

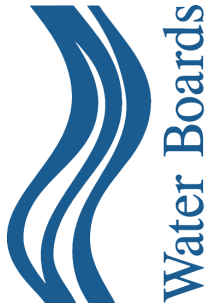


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State Water Board Awards \$ 50 Million to Six Communities for Clean Water Projects

Awards Include Federal Stimulus Dollars
Projects estimated to create or retain about 175 jobs.

SACRAMENTO -- The State Water Board has OK'd \$50 million for a variety of projects to protect public health and the environment and create jobs for Californians. The funding includes \$19 million in federal stimulus money. That money is allocated to California for clean water projects under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The money announced today is in the form of grants and ultra-low interest one-percent loans in Marin; Mendocino; Plumas; San Mateo; Sonoma and Ventura counties.

"Our goal is to get Recovery Act money into our communities as quickly as possible so we are creating and protecting jobs while also protecting the environment," said Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. "I am glad the State Water Board is moving quickly and carefully. Sewer projects and watershed restoration may not sound exciting, but they are important for protecting our clean water, will put Californians back to work, and will serve our state for decades in the future."

"The State Water Board identified these shovel-ready projects so we can both get people back to work and protect water quality," said Charlie Hoppin, Chair of the State Water Board. "Even in routine years, we handle more than \$200 million dollars in loans for these important purposes. This year, the need is more urgent and our staff started early to identify potential recipients so that we can distribute the federal money quickly and responsibly. California has a verified need and we have validated applications for more dollars than are currently available. We will put any additional funds to good use quickly and efficiently."

As of these projects, the state Water Board has now allocated ARRA funds to nine projects in eight California communities. The Water Board approved the first Stimulus project the same day that it received money from the U.S. EPA.

The new projects that have received funding are:

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City of Millbrae (San Mateo County), Water Pollution Control Plant Renovations Project, will renovate the City's aging wastewater treatment plant to provide a modern, cost effective facility that can reliably protect public health and water quality in San Francisco Bay., \$34 million one-percent ultra-low interest rate loan. The project is estimated to create or retain about 70 jobs. (Stimulus and regular funding.)

Ventura County Waterworks District No. 16/Piru Wastewater Treatment Plant (Ventura County), will increase and enhance the District's wastewater treatment capacity \$8,554,771 grant and \$5,554,771 one-percent ultra-low interest rate loan (30 jobs). (Stimulus and regular funding.)

The remaining projects are totally funded with federal stimulus money:

Tomales Bay Watershed Council (Marin County), Tomales Bay Wetlands Restoration/ Monitoring Plan, Integrates the restoration of the Giacomini Wetland and water quality monitoring to reduce and eliminate existing pollutants and identify emerging pollutants, \$799, 629 grant (15 jobs).

Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District (Sonoma County), Estero Americano Sediment Reduction Project and Rangeland Water Quality Enhancement Project, reduces sediment and agricultural pollution in the Estero Americano watershed, \$ 886,941 in grants (30 jobs).

Plumas Corp. (Plumas County), Upper Middle Fork Feather River Complex, Implementing channel/floodplain restoration on five tributaries to the Upper Middle Fork of the Feather River \$158, 577 grant (20 jobs).

Mendocino County Department of Transportation, Tomki Road Feasibility Study and Prototype Vented Low Water Crossing, The Project will develop and install a prototype vented low water crossing to protect water quality in Cave Creek \$149,450 grant (10 jobs).

Ventura County Supervisor Kathy Long said, "We are very excited to hear that the Piru Wastewater Treatment Plant Project is among the first to be awarded federal economic stimulus funding. Without this financial assistance, the sewer rates for the disadvantaged community of Piru would have been more than \$100 a month. Additionally, the project is expected to create 30 jobs, thereby helping our local economy." Long is Vice-Chair of the Board.

"The ability to use federal stimulus funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act 2009 will be a boon to both the natural resources and the

local economy in western Sonoma County. This money will be granted to the Resource Conservation District (RCD) to support projects designed to reduce both sediment and nutrient loading to the Estero Americano Watershed,” said Lisa Hulette, Executive Director of the Gold Ridge RCD. “These types of resource conservation and protection projects are a significant part of our local economy, and will create local jobs. The RCD will continue working at the grass-roots level to nurture and conserve natural resources and improve the environment.”

“We will be able to complete an important wetland restoration and monitoring project in the Tomales Bay watershed,” said Rob Carson, Water-Quality Program Manager of the Tomales Bay Watershed Council. “It will restore approximately 12% of the central California coastal wetlands. This funding will save at least 15 jobs over the next four years and will demonstrate the effect of a large-scale restoration on water quality”.

Under the stimulus program the State Water Board is handling \$270.5 million in addition to more than \$200 million normally loaned by the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) each year. The stimulus money is available for projects in communities that might not normally be able to qualify for an SRF loan. The stimulus money is being granted or loaned at rates even lower than normally available from the SRF.

The Recovery Act money was made available to the State Water Board by the U.S. EPA. At least 20% of the funds provided under the Recovery Act are to be used for green infrastructure, water and energy efficiency improvements and other environmentally innovative projects.

The State Water Board received the stimulus money on May 21, 2009 and made its first award under the program on the same day. It has been working with local governments and others to make sure their clean water projects were ready to begin work and qualify for stimulus money as quickly as possible.

The State Water Board assists local communities in preventing and cleaning up water pollution. Its financial assistance, through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, concentrates on wastewater (sewer) projects and treatment plants. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) regulates drinking water quality and operates the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund which provides low interest loans and grants to public water systems for infrastructure improvements.

