

Gov. Gregoire and Dept. of Ecology announce clean water project recommendations for recovery funding

Local News

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OLYMPIA - Gov. Chris Gregoire and Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) have announced the final proposed list of clean water projects to receive \$65.4 million in federal stimulus funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act).

Projects eligible for the Recovery Act funds - which will arrive in the form of low-interest loans and additional subsidies through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund - are publicly owned water pollution control facilities and associated activities that are ready to proceed to construction. Ecology will administer the funding.

The funding will help local governments pay for water pollution control infrastructure including the upgrade and expansion of wastewater, reclaimed water and stormwater facilities, and green infrastructure projects that improve water or energy efficiency, or other environmentally innovative activities.

Ecology integrated the new federal Recovery Act funding with its annual water quality grant and loan funding cycle, nearly doubling the anticipated funding the state can offer for state fiscal year 2010. Prior to the Recovery Act funding, Ecology planned on distributing \$71 million subject to the final state budget. Ecology proposes to now offer approximately \$140 million.

"We're making sure every dollar will be spent on high priority projects from small towns to big cities to protect our state's water quality and create jobs," said Gregoire.

Of the total \$140 million available, Ecology proposes to fund \$60 million for Puget Sound projects. Of the \$65.4 million in recovery funding, about \$22 million is tagged for projects to benefit Puget Sound.

Ecology Director Jay Manning said, "Investments in protecting and cleaning up Washington's environment play a huge role in securing Washington's quality of life and powering our economy. Communities, families and businesses need clean water, air and soil. These projects will pay off immediately and for generations to come."

For a complete list of the projects, see State Revolving Fund FY 2010 Draft Intended Use Plan posted on Ecology's Web site at:

[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/fun ... ding/FedStimFundsSRF.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/fun...ding/FedStimFundsSRF.html)

Examples of funding Ecology proposes include:

\$4.1 million for Raymond and South Bend's Willapa Regional Wastewater Facility in Pacific County. The project includes new sewer lines, new force mains, upgrades to pump stations, and a

new crossing of the Willapa River. The plant, which will be in Raymond, will improve water quality in Willapa River and estuary. \$23 million to finish the Airway Heights Water Reclamation and Recharge Project in Spokane County. The project improves Airway Heights's system to collect and transport wastewater to new treatment facilities. It will include construction of infrastructure to reuse highly treated wastewater for local customers and to discharge the water back into the stressed West Plains underground water supply (aquifer). The project benefits the Spokane River.

\$6.1 million to design and construct a sewer system and a septic system replacement project in Gorst in Kitsap County. The projects will benefit public health and water quality in Puget Sound's Sinclair Inlet.

\$3.7 million for the Yauger Park Regional Stormwater Pond Expansion Project in Olympia, Thurston County. This green infrastructure project will provide enhanced water quality treatment and additional storage volume at a regional stormwater facility. Treatment of runoff from a rapidly developing urban area will improve water quality in polluted downstream waters and improve habitat for several species of endangered salmon. The project will benefit nearby Puget Sound.

Ecology expects to finalize the funding list by mid-May 2009 after reviewing public comments on the proposed list. It can begin obligating and distributing funds once the Legislature passes SHB 2116 and the capital budget. The agency received 119 applications, worth approximately \$455 million in projects, even though just \$65.4 million in stimulus funding was available.

Ecology is accepting public comments on its Draft Offer and Applicant List and Draft Intended Use Plan until 5 p.m., May 4, 2009, and will hold a public meeting at 10 a.m., April 24, 2009, at the Pierce County Library Processing and Administration Building, 3005 112th St. East in Tacoma.

Send comments on the Draft Offer List and Draft Intended Use Plan to Jeff Nejedly, Department of Ecology, Water Quality Program, P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600. You may also e-mail Nejedly at jnej461@ecy.wa.gov or send a fax to 360-407-7151. If you have questions, call Nejedly at 360-407-6566.

Washington state is administering the Recovery Act investments with an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability. Gov. Gregoire created a Web site, www.recovery.wa.gov, enabling every Washingtonian to see where tax dollars are going and hold government accountable for the results. On the federal level, President Obama has appointed Vice President Biden, a proven and aggressive inspector general, to oversee the recovery efforts of all the states and to root out waste and fraud. This combined oversight will ensure taxpayer dollars aren't wasted. Related Links: [Recommended Water Project List](#) [Washington Recovery web site](#)