associated economic benefits of increased tree canopy, and (3) the creation of a career pipeline for AmeriCorps members to enter the forestry profession, which currently faces a significant workforce shortage.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

We leverage the people power of AmeriCorps to directly bolster local efforts to preserve tree canopy, by deploying service members to community-based sites throughout the state. Members will inventory and plant trees, develop and implement pest management plans, create and maintain nursery beds for replacement trees, and organize opportunities for community engagement in tree stewardship activities. We estimate that each tree planted offers more than $100 in economic value over 25 years; by this figure alone, each member funded represents more than $16,000 invested in the community. We provide this service at no cost to the community. In addition to their direct contributions, members also holistically extend the capacity of host sites and empower local agencies to implement strategic plans concerning further aspects of tree health, such as tree removal and community outreach.
There is a shortage of qualified labor in this field. As members serve, they gain practical skills and are afforded networking opportunities, tree inspection certification, and other professional development resources to prepare them for good-paying, careers. A $10,000 investment from LCCMR pays increasing dividends over time. Two-thirds of last year's members report they are likely to pursue a forestry career as a result of their service opportunity.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

We will recruit, train, deploy, and support 150 AmeriCorps service members over three years. Per member, we will inventory more than 1,000 trees and plant more than 160. Per year, we will develop and manage 24 EAB mitigation plans and 5 gravel bed nurseries. Additional outcomes are determined by site partner priorities. Site partners need staffing support to engage in prudent, proactive aspects of tree management. Each member provides strategic assistance in accordance with the specific needs of their site. Our activities will provide generalized capacity support to host sites and direct benefit to Minnesotans throughout the state.

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Statewide

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Recruit, train, and deploy 150 AmeriCorps service members

Activity Budget: $500,000

Activity Description:
Recruit 50 members per year for three years. Members are recruited through wide-net strategies, including job search websites, job boards, fairs, presentations at college campuses, social media, and targeted messages on Handshake, a leading career community. Applications are reviewed, candidates are screened, and host sites participate in final interviews. Members are trained throughout the year in community forestry and related topics, including: inventorying, planting, pruning, pathology (including Emerald Ash Borer and Oak Wilt), gravel bed nursery design and management, volunteer management, community engagement, community data analysis, and climate science. Within the first month of service, members receive Minnesota Tree Inspector certification. Throughout the service term, members are supported by host site supervisor, Program Managers, and fellow AmeriCorps members; members are encouraged to request technical assistance from our partners at City Forester, LLC and Tree Trust for further insight on specific projects or questions. Members are deployed statewide to serve at host sites that request members; these sites develop goals and set priorities to ensure that members efficiently address the specific community needs of the host site. Host sites include soil and water conservation districts, parks and public works departments, and nonprofits of varying sizes.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
First year – recruit, train, and deploy 50 service members	January 31, 2024
Second year – recruit, train, and deploy an additional 50 service members	August 31, 2024
Third year – recruit, train, and deploy an additional 50 service members	August 31, 2025

Activity 2: AmeriCorps member supervision to pursue site-specific tree activities that meet the needs and community context of host sites

Activity Budget: $500,000

Activity Description:
Sites commit to supervise members and ensure they are able to work safely and efficiently towards site goals. The supervisor welcomes the member to the organization, introduces them to staff and stakeholders, and provides an orientation to the site. The supervisor provides member guidance on site, sets a daily schedule for the member, approves timesheets, and supports the member's data collection. We train AmeriCorps members on a full spectrum of community forestry activities so they are well-prepared to conduct a variety of valuable tree activities; common activities include: inventorying, planting, pruning, watering, mulching, and marking trees for removal. Sites may offer additional training on topics specific to their community context. Some members spend much of their time assessing and mapping community trees during an inventory; others manage community tree sales and teach community members how to plant and care for trees. Most members conduct a broad variety of tree-related activities in support of our goals: "preserving and increasing the urban tree canopy in Minnesota" and "connecting communities to their urban forest." Trees planted and inventoried are a helpful metric to estimate time-use of members statewide, whereas individual sites and members will set goals that reflect their specific needs.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
8,000 trees planted, 50,000 inventoried	July 31, 2024

Total of 16,000 trees planted, 100,000 inventoried	July 31, 2025
Total 24,000 trees planted, 150,000 inventoried	June 30, 2026

Activity 3: Holistic site-support that builds capacity at host sites

Activity Budget: $500,000

Activity Description:

