



**WESTERN  
FORESTRY  
LEADERSHIP  
COALITION**

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## WESTERN FORESTRY LEADERSHIP COALITION MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** WFLC Members  
**FROM:** Caitlyn Peel, Government Affairs Director  
**SUBJECT:** American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 – Update  
**DATE:** Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009

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*This memo provides updated information on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The previous update was dated January 15, 2009 and is available at [http://www.wflccenter.org/news\\_pdf/315\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.wflccenter.org/news_pdf/315_pdf.pdf).*

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Act) of 2009 was signed by President Obama today, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The House and Senate both voted to approve the conference report on Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup> by 246-183 in the House and 60-38 in the Senate. This final “economic stimulus bill” totals \$787 billion. With the goal of strengthening the economy and creating employment opportunities and job preservation, the Act includes key areas such as: energy, science, transportation, tax cuts, health care costs and many others. The Administration has stated that they expect this Act to retain or create over 3.5 million jobs.

For several weeks, the Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) has been working to explore and promote the numerous possibilities for economic stimulus green jobs in the western US. The CWSF submitted an Economic Stimulus Green Jobs Package that was focused on ‘shovel-ready’ opportunities that would result in immediate job creation and stimulus. Please see [http://www.wflccenter.org/news\\_pdf/312\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.wflccenter.org/news_pdf/312_pdf.pdf). Several of those opportunities were included in the final version of the Act.

House and Senate versions of the Act differed in many ways, including total dollar amounts provided for the US Forest Service and the activities authorized for those funds. During the conference committee negotiations, CWSF, National Association of State Foresters (NASF), and many partner organizations successfully worked to promote the House language for the US Forest Service (increased funding levels, broader authorities for State & Private Forestry program funding), along with the addition of report language that would waive the need for states to match the funding received through the S&PF authorities.

The Act includes many provisions that could be beneficial to State and Island Forestry agencies. Some of those provisions will be detailed in this document, though the sheer size of the package means that not all possible funding streams will be identified here. As more opportunities come to light, updated information will be sent to the WFLC membership and posted on the WFLC website ([www.wflcweb.org](http://www.wflcweb.org)).

### **US FOREST SERVICE**

The US Forest Service will receive \$1.15 billion total (\$650 million for construction on public lands and \$500 million for reducing wildfire threats on federal and non-federal land) in the Act. The \$650 million is to be used for road maintenance and decommissioning, trail maintenance and decommissioning, facility improvement and maintenance, abandoned mine remediation, watershed

restoration/ecosystem enhancements, and the support costs necessary to complete this work. WFLC members with fish habitat issues and needs should look to this provision for possible funding opportunities.

Of the \$500 million targeted for wildland fire management, \$250 million is designated for use on federal lands. This funding is to be used for hazardous fuels reduction, hazard mitigation, forest health and rehabilitation. The remaining \$250 million is designated for state and private lands to be used for hazardous fuels reduction, ecosystem improvements and forest health activities. Up to \$50 million of this funding can be used for grants to increase wood-to-energy use on all lands. Thanks to the work of CWSF, NASF and many of our partners, the matching and cost-share requirements for state and private authorities have been waived. None of the funding for state and private lands is subject to providing a match, and the conference report allows for full use of State & Private Forestry authorities for the use of the funds.

The US Forest Service has asked each Region to submit a list of priority projects to the Washington, DC office by February 20, 2009. The NASF and the CWSF have sent information to their respective membership with the timeframe and requirements for submitting projects. The US Forest Service will be submitting a plan for the funding within 20 days of the bill being signed by the President. The agency will also identify projects that can be 'on the ground' within seven days after the Act has been signed.

Some other provisions of interest to forestry in the west are noted below. If any of these provisions are of interest to you, we can help you to connect with the respective agency for more information.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR – BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

The Act provides \$125 million for maintenance, rehabilitation, and restoration of facilities, property, trails and lands for remediation of abandoned mines and wells. Also included is \$180 million in funding for construction activities on BLM lands including reconstruction, decommissioning and repair of roads, bridges trails, property and facilities and energy retrofits. For BLM wildfire management specific to hazardous fuels reduction, the Act provides \$15 million.

#### **FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE – RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

\$165 million is provided for deferred maintenance, construction and capital improvement projects on national wildlife refuges and national fish hatcheries and for high priority habitat restoration projects. Another \$115 million is included for construction, reconstruction, and repair of roads, bridges, property and facilities as well as energy efficient retrofits.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

There is \$43 billion in energy and efficiency programs and energy-related tax provisions were funded at over \$20 billion. Energy efficiency and renewables make up a significant piece of the spending in the ARRA. Of the \$2.5 billion for applied research, development, demonstration and deployment activities, \$800 million is specified for use on biomass projects. The Act also extends the renewable energy production tax credit through 2013 for qualifying facilities including biomass, waste to energy, geothermal and other facilities and allows for developers of renewable energy facilities to claim the investment tax credit instead of the production tax credit. The intent of this provision is to allow for more up-front investment from developers because they receive credit on

the investment they make and not on the results of the investment. There are other provisions intended to promote development of renewables such as:

- Innovative Technology Loan Guarantee Program – \$6 billion  
This program is authorized in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, the \$6 billion is to be used to fund new loan guarantees with some funding set aside for administrative costs.
- Temporary Program for Rapid Deployment of Renewable Energy and Electrical Power Transmission Projects – \$500 million  
This is a new program authorized as an addition to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that could be used for renewable energy systems that generate electricity, including biofuel projects in the pilot or demonstration scale.

#### **NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

There are opportunities for competitive research funding through NRCS in the Act as well as the possibility of rural development and facilities loan programs through NRCS' Rural Community Advancement Program.

#### **FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

The Act provides \$210 million for firefighter assistance grants (up to \$15 million each) directed towards modifying, upgrading or constructing non-federal fire stations. Fire departments (defined as any agency or organization with a formally recognized arrangement with a State, territory, local or tribal authority to provide fire suppression to a population within a fixed geographical area on a first-due basis) are eligible for funding.

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