

stimulus news DIGEST

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Recovery Project News

Stimulus Dollars Pay for 139 Monterey County Jobs:

About \$113 million of federal stimulus money has created or saved more than 139 Monterey County jobs, according to newly released data. The money largely replaces school funding cut at the state level, but also went to social services, transportation and housing assistance. "It is putting people to work," said Monterey-Salinas Transit Deputy Director Hunter Harvath. The agency saved or created 84 jobs with a stimulus grant, more than any other county agency. MST used some of its \$7.6 million in stimulus funding to pay off loans for buses the department had purchased in 2003. With state cuts, the agency would have had to lay off 30 drivers to cover the payments. Monterey County housing programs received nearly \$4 million, area schools received about \$32.6 million in stimulus money, and other agencies that received stimulus dollars for housing-related projects, such as retrofitting public housing units with energy-saving roofs or appliances. ("Stimulus Dollars Pay for 139 Monterey County Jobs," *The Californian*, 11/3/09)

Ground to be Broken on 91 Freeway Widening Project:

Officials today will break ground on a \$59.5-million project to widen the eastbound side of 91 Freeway with the hope of easing congestion for commuters along the heavily traveled stretch between Orange and Riverside counties. The section has long been considered one of the worst freeway bottlenecks in the nation, connecting bedroom communities in the Inland Empire to job centers in Orange and L.A. counties. The roughly 6-mile-long project will run from the 241 Freeway, a toll road, to the 71 Freeway and will expand the eastbound lanes, excluding two express lanes, from four to five. About 50,000 commuters pass through that plaza each weekday and the new lanes on the 241 Freeway are supposed to ease traffic flow to and from the 91 Freeway. Orange County transportation officials said the bulk of the 91 widening project, \$47.9 million, is being funded with federal stimulus dollars. ("Ground to be Broken on 91 Freeway Widening Project," *Los Angeles Times*, 11/3/09)

California Leads Stimulus Job Count with More Than 100,000:

The \$787 billion stimulus bill approved by Congress earlier this year has saved or created more than 640,000 jobs, including more than 100,000 in California. Vice President Joe Biden said the stimulus has created another 400,000 jobs if you include harder-to-count jobs created as a result of extra economic activity, putting the total more than 1 million. Standing at Biden's side, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said his state has saved or created more jobs than any other state in the nation. He said teachers and other educators account for more than 62,000 of California's jobs, including those who might have been laid off if not for the federal stimulus money. ("California Leads Stimulus Job Count with More Than 100,000," *Sacramento Bee*, 10/30/09)

California Gets Federal Stimulus Money for Solar

Jobs Training: The California Solar Training Partnership has received \$3.5 million of federal stimulus money through the U.S. Department of Energy to develop a regional solar jobs resource and training center.

The center, one of nine in the nationwide "Installer Instructor Training Network," will enable California to build a trained clean energy workforce, the California Energy Commission says. The money will be used by a joint effort of the Energy Commission, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the California Center of Sustainable Energy to develop a training curriculum and provide professional development for trainers in solar photovoltaic and solar heating and cooling technologies. ("California Gets Federal Stimulus Money for Solar Jobs Training," *Central Valley Business Times*, 10/29/09)

Big Money Comes in For Water Projects in Redwoods:

Humboldt County has seven projects that qualified for awards or low-interest loans as part of the \$717 million allocated for 160 water projects statewide. Among the awards are \$2.2 million for a water system upgrade for Phillipsville; \$1 million for a well, pipeline and water treatment facility for Loleta; and \$2.25 million for a solids and disinfection management project for Rio Dell. Garberville will get \$3 million for a wastewater treatment plant upgrade; the Humboldt County Resource Conservation District will get \$180,000 for an agricultural enhancement program; and the Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of Trinidad Rancheria will get \$1.66 million for Trinidad Beach and harbor improvements. The Pacific Coast Fish, Wildlife and Wetlands Restoration Association will receive \$1.4 million for erosion control on Redwood Creek. Del Norte County's Service Area No. 1 will get \$695,000 for a sewer collection system rehabilitation project. The State Water Resources Control Board is managing \$567.1 million of the total funding – of which \$256 million is from the Recovery Act and \$310 million is from the board's Clean Water State Revolving Fund. (*"Big Money Comes in For Water Projects in Redwoods," Times-Standard, 10/28/09*)

SMUD Receives \$128M in Smart-Grid Funds: The Sacramento Municipal Utility District has been awarded \$127.5 million in federal economic stimulus funds that will go toward a \$308 million smart-grid infrastructure investment. Smart grids use digital technology to monitor the flow of power between suppliers and users and improve efficiency and reliability. In Sacramento, the federal funds will support efforts by members of a joint venture between SMUD, California State University Sacramento, the state Department of General Services and the Los Rios Community College District to expand smart-grid technology here. (*"SMUD Receives \$128M in Smart-Grid Funds," Sacramento Business Journal, 10/27/09*)

SDG&E to get Federal Smart-Grid Funding: Federal stimulus funds will pay for part of a new \$60 million wireless communications system linking San Diego Gas & Electric Co.'s workers, substations and meters. SDG&E's grant was the second-largest in California and the only one to a for-profit utility. SDG&E plans to use the federal grant – along with a \$1 million state grant plus \$31 million from customers – to build a new communications system. The Department of Energy said grants of \$400,000 to \$200 million will lead to the installation of at least 18 million advanced digital meters, which should bring the nation's total to about 40 million, or enough to cover one-quarter to one-third of U.S. homes. (*"SDG&E to get Federal Smart-Grid Funding," San Diego Union Tribune, 10/28/09*)