Members build host-site capacity by engaging in forestry activities that have critical value and may include significant qualitative outcomes or outcomes that are not easily aggregated outside of a particular community context. Such activities include, but are not limited to, developing and managing EAB plans, gravel bed nurseries, and outreach events. We work closely with sites to set expectations, and we encourage sites to leverage their community role when determining which interventions to pursue. Before host sites are selected and members are placed, our staff determine whether site needs fit within our program model. Sites are provided information acceptable and appropriate interventions; sites select from a "menu of interventions" to tailor member service with site needs. Members are trained on data collection, and program evaluators continually track data entries and flag concerns. We track implementation and impact data weekly, and we monitor program effectiveness to make continuous improvements. This method allows our program to build capacity at host sites, while allowing us to gain insights and share lessons-learned with others sites and partners. We anticipate members will manage EAB plans, gravel bed nurseries, and outreach events over the three-year funding period – but the holistic impact is even more substantial.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
At least 30 EAB plans developed, managed, and/or supported	June 30, 2026
At least 5 gravel bed nurseries developed, managed, and/or supported	June 30, 2026
At least 35 outreach or community events developed, managed, and/or supported	June 30, 2026

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
City of Andover	City of Andover	Site Partner	No
City of Bloomington	City of Bloomington	Site partner	No
City of Edina	City of Edina	Site partner	No
City of Ely	City of Ely	Site partner	No
City of Hopkins	City of Hopkins	Site partner	No
City of Le Sueur	City of Le Sueur	Site partner	No
City of Lakeville	City of Lakeville	Site partner	No
City of Minneapolis	City of Minneapolis	Site partner	No
City of Minnetonka	City of Minnetonka	Site partner	No
City of Moorhead	City of Moorhead	Site partner	No
City of Plymouth	City of Plymouth	Site partner	No
City of Roseville	City of Roseville	Site partner	No
City of Saint Peter	City of Saint Peter	Site partner	No
City of Winona	City of Winona	Site partner	No
Great River Greening	Great River Greening	Site partner	No
Mississippi Park Connection	Mississippi Park Connection	Site partner	No
Rochester Parks & Recreation	Rochester Parks & Recreation	Site partner	No
Tree Trust	Tree Trust	Site partner	No
Karen Zumach	Tree Trust	Contracted forestry trainer	No
Carlton Soil and Water Conservation District	Carlton Soil and Water Conservation District	Site partner	No
City of Belle Plaine	City of Belle Plaine	Site partner	No
City of Brooklyn Park	City of Brooklyn Park	Site partner	No
City of Burnsville	City of Burnsville	Site partner	No
City of Duluth	City of Duluth	Site partner	No
City of Rochester	City of Rochester	Site partner	No
Great River Greening	Great River Greening	Site partner	No
Minneapolis Downtown	Minneapolis Downtown	Site partner	No

Improvement District	Improvement District		
Chad Giblin	City Forester	Contracted forestry partner	No
Dylan Kelly	Ampact	Project manager	No

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.
ServeMinnesota shares with the ENRTF and LCCMR a commitment to facilitate changes in behavior to better protect, conserve, and enhance Minnesota's environment and natural resources. We plan to enact this commitment through work done with community partners in communities throughout the state. Our work plan includes meaningful outreach activities which will be designed with host-sites to be appropriate and accessible within the communities being served. We agree that sharing this work and acknowledging ENRTF allows for critical transparency into the use of public funds. We plan to include attributions to ENRTF wherever it is appropriate to do so, including in outreach to prospective site partners, while recruiting service members, and on social media campaigns related to Community Forestry.

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?
Local agencies across the state are working to preserve natural resources so Minnesotans will enjoy active wildlife, clean air, and clear water for generations to come. In recent years, extreme weather has increased the urgency of this work. Bolstering community efforts now offers us the best chance for sustaining and paying for longer-term plans for ecological resiliency. LCCMR funding allows us to leverage powerful, matching funds from the federal government to bring an additional $3 million dollars to directly support Minnesotans statewide who are engaged in this work. Ongoing efforts will be sustained by federal AmeriCorps funding and community investment.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	$ Amount	$ Amount Spent	$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
Impact & Improvement Evaluator		Lead program continuous improvement and evaluation			23%	1.05		$64,491	-	-
							Sub Total	**$64,491**	**$64,491**	**-**
Contracts and Services										
Ampact	Subaward	Since 2003, Ampact has implemented ServeMinnesota's strategic initiatives, including service member compensation and compliance. ENRTF contributions directly compensate AmeriCorps members serving in Community Forestry. ENRTF funds $9,300 towards each member's living allowance; this contribution activates a block grant of federal AmeriCorps dollars, funding the remainder of this project.				100		$950,509	$950,509	-
Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa	Subaward	Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa will implement year three of this project. CCMI brings 22 years of experience in natural resource stewardship and is prepared to recruit and support the remaining 50 members needed to reach our 150-member target while completing outstanding deliverables.				50		$485,000	$485,000	-
							Sub Total	**$1,435,509**	**$1,435,509**	**-**
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**

