

Rolling Hills Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.



Providing leadership in protecting and improving the economic, social, and natural resources of residents in the RC&D area.

NEWS RELEASE

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GA RC&D COUNCILS RECEIVE STIMULUS FUNDS TO SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS

Five Georgia RC&D Councils have received over \$570,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds to support local jobs and businesses through north Georgia. The Limestone Valley and Rolling Hills RC&D Councils will be working collaboratively on projects in northwest Georgia and Oconee River, Upper Ocmulgee River and Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D Councils will be working together in northeast Georgia. The Councils made application through the Georgia Forestry Commission to do tree planting on public grounds for ecosystem restoration and to support green jobs. Working closely with local governments and school systems, the Councils compiled over 92 projects with a proposal to plant over 1600 trees on school grounds, parks, streetscapes, and other public areas. Most projects submitted were approved and must be finalized by March 2011.

The projects will benefit the region by supporting *local* tree nurseries and landscape contractors. Trees will be purchased *locally* from *local* growers and planted and maintained by *local* landscaping contractors. Bid processes will ensure that projects within each county will be serviced by businesses within each county if possible. All efforts will be maintained to utilize plant materials grown in the region, and not shipped in from out of state. The Councils estimate approximately 50 businesses will be impacted through this project including landscape contractors, tree nurseries, and related industries. Also approximately 25 jobs will be retained or created.

The public will also receive *long term* and *lasting* benefits from the projects completed through the installation of trees throughout their community. Even though funding is committed to support local businesses, the residents will benefit from the lasting effects of the expansion and improvement of the tree cover in the region. Many projects are designed to provide much needed shade for school grounds and playgrounds. Other projects will provide shade for parking lots, downtown trees for economic development, or trees for parks. Also, trees will be planted around school buildings for energy conservation—especially adjacent to heat and air units.

Whether located on schools, community parking lot shade trees, trees planted in communities to promote economic development, or trees planted in parks the public throughout the region will reap continuing benefits from the improvement to the green infrastructure in the area.

Trees should be going in the ground soon!

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