

March 3, 2009

Dear Community Leader and/or Water Manager,

With all of the questions being raised regarding stimulus funding, opportunities for water projects, and matters of process and timeframes, perhaps the following information and attachment will prove a useful resource. This information relates to the federal stimulus funding to be distributed by DEP for water-related projects.

1. The State is expecting around \$90M for water and \$130 – 200M for wastewater projects. Stimulus funds will be administered just like SRF **loans** and ½ of funds will go to disadvantaged (pop under 7500) municipalities.
2. The bulk of the stimulus money for which DEP will be responsible will come through the EPA and then the State's Clean Water (wastewater/storm water) and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan programs.
3. It is expected that there will be more financial assistance opportunities for wastewater and storm water projects than for drinking water projects because the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) for wastewater and storm water projects is much larger and has certain flexibilities, both in terms of what it funds and how it can generate revenues, than the smaller, more restricted Drinking Water SRF.
4. Any water-related project will either have to be on the existing priority lists or come in by way of a new request to be included on the priority lists under the existing program's ranking system.
5. The State's backlog of shovel-ready projects is especially large in the Clean Water SRF program, but there likely will be the need to solicit new drinking water projects.
6. There is the possibility that the State will receive more money than can be dedicated to already qualifying projects. The stimulus money, along with a recent \$250 million bond issue, is expected to clear out the backlog of projects and enable new projects to be funded.
7. New projects can be submitted for consideration on the State's priority lists. The initial application is relatively simple (a request for inclusion) with basic information to identify the type and scope of project(s), location, service area and service population, estimated costs, project completion schedule, and information to "score" the project in terms of its environmental, public health and water supply benefits.

If projects are already near "shovel ready," moving up the list and qualifying for funding may be easier than for other projects, depending on the background planning, design, permitting, and public participation the project has already accomplished. Information on the SRF programs is available at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/wff/index.htm>.

According to FDEP staff, it is always to a community's advantage—especially one with ready projects—to at least request inclusion in the program to take advantage of whatever opportunity might arise. By requesting inclusion you are not committing to anything and do not have to accept funding even if it comes your way (in the event that other funding constraints prevent a community from moving forward, for example).

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