Capital Equipment										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel In Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel Outside Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Printing and Publication										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Other Expenses										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
							Grand Total	**$1,500,000**	**$1,500,000**	-

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	$ Amount	$ Amount Spent	$ Amount Remaining
State						
			State Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Non-State						
Cash	Federal AmeriCorps Funding	ServeMinnesota is the state's administrator of AmeriCorps funds. We bring federal AmeriCorps dollars into our state and local communities to support initiatives and projects that serve the interests of Minnesotans. In order to activate these funds and earn federal investments, it is necessary that we show local buy-in and traction within our community; we must generate non-federal, financial contributions in order to leverage Federal AmeriCorps funding. This funding supports Community Forestry initiative expenses including member training, compliance, program management, member health insurance, FICA, mileage, and the remainder of member living allowances not funded by ENRTF funds ($21,600 per member X 50 members X 3 years).	Secured	$3,240,000	$3,240,000	-
			Non State Sub Total	**$3,240,000**	**$3,240,000**	**-**
			Funds Total	**$3,240,000**	**$3,240,000**	**-**

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: 58fd1d3b-e2a.pdf

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Document summarizing focus and scope of Community Forestry programming in Minnesota. Members focus on preserving and increasing the tree canopy throughout the state while becoming the next generation of environmental leaders. Members serve at 32 sites and counting, sites include cities, neighborhood associations, and soil and water conservation districts....

Financial Capacity

File: 7b649a3a-9f2.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Signed board resolution	a7f89aee-4c5.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Support letter from Douglas County Park Superintendent	0b45a8b6-234.pdf
Support letter from Carlton SWCD	1fdee169-589.pdf
Support letter from Frogtown Green	c65d01ad-ba3.pdf
Support letter from Ashley Peters	25181146-531.pdf
Background Check Certification Form	1ec18276-a72.pdf
Additional Details for Revision Request Comments 3-4	232e4921-68a.docx
Activities and Milestones Spreadsheet	c8bed8c5-adc.xlsx
Example Listening Session Document	c12418d4-c58.pdf
Activities and Milestones Spreadsheet	42b74f72-ece.xlsx
LCCMR Report Revisions – April 2025	e2d98a70-172.docx
Activities and Milestones - Oct 2025 Report	639884d0-823.xlsx
Activities and Milestones - April 2026 Report	4dfb7ce4-9f7.xlsx
2024-ServeMinnesota-Annual-Report	01ae529f-9ed.pdf
Trees Planted (April - June 2026) Final Update Activity 2	e8b1729f-922.xlsx
Summary of Activities since last reportiong period - Final Update Activity 2	cf296054-3ee.docx
Gravel Bed Nursery photo 1	44080632-ed6.jpe
Gravel Bed Nursery photo 2	c42d0112-fd5.jpe
Gravel Bed Nursery photo 3	5c986f8a-ca5.jpe
Activity 3 Final Update - Additional Information	8aedce8d-4a7.docx
Activities and Milestones	967f926c-e48.xlsx
Final Visual Component	c1902500-0a9.pdf

Media Links

Title	Link
Ampact Acknowledgment	https://www.ampact.us/environment
ServeMinnesota Website Acknowledgment	https://www.serveminnesota.org/program/community-forestry-corps/

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Date: 9/21/22 - Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional details to our workplan. The following changes have been made: (1) Our budget description was modified in response to a question from a committee member to better reflect the fact that LCCMR funds would directly flow to AmeriCorps member expenses by partially funding member living allowance; (2) the Background Check Certification Form was signed by ServeMinnesota CEO, Audrey Suker and uploaded to our attachments page; (3) we added our plans for dissemination.

Date: 11/15/22 - Thank you for the feedback and for the opportunity to revise our proposal. The following changes have been made: (1a) Added Ampact as a sub-award agency to our budgeting section; this change responds to COMMENT ID 1, which asked for additional information on how we intend to distribute stipends to AmeriCorps members. (1b) Removed budget item categorized as Other. (2) Added a Word document to the Attachments page, which responds in significant detail revision requests in COMMENT IDs 2-3. (3) Updated Review page to include a date identifying prior changes to clearly distinguish changes that were made previously from those that are being made presently.

Date 1/26/23: Thank you for working with us to clarify our workplan and to develop our expectations so that we and LCCMR are able to confidently agree on a contract as to what work will be done and what indicators will signal that the work has been successfully completed. We have updated our activities and milestones to reflect the information that we included in a separate attachment on 9/21/22. We have adjusted the approximate completion date for our first-year recruitment activity to 1/31/2024. We have edited the subaward in our budget to reflect 50 FTE/year for 3 years. We have edited the explanation of Ampact's contribution to our project to clarify the relationship between AmeriCorps, Ampact, and ServeMinnesota. In similar fashion, we updated the description of the non-ENRTF funds sourced from Federal AmeriCorps funding; we describe the relationship between ServeMinnesota and AmeriCorps, and we indicate that AmeriCorps funding is made available only when we earn investments from other sources.

Date: 6/6/23 - Thank you for all the work your office has done to prepare, clarify, and submit our Work Plan. We updated Budget section to explicitly reflect Impact and Improvement Evaluation by Dr. Sharon Delcambre, Project Manager for this Work Plan. Dr. Delcambre is identified in the Personnel section, with 0.35 FTE and $105,000 in ENRTF funds. Updated Professional/Technical Contracts to reflect this change in ENRTF fund allocation; ENRTF funds will contribute $9,300 towards each member's living allowance, with the remainder being provided by a block grant of federal AmeriCorps dollars. Updated this section also to correct a grammatical error (corrected from "...each members' living allowances..." to "...each member's living allowance...").

Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

The following are acknowledgements and conditions beyond those already included in the above workplan:

Do you understand and acknowledge the ENRTF repayment requirements if the use of capital equipment changes?

N/A

Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

N/A

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

N/A

Work Plan Amendments

Amendment ID	Request Type	Changes made on the following pages	Justification For Amendment Request (word limit 75)	Date Submitted	Approved	Date of LCCMR Action
1	Amendment Request	• Project Collaborators - Project Manager Info • Other • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Attachments	This amendment transfers the Year 3 subaward ($465,000) from Ampact to Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) following Ampact's decision to sunset Climate Impact Corps operations. The transition will occur following amendment approval, as early as July 2025. CCMI's 22 years of environmental stewardship experience ensures continuity of service delivery and achievement of all original grant outcomes, including recruiting 50 additional AmeriCorps members, completing tree inventory targets, and supporting Emerald Ash Borer planning activities.	July 18, 2025	Yes	July 29, 2025
2	Project Manager	Previous Manager: Sharon Delcambre (Sharon@serveminnesota.org) New Manager: Jessica Ayers-Bean (Jessica@serveminnesota.org)	The project manager role is being transferred to Jessica to ensure oversight and continuity of reporting requirements. This change will facilitate effective coordination between ServeMinnesota and CCMI, maintaining accountability for grant deliverables and ensuring seamless management of all project components through the final year of implementation.	June 27, 2025	Yes	July 14, 2025
3	Amendment Request	• Budget - Personnel • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts	Work initially planned to be carried out by ServeMN staff was completed by Ampact and Conservation Corps; as a result, ServeMN's staffing expenses were decreased without reducing the scope of intended deliverables. We are requesting a budget amendment to revise the amount allocated to Ampact to reflect	June 9, 2026	Yes	June 16, 2026

			final program costs and shift costs from ServeMinnesota staffing support to CCMI's subaward to support additional CCMI member hours.			

Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update August 14, 2026

Date Submitted: September 9, 2026

Date Approved: October 1, 2026

Overall Update
Thank you for supporting ServeMinnesota's community forestry work over these past three years. In partnership with Ampact, Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI), and many community-based host organizations across the state, we supported a wide range of valuable tree care and environmental stewardship projects. This work has made our communities stronger and helped to protect the natural resources Minnesotans cherish. Throughout the funding period, work has ranged from assisted forest migration projects to urban tree planting projects to disaster response and much more. We deployed more than 150 Minnesotans, provided them with the training and mentorship needed to make a lasting impact in their communities.

