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Secretary Vilsack awards \$84.8 million for watershed projects

By Agri-Pulse Staff

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In the latest sign of a flood of federal stimulus money headed to rural America, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced Thursday that the USDA is sending \$84.8 million to state and local governments to improve water quality, increase water supply, decrease soil erosion, and improve fish and wildlife habitat in rural communities as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.

“President Obama is committed to improving water quality, creating more dependable water supplies and decreasing soil erosion and this funding will make a big difference in the lives of the people who live in these rural communities,” Vilsack said.

Other major benefits include improved community safety and health, flood mitigation, sediment control, and enhanced fish and wildlife habitat.

“For example,” Vilsack said “the Neshaminy Creek Watershed [Pennsylvania] project funding will be used to acquire, elevate and flood-protect approximately 80 homes and businesses in the 100-year flood plain, while the Beaver Creek [Colorado] Watershed project will develop 45 land-treatment contracts with family-owned farms, resulting in significant water quality improvement, water conservation, and enhancement of scarce wildlife habitat.”

ARRA funds will be used to develop conservation measures such as planting vegetative cover and creating shallow water ponds to improve wildlife habitat, improving irrigation efficiency and conserving water, installing filter strips and soil erosion control practices, flood proofing homes and enhancing stream corridor and floodplain function, and constructing small flood control dams.

USDA is directing technical and financial assistance available through this funding toward projects that are ready to begin and that will relieve stress on local economies through the creation of over 1,400 jobs.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has worked closely with sponsors to identify projects that are ready for immediate implementation. The 53 projects funded with \$84.8 million are:

Location	Project	Funding
Arkansas	Upper Petit Jean	134,000
California	Stemple Creek	275,000
California	Lower Silver Creek	10,000,000
Colorado	Beaver Creek	2,500,000
Colorado	Highline Breaks	629,000
Colorado	Holbrook Lake Ditch	185,000
Colorado	Limestone-Graveyard Creeks	187,000
Colorado	Trinidad Lake North	79,000
Iowa	Mill Creek	57,500
Iowa	Hacklebarney	161,000
Iowa	East Fork of The Grand River	1,258,250
Idaho	Southern Washington County Water Quality Project	430,000
Kansas	Big Caney	214,000
Kentucky	Fox Creek	4,092,880
Louisiana	Bayou Duralde-Lower Nezpique	1,270,000
Louisiana	Red Bayou	3,200,000
Minnesota	Whitewater River	299,000
Minnesota	Kanaranzi-Little Rock	245,000
Missouri	East Yellow Creek	420,000
Missouri	West Fork of Big Creek	950,000
Missouri	Upper Locust Creek	1,730,000
Missouri	Big Creek-Hurricane Creek	950,000
Missouri	East Fork of Big Creek	850,000
Montana	Buffalo Rapids	281,000
Nebraska	Blackwood Creek	2,000,000
New York	New York City Watersheds	1,000,000
North Carolina	Swan Quarter Watershed	5,280,858
Oklahoma	Upper Red Rock Creek	60,000
Oklahoma	Stillwater Creek	40,000
Oklahoma	Turkey Creek	1,670,000
Pennsylvania	Tulpehocken Creek	1,375,000
Pennsylvania	Red-White Clay Creeks	430,000
Pennsylvania	Brandywine Creek	20,000
Pennsylvania	Neshaminy Creek	10,075,000
Northern Marianas (Saipan)	Kagman	4,150,000
Texas	Elm Creek (Cen-Tex)	746,000
Texas	Caney Creek	399,000
Texas	Trinity - Big Sandy Creek	369,000
Texas	Lower Brushy Creek	2,502,000

Texas	Plum Creek	1,335,000
Texas	Trinity - Little Elm & Laterals	1,508,000
Texas	Trinity - Chambers Creek	8,558,000
Texas	Trinity - East Fork Above Lavon	666,000
Texas	Trinity - Hickory Creek	658,000
Texas	Trinity - Pilot Grove	744,000
Texas	Trinity - Richland Creek	3,125,000
Texas	Upper Brushy Creek	930,000
Virginia	Little Reed Island Creek	225,300
Virginia	Chestnut Creek	367,700
Virginia	North Fork Powell River	380,000
Washington	Omak Creek	625,000
West Virginia	Upper Deckers Creek	2,100,000
<u>West Virginia</u>	<u>Upper Tygart</u>	<u>3,025,000</u>
Total		\$84,761,488

Funding provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is part of the Obama administration's plans to modernize the nation's infrastructure, jumpstart the economy and create jobs. For more information on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, visit www.recovery.gov.

To learn more about your eligibility for USDA projects underway through the Recovery Act, go to www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome.