

Creating Jobs through Green Infrastructure



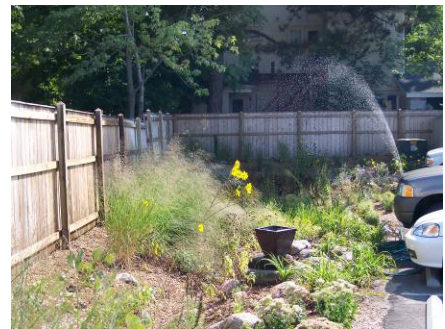
Congress' economic recovery package includes much-needed funding for clean water, including green infrastructure. This funding can begin to rebuild the nation's water supply infrastructure which for too long has been strained by rapid growth and lack of investment and will be further challenged by a changing climate.

States and cities will be receiving water infrastructure funding through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund in coming months. Communities will need to be prepared to spend this money quickly in a way that will create jobs and begin to build a 21st century water infrastructure. Green infrastructure is the most cost-effective way of accomplishing those goals.

Green Infrastructure Will Stimulate the Economy

Green infrastructure creates jobs across diverse sectors including plumbing, landscaping, building, and design, and also supports supply chains and the jobs connected with manufacturing of materials including roof membranes, rain barrels, and permeable pavement. Several examples highlight the job creation potential in this area:

- PlaNYC, New York City's broad sustainability plan, will create over 268,000 years of employment in water infrastructure construction and nearly 4,000 permanent jobs related to operations and maintenance of those projects. Green infrastructure projects will create 14,000 years of employment for construction and over 3,600 permanent jobs;
- Washington, DC estimates that fully implementing the Green Roof Study would create 1,769 full time jobs;
- American Rivers' research has found that if 600 American cities over 50,000 in population covered 5% of their larger roofs (>10,000 sf) with green roofs, it would stimulate \$48.5 billion in labor and materials investments, and create 95,000 jobs for 10 years.



American Rivers and our partners have identified **over 250 green infrastructure water projects in 33 states and the District of Columbia with a total cost of \$1.2 billion that are ready to begin within 6-9 months.** Many cities are already incorporating sustainable green infrastructure into their water management strategies and this surge in interest has been enhanced by the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Green Infrastructure Initiative and formal recognition of the validity of using green infrastructure techniques to meet regulatory requirements.

Green Infrastructure: The 21st Century Tool for Clean Water

There is an immediate need to significantly reinvest in America's traditional water infrastructure, however, the economic stimulus package should encourage smart, innovative approaches that protect the water our communities rely on for the future. Green infrastructure approaches such as restoration of wetlands, streamside buffers, rain gardens and green roofs have far-reaching benefits. These modern approaches to managing wet weather reduce stormwater runoff and sewage overflows, increase water infiltration to recharge drinking water supplies, and create valuable greenspace. Green infrastructure costs less than traditional hard infrastructure projects, and reduces the amount of water flowing to treatment plants which reduces energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions associated with water treatment and prolongs the life of existing hard infrastructure.

For more information please contact Bill Lee at blee@amrivers.org or (202) 243-7070 or Katherine Baer at kbaer@amrivers.org or (202) 347-7550