Activity 1
Over the three year period, these funds worked alongside federal AmeriCorps funding to deploy more than 150 Minnesotans to strengthen forests, improve urban tree canopy, and much more. CCMI successfully recruited, trained, and deployed AmeriCorps service members to host sites; in conjunction with other funds, CCMI deployed more than fifty total members across the state during the final year of our ML 2023 project. These members supported communities from Austin and Rochester to Bemidji and Duluth.

2 additional members were recruited and trained between April 1 and June 30, both were deployed to serve with the City of Eden Prairie. All other members serving during this time period were recruited and trained at the start of the calendar year. In total, over the 3-year grant period, 169 individual service members were recruited, trained, and deployed. This is equivalent to 150 full time members, members occasionally exit the program early and need to be replaced with another individual, which is why the actual number of individuals is higher than the total FTE.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 2
ServeMinnesota, Ampact, and CCMI made strong progress on site-specific tree activities to meet the needs of host sites, including 89,085 trees planted and 112,435 trees inventoried. Due to changing community needs, we exceeded our tree planting goal and did not reach our tree inventory goal. During this time, CCMI experienced lower than anticipated demand for tree inventorying services. CCMI reported an increase in municipalities' use of LiDAR as a time and cost-efficient approach to inventorying trees. There continues to be strong demand for tree management following LiDAR inventorying activities, such as removal, disease management, and planting; CCMI crews are involved in supporting these efforts. CCMI also reassigned crews to Bemidji last fall and again this spring in response to a derecho that blew through the area, knocking down over nine million trees and leaving the community with millions of dollars of damage.

Please see the attached spreadsheet (labeled Trees Planted April - June 2026) showing location and tree count data. An additional attachment (labeled Summary of Activities since last reporting period) details work conducted by members at partner sites from April through the end of the grant.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 3
We met the target outcomes for this activity, including supporting 45 EAB plans, 18 gravel bed nurseries, and 907 outreach and community events. Members continued to support holistic site capacity in important and community specific ways. Host evaluations reflect some of these impacts; notable testimonials included the City of Golden Valley,

Lake of the Woods Soil and Water Conservation District, and the City of Austin, among others.

Golden Valley shared: “The training provided to the members before starting their term was excellent. I really appreciated that Liberty came with a base knowledge of tree identification, chainsaw safety and operation as well as knowledge on invasive species management… Without Liberty, the tree inventory update would not be possible. This was a 100% increase in services. She was also pivotal in the tree planting events allowing for expanded services to residents during a very busy time.”

Lake of the Woods SWCD noted tree planting services were expanded in an area of northern MN where there are very few labor forces for planting trees.

Austin MN shared the value of updated tree inventory maps for tree planting, treatment of ash trees and installing tree watering bags and tree stakes.

Please see Attachments.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination
The ENRTF continues to be acknowledged on ServeMinnesota’s website and annual report. (https://www.serveminnesota.org/program/conservation-corps/)

ServeMinnesota highlighted our ENRTF and LCCMR work in collaboration with CCMI on social media and in our newsletter. We will continue to explore storytelling opportunities to showcase the impact of this project to Minnesota’s communities.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2026

Date Submitted: March 31, 2026

Date Approved: April 20, 2026

Overall Update

Since our October report, ServeMinnesota and Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) have moved from partnership development into full program implementation. Between October and January, we aligned training protocols, transferred Ampact's forestry curriculum to CCMI's learning management system, modified data collection forms to capture tree inventory activities, and successfully recruited host sites and members. In February, 50 AmeriCorps members began service, completing our three-year recruitment goal of 150 members.

Cumulatively, we have met five of six performance targets—including members recruited, trees planted, outreach events, EAB plans, and gravel bed nurseries—and are making progress on the sixth, trees inventoried, which stands at 100,954 of 150,000. Members added 2,226 trees to the inventory in their first four weeks of field work this spring. Peak field season is ahead, and individual member placements at sites in Rochester, Austin, Faribault, and Duluth have tree inventory as a primary project focus.

We are on track to fully expend Year 3 funds by the June 30 project end date.

Activity 1

Fifty CCMI members began service in February 2026, completing the final year of recruitment and meeting our cumulative goal of 150 members. The cohort includes eight individual placements at dedicated forestry host sites and approximately 42 crew members engaged in forestry activities statewide.

CCMI signed a training agreement with Ampact to transfer the Climate Impact Corps forestry curriculum to CCMI's learning management system. Members completed an intensive training sequence in February, earning 183 certifications across a range of competencies; these include Minnesota Tree Inspector certification (UMN Extension) and ANSI Z133 safety standards to tree biology, pruning, chainsaw operation, and First Aid/CPR. Seven individual placement members received this full forestry-specific training before beginning their site assignments.

