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\$280 Million in American Rescue Plan Act Funding Approved to Address Statewide Water Needs

LITTLE ROCK, AR – Funding of \$280 million was approved today to help address statewide water needs. The approved funding includes \$270 million to address water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure projects and \$10 million to assist areas in Eastern Arkansas with the transition from groundwater to surface water and help preserve the Sparta and Alluvial aquifers.

Last year, Governor Hutchinson created a Water and Other Infrastructure Working Group to assist the Arkansas American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Steering Committee in identifying water infrastructure projects. The working group conducted a needs survey that identified more than \$5 billion in water, wastewater, and stormwater needs across the state. The working group made a subsequent funding proposal which was approved by the Steering Committee in August and by the Arkansas Legislative Council today.

“In January, I laid out my W.I.N.S. in 2022 initiative. One of those initiatives was infrastructure, and I am delighted the Arkansas Legislative Council has approved \$280 million to improve our state’s water infrastructure,” Governor Hutchinson said. “I appreciate the Department of Agriculture, Arkansas Natural Resources Commission, ARPA Steering Committee, and members of the General Assembly who have worked diligently to secure this funding for a critical need in our state.”

The \$270 million in one-time grant funding for water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure projects will be administered by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture through the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission. Projects will be determined for eligibility consistent with the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) Final Rule. Funding will be limited to a maximum of \$5 million per entity for each project type.

Eligible entities must apply for the grant funding by Friday, November 4, 2022. Applications and additional information on the grant program can be found at:
agriculture.arkansas.gov/american-rescue-plan-funding-water-and-wastewater-grant-program/.

A series of virtual and in-person meetings will be held across the State during the application period to assist entities in completing applications for funding under this program. The date, time, and location of the meetings are as follows:

- September 21, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Harvey Jones Conference Center, Springdale
- September 29, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Arkansas Municipal League, North Little Rock
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- October 4, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Dumas Community Center, Dumas

- October 19, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Forrest L. Wood Crowley's Ridge Nature Center, Jonesboro
- October 26, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Hope Community Center, Hope
- November 1, 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m., Virtual Meeting

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Visit agriculture.arkansas.gov/.