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Ohio EPA Funds the Largest Number of Water Pollution Projects in Nation and Third Largest for Drinking Water Projects with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funds

U.S. EPA Administrator Jackson Joins Ohio in Announcement of Job Creation/Retention, Millions of Ohioans Positively Impacted by Water Projects

Ohio Governor Ted Strickland, U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson and Ohio EPA Director Chris Korleski today announced that Ohio leads the nation with 274 water pollution control projects. Additionally, Ohio ranks third with 62 drinking water projects funded when comparing all states issuing American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. These stimulus funds are creating and retaining hundreds of jobs in Ohio.

Water pollution control construction projects to protect or improve the quality of Ohio's rivers, streams, lakes and other water resources will impact 5.6 million Ohioans in 187 communities and have already created/retained more than 400 jobs. Approximately 325 construction contractors and equipment/material suppliers have been awarded direct contracts, with 143 working on home septic system installations. When compared to market loan rates, the combination of stimulus funds and low-interest loans will save Ohioans \$352 million in financing costs.

Drinking water projects will help ensure that 1.2 million Ohioans in 150 communities have access to adequate and safe supplies of drinking water and have already created more than 300 jobs. These projects have resulted in contracts with 119 companies and numerous subcontractors, subsequently leading to additional community economic stimulus. It is estimated that Ohio communities will save nearly \$85 million in interest costs when compared to market loan rates thanks to the combination of stimulus funds and low-interest loans.

"These much-needed projects either improve the ability of Ohio's citizens to access clean, safe drinking water, or they help insure that wastewater is properly managed and treated by our communities before being discharged to Ohio's waterways. With the availability of the ARRA money, we have had an unprecedented opportunity to support over 300 projects across the state, projects which will create environmental and public health benefits to nearly 7 million Ohioans," said Ohio EPA Director Chris Korleski. "Ohio EPA has worked extremely hard to put the best and broadest water infrastructure recovery program in place, and we have been able to put ARRA funds to work in hundreds of communities."

Ohio EPA received \$220.6 million in ARRA funds for water pollution control projects and \$58.46 million in ARRA funds for drinking water projects. Most projects receiving ARRA subsidies were combined with zero percent or low-interest loans through the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) for water pollution projects and the Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) for drinking water projects.

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An additional \$134.7 million has been obligated by WPCLF to help fund the 274 water pollution control projects. The WSRLA provided \$61.4 million in funding to help the 62 drinking water projects.

"These infrastructure upgrades will give millions more Ohioans access to safe drinking water and cleaner lakes, streams and rivers in their communities. And, while we're improving the quality of life for Ohio families, we're also putting people to work," Governor Strickland said. "These projects are true investments in our communities and in Ohio's workforce. I commend Director Korleski and his staff for their tireless work to maximize the ARRA resources that we received."

Water Pollution Control

As one of the five top-funded states, Ohio funded more ARRA projects than the other four states combined. Ohio also ranks first in the nation for funding the most green projects with a total of 79 projects. Ohio is one of only two states to devote a portion of its ARRA funding (\$3.4 million) to help home owners replace or upgrade 463 failing home septic systems through a pilot project partnership with the Ohio Department of Health.

"The health and economic benefits achieved through clean water and sewage technologies are tremendous," said Dr. Alvin D. Jackson, the director of the Ohio Department of Health. "These investments will go a long way in improving the health and well-being of Ohio communities."

Water pollution control funding provided:

- 215 miles of new sanitary sewers;
- 15 miles of new storm sewers;
- 110 miles of rehabilitation of existing sewers;
- 9.7 stream miles improved;
- 100 acres of wetlands physically improved;
- 5,472 failing home sewage treatment systems eliminated by the construction of new sewers; and
- replaced or improved 463 failing home sewage treatment systems.

In addition, 35 enforcement actions were resolved or avoided and 26 projects eliminated or reduced sewer overflows and basement backups.

Drinking Water

Ohio's drinking water program ranks third in the nation for funding the most ARRA drinking water projects and ranks second for providing 39.7 percent of its total ARRA funding allotment for green projects. Funding to provide high quality and reliable quantities of drinking water will have numerous benefits to Ohioans including:

ARRA projects funded
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- 19 projects for new and/or improvements to existing drinking water treatment facilities;
- 19 projects for connecting struggling public water systems to other more reliable systems;
- 12 projects to provide public drinking water to areas with contaminated or less reliable private wells;
- 32 projects to replace leaking and failing waterlines;
- 7 projects to install new wells;
- 15 projects to install new and replacing existing pumps and booster stations;
- 10 projects to install and repairing existing water storage facilities; and
- 7 projects for new water meters.

In total, nearly 34 miles of leaking and failing water lines will be upgraded or replaced preventing about 177 million gallons in water loss annually. Additionally, 14 public water systems under enforcement for exceeding drinking water standards will return to compliance.

Ohio EPA announced these program successes in conjunction with the one year ARRA anniversary of February 17, 2010. Joining Ohio EPA Director Chris Korleski at the press conference in Columbus were: First Lady Frances Strickland, U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson, U.S. EPA Region 5 Acting Deputy Regional Administrator Walter Kovalick, Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Alvin D. Jackson, Ohio Water Development Authority Executive Director Steve Grossman and Ohio Rural Community Assistance Program State Director Randy Hunt.

For additional information on the federal program, please visit www.epa.gov/recovery/, or see the Web sites below for Ohio specific details.

A list of the final water and wastewater projects funded by ARRA in January 2010 is available at www.epa.ohio.gov/portals/47/nr/2010/february/JanuaryARRA.pdf.

An online media kit is available at www.epa.ohio.gov/pic/media/stimulusfinal.aspx.

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www.epa.ohio.gov

Water Pollution Control Projects: www.epa.ohio.gov/defa/stimulus_pages/stimulus.aspx
Drinking Water Projects: www.epa.ohio.gov/ddagw/dwaf_economic_stimulus.aspx