We are currently recruiting five additional members for early summer deployment to support tree inventory activities during peak field season.

Activity 2

Trees planted stands at 30,252 cumulatively, exceeding the 24,000 target. Trees inventoried stands at 100,954 of 150,000. Members added 2,226 trees to the inventory count in the first four weeks of field work, along with 23 diseased trees flagged or removed. No trees were planted this period due to frozen ground and snow cover; planting activity will resume as the spring season opens.

Since October, we have resolved data alignment questions flagged in our last report. CCMI modified its tracking forms to capture tree inventory activities specifically, and we have established shared definitions of inventory work that reconcile Ampact's prior approach with CCMI's field practices. CCMI crews bring experience in comprehensive tree management—including removal, marking, and disease mitigation—that expands the range of forestry services available to host communities. Individual placements in Rochester, Austin, and Faribault have tree inventory and GIS mapping as primary project scopes, and crew members are contributing inventory and diseased tree management across multiple sites statewide.

With peak field season ahead, we expect significant progress on the remaining inventory target through the end of the grant period.

Activity 3

All three cumulative targets for this activity have been met: 45 EAB plans supported (goal: 30), 18 gravel bed nurseries

(goal: 5), and 907 outreach and community events (goal: 35). We expect Year 3 contributions to increase these totals further.

Seven site-specific service projects are in active development. At the City of Austin, members are assisting with EAB mitigation and developing a community response plan. The Hormel Nature Center in Austin is managing 200 acres of forested area affected by Emerald Ash Borer and Dutch Elm Disease, including invasive species inventorying and gravel bed nursery operations. At River Bend Nature Center in Faribault, members are leading environmental education programming alongside tree and habitat inventory work.

We are also in discussions with CCMI about whether supporting storm-related tree care in Bemidji is within scope for these funds. Whether or not LCCMR funds directly support that work, the partnership that this funding enables continues to strengthen CCMI's forestry capacity statewide, building relationships and expertise that serve Minnesota communities beyond the scope of any single grant.

Dissemination

The ENRTF continues to be acknowledged on ServeMinnesota's website and annual report. We are continuing conversations with our communications team to look for additional ways to highlight ENRTF and LCCMR support.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2025

Date Submitted: October 1, 2025

Date Approved: October 14, 2025

Overall Update

ServeMinnesota completed Year 2 of the ML 2023 LCCMR award in a strong position to meet all remaining program targets by the end of Year 3.

In August 2025, we transitioned implementation from Ampact to Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI). Our team worked closely with CCMI to establish an MOU for grant-funded forestry activities. We are collaborating with CCMI on outreach to previous Ampact member host sites, and putting plans in place for member training and data collection and reporting.

This partnership leverages CCMI's proven operational strengths in member management, workforce development, and field-based conservation work. For example, in 2024, CCMI placed 300 AmeriCorps members supporting forestry activities across Minnesota—improving nearly 30,000 acres, supporting 95 project partners, and planting 64,000 trees, shrubs, and forbs.

CCMI operates on a calendar year, which reflects the seasonal demands of forestry work. While many current 2025 CCMI member placements are addressing grant-aligned community forestry needs, many of those placements focus on activities corresponding to targets we have already attained rather than tree inventories and removals. As such, Year 3 LCCMR funds will support incoming 2026 CCMI member tree inventory and removal activities, which will be reflected in future metrics and financial

Activity 1

Since August, we have worked with Conservation Corps to ensure continuity and accuracy in program implementation. This includes coordinating on training protocols -- integrating relevant parts of Ampact's models with CCMI's established curriculum -- and aligning our approaches to data collection and member placement tracking. We are being thoughtful about which partnerships, placements, and projects are most appropriate for this grant's specific objectives.

CCMI's organizational infrastructure supports comprehensive member development in safe, structured environments where emerging professionals gain leadership and stewardship skills. The partnership expands member training to include additional competencies in disaster response and tree removal, increasing the range of forestry services CCMI members can safely provide to host communities.

CCMI is currently selecting host sites representing a range of Minnesota communities as well as recruiting members to begin their service in 2026. Our intention is for Year 3 LCCMR funds to support 2026 CCMI member forestry activities.

Activity 2

We successfully completed Year 2 of this award in a strong position to meet all performance measures by June 2026, and we are confident we will meet this target in partnership with CCMI.

Because fall represents the prime planting season, many of CCMI's current members are supporting communities in their tree planting efforts. 2026 members will focus their efforts on tree inventorying and tree removals, supported by LCCMR-awarded funds.

Tree inventorying represents a specialized focus requiring the establishment of clear, shared definitions of the work and reporting expectations. Under Ampact's model, inventory activities were conceptually embedded within broader tree marking and removal processes. CCMI crews are trained and equipped to manage comprehensive tree work where hour-based tracking often better captures value and impact. We are reconciling these approaches to ensure accurate reporting while maintaining CCMI's effective workflows and seasonal responsiveness.

Activity 3

CCMI operates across Minnesota with established relationships spanning conservation districts, municipal departments, and nonprofit organizations—providing a strong foundation for capacity-building activities like managing gravel bed nurseries, supporting disease management plans, and leading community engagement.

The transition to CCMI strengthens our ability to deliver holistic, site-responsive forestry programming. CCMI's model emphasizes building sustainable partnerships with diverse host sites, ensuring members address specific community needs and contexts. This approach allows programs to build lasting organizational capacity beyond individual service terms.

While we have met the explicit cumulative targets for this activity (30 EAB plans, 5 gravel bed nurseries, and 35 outreach events supported), we expect these numbers to increase as Year 3 progresses. CCMI's extensive network and member capacity create opportunities for additional capacity-building work that strengthens Minnesota's urban forestry infrastructure and community engagement around tree stewardship.

Dissemination

Since our last report, ServeMinnesota has included mention of the ENRTF in our annual report.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2025

Date Submitted: July 18, 2025

Date Approved: July 29, 2025

Overall Update

Fifty members continue to support communties from Austin to Ely, implementing an array of tree care activities tailored to community needs. Members have made significant progress on our cumulative goals, having inventoried 72,086 trees (48% of our three-year goal) and planted 22,279 trees (93% of our target). The variety of projects is remarkable—from tree distribution and replanting in urban communities to collecting tree seeds adapted to southern Minnesota to support forests under threat from warmer weather. Members are having measurable impacts while developing critical resources like tree inventories and GIS maps that build lasting capacity.

July 18, 2025:

We have attached an updated metrics report that includes year 2 data. Please note that, as part of our routine data verification process as we finalize year two data, we audited the impact metrics tracked in our database and have made corrections to two metrics: gravel bed nurseries supported and emerald ash borer plans supported. SInce our program year ends in July, we took the opportunity to report the data in full program year columns; this allows us to provide finalized data which is clearer and more accurate.

Activity 1

Our 50 year-two AmeriCorps members continue to serve 40 sites in 17 counties from Austin to Ely. Preparations are underway for third year recruitment and placement. Interest in Forestry Corps AmeriCorps service remains strong. We continue to experience high demand among AmeriCorps applicants and, as a result, continue to successfully fill available member slots. In the coming year, as we develop a plan to shift our Forestry Corps work to another partner, we will likely adjust the member service period to better align with the growing season. ServeMinnesota dedicates resources on member recruitment, including via social media, e-mail outreach, college campus outreach, and more. In addition, our implementation partner supports member recruitment within their network of supporters and stakeholders.

Activity 2

Member supervision to pursue site-specific tree activities continues as planned, with members contributing to a wide range of outputs supportive of tree health state wide. With a total of 20,000 trees planted and 70,000 inventoried, members have completed the first milestone of 8,000 trees planted and 50,000 inventoried, and we are approaching the second milestone (16,000 trees planted/100,000 inventoried).

Other significant outputs aligning with specific goals and projects of host sites this year include: 40,000 tree seeds collected for forest-assisted migration, 30,000 trees cared for (watered, pruned, etc.), 4,000 trees marked for removal.

Activity 3

Member service continues to make a difference for the ability of host sites to meet local needs, including volunteer mobilization, maintenance of communication resources (pamphlets, databases, maps, etc.), and more. This is important work that sites otherwise delay because they don't have the staffing capacity to consistently address both immediate, urgent community needs and longer-term needs for improvements or updates. Members help to bridge this gap. We have exceeded our expectations for outreach events and gravel bed nurseries. EAB plans are in progress, and we will add them as they are completed and verified.

Dissemination

We maintain acknowledgments as previously described on ServeMinnesota and Ampact's websites. We will also include acknowledgment in our upcoming annual report.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2024

Date Submitted: November 11, 2024

Date Approved: November 12, 2024

Overall Update
Since the approved revision was submitted on 7/17/2024, we have finished the first program year and begun the second. We have included an updated spreadsheet in the attachments, which shows the measured impacts through the end of July. We are on track for this second year, with members recruited and placed at host sites across the state. Our impact data so far is modest, as expected.