San Diego Region Nets \$154 Million for Clean Energy: San Diego municipalities, school districts and one water district have won \$154 million in allocations for financing renewable energy projects for public facilities. The program administered by the Internal Revenue Service is funded by federal economic stimulus dollars. A total of 192 projects will receive funds under the awards. San Diego Unified School District received \$74 million in allocations – or 9 percent of what was awarded nationwide – for 111 projects. UC San Diego will receive \$15 million for 15 renewable energy projects. San Diego State University won \$2.4 million for one project. The City of Chula Vista received \$29 million for 34 renewable energy projects. The IRS allocated \$800 million to 739 projects for public agencies throughout the nation. Eighty percent of the total went to California-based organizations. (*"San Diego Region Nets \$154 Million for Clean Energy," San Diego News Network, 10/29/09*)

MID Given \$1.49M Grant: The federal government Tuesday awarded \$1.49 million to the Modesto Irrigation District for energy-saving improvements to its grid. The grant, part of \$3.43 billion in "smart grid" funding, will help pay for new voltage controls at substations and related work. The project, which requires an equal contribution from the MID, will assure that the system delivers only as much electricity as a customer needs. The project is intended to work hand-in-hand with the district's new high-tech meters, which are read by remote control and eventually could help customers manage their power use. The MID was one of six California utilities receiving grants Tuesday from the U.S. Department of Energy. The largest by far is \$127.5 million for the Sacramento Municipal Utilities District for 600,000 smart meters, 100 electric vehicle charging stations and related improvements. (*"MID Given \$1.49M Grant," Modesto Bee, 10/27/09*)

UC Davis MIND Institute gets \$12M Grant: The University of California Davis MIND Institute will receive \$12 million in stimulus funds to study autism and other disorders. The funding will be used over the next two years to investigate childhood risks of autism due to genetics and the environment, an autism phenome project that is one of the nation's largest studies of the disorder, and several other studies. (*"UC Davis MIND Institute gets \$12M Grant," Sacramento Business Journal, 11/2/09*)

CSUF to Reinstate 264 Courses this Spring: Cal State Fullerton will receive \$1.6 million in federal stimulus money that will allow the campus to reinstate 264 courses and rehire some lecturers this spring. The courses will be spread throughout the university's eight colleges. The actual courses have not yet been determined, but priority will be placed on those aimed for juniors and seniors to help them graduate on time. Officials are also working on determining how many lecturers may be rehired. The courses had been eliminated earlier this year as part of \$54.5 million in budget cuts approved for the 36,292-student university. Other cuts included hiring and pay freezes, furloughs and enrollment cuts. The federal stimulus funds are part of \$25 million allocated by the California State University to campuses to provide additional course sections and classes for students, as well as student support services. Statewide, CSU campuses will add up to approximately 4,000 additional course sections and potentially retain up to 800 lecturers for the winter/spring term. (*"CSUF to Reinstate 264 Courses this Spring," The Orange County Register, 10/27/09*)

Whittier Plans \$2.6 Million Worth of Road Projects: Federal stimulus money is going to pay for seven different street projects - from repaving to new traffic signals - throughout the city. The City Council approved the resolution this week for the \$2.6 million coming to Whittier. These projects will provide jobs and help stimulate the economy, said Chris Magdosku, assistant public works director. "They also will provide city residents and business owners with smoother, rideable roads, safer streets and intersections, and reliable, efficient street lighting." (*"Whittier Plans \$2.6 Million Worth of Road Projects," Whittier Daily News, 11/1/09*)

Trinity County Uses Stimulus Money to Add Bus Service to Redding: The Trinity County Department of Transportation was the first in the state to be purchased with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act rural transit funding. The buses will enhance transit service between Willow Creek and Weaverville and add new service from Weaverville to Redding. They also will provide "a vital link" connecting rural Trinity County with intercity bus services in Arcata and beyond to Greyhound and Amtrak buses. The funds were part of \$34 million that will enable rural transit agencies to construct bus station terminals, improve bus fare collection systems, upgrade safety and surveillance security equipment, and purchase more than 125 new vehicles. (*"Trinity County Uses Stimulus Money to Add Bus Service to Redding," The Redding Searchlight, 10/29/09*)

Editorial

Why Stimulus Jobs aren't Built to Last: Stimulus may have created or saved 640,000 jobs so far, but many of those positions were never intended to last. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was designed to put millions of people to work, mainly for "shovel-ready" projects. By their very nature, most of those projects last only until the work is completed or the funding runs out. That means millions of workers hired with stimulus funding are left looking for a job after the stimulus-funded program is completed. "The bottom line is these are meant to be stop-gap measures," said Doug Roberts, chief investment strategist at Channel-CapitalResearch.com. "This is fairly typical in stimulus plans. It's the same as it was in the 1930s: to put people back to work, the government looks at all of the stuff that was on its to-do list." Roberts said the idea behind temporary, "shovel-ready" stimulus jobs, is to help the labor market ride out the storm: When the money runs out, hopefully the economy will have bounced back, and those temporary workers will be able to find full-time employment. (*"Why Stimulus Jobs aren't Built to Last," CNN, 11/2/09*)

