

## Green Infrastructure Funds Available in NY State

### FACT SHEET #3:

#### ***What does Environmental Innovation mean for the purpose of Federal Stimulus Funding?***

The federal economic recovery plan, “American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009” (ARRA), requires that 20% of State Revolving Fund (SRF) monies be used for green infrastructure, water efficiency, energy efficiency, innovative water quality improvements, decentralized wastewater treatment, stormwater runoff mitigation, and water conservation.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the federal agency charged with overseeing the nation’s SRF program, has broadly defined “environmental innovation” projects that qualify for ARRA funding. Projects must be new and innovative, and take a “systems” approach to address different components of water resource management while promoting cost efficiencies. Environmentally innovative projects must be sustainable, nontraditional, and have a business plan for continued management and maintenance. This Fact Sheet provides a summary and brief examples of environmental innovation projects that qualify for funding, based upon available federal and state guidance.

#### ***What Environmentally Innovative Projects Qualify for Funding under the Clean Water State Revolving Fund?***

For purposes of ARRA funding under the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF), environmentally innovative projects include projects that demonstrate new and/or innovative approaches to managing water resources in a more sustainable way, including projects that achieve pollution prevention or pollutant removal with reduced costs and projects that foster adaptation of water protection programs and practices to climate change. EPA has provided examples of project approaches that meet the environmental innovation requirement, including:

- **Green Infrastructure/Low-Impact Development Stormwater Projects :** Projects that use new ways to manage water resources such as stormwater infiltration, green roofs and porous pavement.
- **Wetland Restoration and Constructed Wetlands:** Projects that restore wetlands or construct artificial wetlands to protect or restore water resources.
- **Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Solutions:** Environmentally innovative projects that apply decentralized wastewater treatment solutions to existing deficient or failing on site systems. Centralized solutions do not qualify for environmental innovation green project reserve funding. Contact the NY State Environmental Facilities Corporation (see link below) for more information about what size system is eligible.



- **Water Reuse:** Projects that reuse water and reduce energy consumption, recharge aquifers or reduce water withdrawals and treatment costs
- **Water Balance Projects:** Projects that use Water Balance Approaches (water budgets) at the project, local or regional scale that preserve or restore site, local or regional hydrology. Such an effort could address in a concerted manner, surface and groundwater withdrawals, stream flow (aquatic species protection), wetland and floodplain storage, groundwater recharge and regional or local reuse and harvesting strategies using a quantified methodology.

- **Sustainable Landscaping and Site Design:**

The water quality portion of projects that employ development and redevelopment practices that preserve or restore site hydrology through sustainable landscaping and site design, including infiltration and permeable paving practices.



- **Adaptation of Clean Water Programs to Climate Change:** Projects that facilitate adaptation of clean water programs and practices to climate change.

- **Energy Savings and Sustainable Site Design:** The water quality portion of projects that demonstrate energy savings and greenhouse gas reduction benefits of sustainable site design practices and the use of green stormwater infrastructure.

- **Differential Uses of Water:** Projects that incorporate differential uses of water based on the level of treatment to reduce the costs of treating all water to potable water standards.

- **Integrated Water Resources Management:** Identifying and quantifying the benefits of using integrated water resources management approaches, using modeling or other strategies, is encouraged as part of implementing projects that meet other funding requirements.

### ***What Environmentally Innovative Projects Qualify for Funding under the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund?***

Within the context of ARRA and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program, the definition of “environmentally innovative projects” includes projects that demonstrate new and innovative approaches to delivering water supply services and/or managing water resources in a more sustainable way. These projects should achieve public health protection and environmental protection objectives at the lowest overall cost. Projects must be consistent with the DWSRF program requirements, as well as the timelines and objectives of ARRA. To receive funding under ARRA’s Green Project Reserve, environmentally innovative projects must complete business case documentation, which includes technical and financial information that demonstrates the water and energy efficiencies and operating cost reductions expected by project implementation. Examples of eligible environmental innovation projects under the DWSRF include:

- **Adaptation to Climate Change:** Projects, or components of projects, that enable the utility to adapt to the impacts of global climate change.

- **Total Water Management:** Projects, or components of projects, consistent with a “Total Water Management” planning framework; or other planning framework within which project life cycle costs (including infrastructure, energy consumption and other operational costs) are minimized.

For more information and resources on types of environmental innovation projects:

<http://hudsonwatershed.org/>

<http://www.nysefc.org/home/index.asp?page=687>

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