Activity 1
We have successfully finished our first year of this funded project, and we are approximately 30 days into the current program year. Already, we have recruited and deployed more than 50 AmeriCorps members (E6 in attached spreadsheet) to engage in tree care activities for the year ahead, with placements at 38 sites across 15 counties: Mower, Hennepin, Blue Earth, St. Louis, Dakota, Le Sueur, Ramsey, Nicollet, Winona, Stearns, Lake, Rice, Olmsted, Wabasha, and Washington.

Activity 2
We are on track; all members will have service plans and associated projects that they develop with their sites, and we will use these plans to collect and organize output data in the coming months.

Tom D. pointed out a discrapancy between our tree planting goal and our reported number and asked for clarification. We have updated the attached spreadsheet to include additional tree plantings. The previously reported number for May is unchanged and correctly captured the appropriate total (2,800), and our error was not including the full amount for June (14,261) and July (3,818), for a cumulative 20,879 trees planted. To explain: Earlier in the year, we updated our internal data tracking to distinguish (a) total tree plantings and (b) tree plantings where members assisted or facilitated tree plantings (for instance, by leading groups of residents for a tree planting event or by supporting host site staff during tree plantings).

Activity 3
Most of our host sites are returning from last year, which speaks both to the importance of the work members do and the strong partnerships we build with community-based sites where this work is carried out. See column F for cumulative progress: 30 gravel bed nursuries built and 275 outreach and community events as of 9/24/24.

Dissemination
Alongside recruitment details posted on our website for community members considering service, we have included the following: Forestry activities through Climate Impact Corps are partially funded by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). This does not necessarily represent the policy of or endorsement by the State of Minnesota.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2024

Date Submitted: July 17, 2024

Date Approved: July 23, 2024

Overall Update
Community forestry activities are proceeding well. We are on track for each of our detailed metrics, and the program continues to have significant broader impacts on sites and communities. Our program has scaled rapidly over the last few years; this growth continues to transform our program impact and work more holistically toward promising community forestry strategies and site-based capacity building. This involves both a challenge and an opportunity; as we grow and prepare members for high-impact service, the addressable needs expand beyond our initial expectations and output guidelines. We intend to meet our activity targets while also continuing to learn in community with our partners how to measure and evaluate the broader impact and significance of this project.

Activity 1
50 Community Forestry members were successfully recruited and deployed this year at more than 40 sites across the state, including at non-profits and local governments in Minneapolis, Ely, Winona, St. Louis Park, and several others. Member recruitment is often challenging due to ongoing economic trends and labor shortages; these considerations reinforce the importance of this work and member service. We continue to pursue additional partnerships with host sites, philanthropic organizations, and other aligned organizations to sustain the program model, serve those most in need, and improve the benefits and development opportunities available to members.

Activity 2
Member services are going well, with more than 45,000 hours of service being delivered as of July 15th, 2024. In addition to inventorying 46,800 trees and directly planting 3,000, members have supported their host sites in planting more than 17,000 trees statewide. It is sometimes challenging to estimate the outputs of member activities because members, sites, and their communities work together to improve tree canopy. Even when members do not directly place the tree in the ground, they serve the tree planting needs of their community by mobilizing volunteers, identifying trees, or collecting data; tree planting events are a prime example of this, and members have engaged 2,500 community members in community tree events and mobilized more than 7,000 community members in forestry stewardship activities.

Activity 3
With more than 250 outreach and education events, we have surpassed our initial target for this activity. This success speaks to the compelling community needs and interests for this program. Many sites request to host members looking to address unmet community forestry needs, and it can be challenging to precisely anticipate the shape and character of those needs ahead of time. Our members are trained to provide a range of services, and the higher-than-expected number of outreach and education events is a sign that this is working well. Members are also spending significant time managing gravel bed nurseries and developing EAB outreach plans. We expect to exceed our initial estimate for these targets as well.

Dissemination
The ENRTF will be acknowledged on ServeMinnesota's website and our annual report. Ampact, our implementation partner and sub-grantee, also acknowledges the ENRTF on its website. And ServeMinnesota mentioned ENRTF support on impact sheets distributed at in-person listening sessions for community members in Saint Cloud, Austin, Rochester, and Chisholm.