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Regional water recycling program awarded \$7.3 million to begin construction

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The North Bay Water Reuse Authority has been awarded \$7.3 million by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) towards the construction of projects that will expand recycled water use in the region. The funds are the first increment of a \$25 million federal authorization by Congress in March 2009.

"The North Bay Water Recycling Program would once again like to express how thankful we are to Congressman Mike Thompson, Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, and Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer for securing the funding. Their support has made it possible to move forward with these important projects that will help to ensure a long-term reliable water supply for our communities. We are thrilled to be able to begin funding the construction phase," said Bill Long, chairman of the authority.

The grant is also good news for the local economy. Based on a formula developed by the ARRA, the \$7.3 million will create approximately 372 jobs during the construction. The total number of jobs includes direct labor, labor for material costs and indirect jobs.

"Recycled water is an important part of the solution toward developing sustainable water supplies for the North Bay. These funds will allow many years of planning to become a reality as construction begins," stated Chuck Weir, program manager for the North Bay Water Reuse Authority. "Recycled water will help to ensure that there is a reliable, environmentally beneficial water supply to support the needs of our communities and economies."

The water recycling projects are part of a regional cooperative program that includes the Sonoma County Water Agency, Napa Sanitation District, Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District, Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District and Novato Sanitary District. In addition, North

Marin Water District and Napa County are providing financial and technical support for the regional program.

Recycled water provides an environmentally sound, cost-effective and drought-proof water supply for irrigation of crops, parks, lawns, golf courses and industrial applications. Recycled water is needed more than ever to supplement over drafted groundwater supplies, and stressed river water supplies. Projects in Phase I of the North Bay Water Recycling Program include:

- Sonoma County — Extending the existing use of recycled water into the City of Sonoma and Sonoma Valley to support urban and agriculture usage. In addition, recycled water will be used to restore portions of the Napa Salt Marsh Restoration area that provides extensive habitat for endangered species, migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, fish and other aquatic species.
- Marin County — Providing recycled water to large landscapes, schools and parks, the Fireman's Fund Companies, Valley Memorial Park Cemetery, commercial users west of U.S. 101, and landscaping at Hamilton Field, including the Coast Guard housing area.
- Napa County — Napa County and Napa Sanitation District are working with local property

owners to bring recycled water to users in the Milliken-Sarco-Tulocay Creek (MST) area who have been hard hit by falling groundwater levels. The pipeline might be upsized to accommodate potential future expansion of recycled water use.

Total cost of the first phase of the projects is estimated at \$100 million. Under the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act, the Federal government will provide 25 percent of the estimated \$100 million cost design and build several recycled water projects in the North Bay.

The federal government previously provided about approximately \$1.5 million in grants for the engineering, planning, and environmental phases for this important recycled water program. The program also received \$200,000 in funding toward construction as part of the 2010 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill.

More information on the North Bay Water Recycling Program can be found by visiting www.nbwra.org ^[1] or calling 707-547-1923.

CORRECTION, May 14, 2010: Golf courses were not part of phase I of the project in Marin County. Incorrect information was provided by the authority.

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