

MEMORANDUM

To: Obama Transition Team

From: Sixteen National Environmental Leaders

Subject: Economic Recovery through Investments in our Environment, Energy System and Heritage – Updated Memo and Proposals

Date: December 10, 2008

"We'll put people back to work rebuilding our crumbling roads and bridges, modernizing schools that are failing our children, and building wind farms and solar panels, fuel-efficient cars and the alternative energy technologies that can free us from our dependence on foreign oil and keep our economy competitive in the years ahead." President-elect Barack Obama November 23, 2008.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit an extensive list of environmentally responsible investments that can help facilitate our national economic recovery while improving our quality of life, reducing pollution, and investing in many of our nation's most treasured assets.

When President Franklin D. Roosevelt took bold action to combat the Great Depression, he quickly put Americans to work renewing our nation and laying the foundation for our country's vibrant post-war economy. Within four months, FDR began a mobilization that ultimately put millions to work replanting forests, rebuilding roads and bridges, blazing trails, and making other critical investments on our public lands and in our communities. President-elect Obama not only has the opportunity to create jobs by making similar, critically needed investments, but also to bring our economy into the 21st century with green, environmentally-sensible jobs that lay the foundation for shared prosperity in the economy of the future.

We are providing the attached list of projects and proposals for growing our economy through the creation of new green jobs that will enhance our environment, protect our planet, and inspire the American people. Attached are more than 80 proposals to invest billions over the next two years in renewable technologies, energy efficiency, water resources and infrastructure, green transportation, our treasured national parks and other public lands, and national and community service. Together, we estimate these proposals would create as many as 3.6 million jobs. The list of proposals we shared with your transition team last week has been augmented here by updating jobs estimates, adding additional programs, integrating some of the individual proposals, and adding citations to legislative authorities governing the proposals.

We welcome the opportunity to submit our recommendations to you. The attached proposals demonstrate that investments in our environment are investments in our economy. We agree with President-elect Obama that clean energy and environmental protection are central to driving economic recovery and growth. Our recommendations and experience show that investing in high quality green jobs here at home - generating more renewable energy, reducing our oil dependence through increased efficiency and public transit, restoring our waterways and parks, and funding local green infrastructure water projects - creates good jobs, reduces pollution, and will jump-start America's economy. Meanwhile, wasting energy, increasing pollution, and destroying wild places drains our economy. Finally, these projects highlight the ability to invest now in projects with long term benefits, in order to produce needed jobs in the near term.

There will likely be many projects suggested to your transition team that, while they may create jobs in the short run, will carry a large monetary and environmental price tag in the long run. We urge your team to reject such projects and we suggest the following principles for evaluating projects: shift from old and environmentally damaging energy, water, and transportation infrastructure to approaches that will promote new green industry and green jobs sectors and reduce pollution. Just as importantly, investment in green solutions helps build the clean, green economy that the nation needs for the future.

- 1. Invest in green solutions because they deliver the greatest benefits most efficiently.** We should direct public investment to solutions that provide the greatest benefits and do the best job of meeting the underlying goal, whether it is efficient transportation, lighting, and/or heating/cooling.
- 2. Boldly stimulate green industries and create green jobs.** We should stimulate a decisive restoration of our public land and heritage, or efficient provision of clean water. Green solutions of all kinds provide multiple benefits, don't cause additional harm to communities, public health, or the environment, and do it for the least cost for the benefit achieved. Just as importantly, investment in green education and training helps build solutions for the clean, green economy that the nation needs for the future.
- 3. Fix existing needs first.** We should not invest stimulus dollars in new "green field" developments, such as new highways or sewer lines that contribute to sprawl and that would only compound existing problems. We should invest public dollars in places where we can fix existing infrastructure and environmental problems. Such "highways and sewer lines to nowhere" may create jobs in the short term but the negative effects of such infrastructure will be felt far into the future.
- 4. Invest in environmental restoration and green infrastructure because they restore ecosystems while creating good jobs.** Restoring freshwater and tidal wetlands, natural water flows across highway corridors, natural barriers to storm and flood hazards, wildlife corridors and healthy forests can require extensive design, science, and field labor and can produce tangible long-term human health benefits. Including environmental restoration in stimulus package projects can add the benefits of ecosystem services to a green economy.
- 5. Reject economic proposals which would increase global warming pollution, destroy important natural areas, or increase our reliance on wasteful water use.** It is critical to reject economic proposals that would expand our reliance on coal, or make us reliant on oil shale or tar sands, such as the development of dedicated transportation corridors (i.e., for coal trains) or transmission lines designed to move these dirty fuels to expanded markets. You also should reject proposals to invest in coal-to-liquid manufacturing facilities, conventional coal plants, waste incineration or biofuels that exacerbate global warming and other environmental problems. Public transit, renewable energy, efficiency, and green water infrastructure can supply even more jobs across multiple sectors of the economy without the negative impact.

We applaud you for your commitment to economic stimulus and to protecting America's environment. Your stimulus bill can be a turning point, moving us away from oil dependence and outmoded practices of the past and towards a cleaner, more secure future.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions about these items or to request any other information that would be helpful. If you have any overarching requests regarding this effort, please contact either Rebecca Wodder with American Rivers at (202) 347-7550 or Tom Kiernan with the National Parks Conservation Association at (202) 454-3300. The organizations involved in submitting

this document do not necessarily endorse or have expertise on every recommendation in this report. If you have questions with regard to specific proposals, please contact the people leading the different working groups as noted in the attached proposals.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute these recommendations.

Thomas Kiernan, President
National Parks Conservation Association

Rebecca Wodder, President
American Rivers

John DeCock, President
Clean Water Action

Rodger Schlickeisen, President
Defenders of Wildlife

Margie Alt, Executive Director
Environment America

Fred Krupp, President
Environmental Defense Fund

Brent Blackwelder, President
Friends of the Earth

John Passacantando, Executive Director
Greenpeace

Gene Karpinski, President
League of Conservation Voters

John Flicker, President
National Audubon Society

Larry Schweiger, President & CEO
National Wildlife Federation

Frances Beinecke, President
Natural Resources Defense Council

Keith Laughlin, President
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Carl Pope, Executive Director
Sierra Club

Will Rogers, President
The Trust for Public Land

William Meadows, President
The Wilderness Society