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**Report: upgrading water systems can reduce pollution –
and put nearly 1.9 million people to work**

New report from Green For All shows the broad economic and environmental benefits of upgrading our water systems

MILWAUKEE – Want to create nearly 1.9 million American jobs and add \$265 billion to the economy? Upgrade our water and wastewater infrastructure. That’s the message of a new report released today by Green For All, in partnership with American Rivers, the Economic Policy Institute and the Pacific Institute. The Rockefeller Foundation generously provided funding for the project.

Every year, sewage overflows dump 860 billion gallons of untreated sewage into our water systems – enough to cover the entire state of Pennsylvania with waste one-inch deep. But investment in our nation’s infrastructure to handle stormwater and wastewater has lagged, falling by one-third since its 1975 peak.

The report, *Water Works: Rebuilding Infrastructure, Creating Jobs, Greening the Environment*, looks at an investment of \$188.4 billion in water infrastructure – the amount the EPA indicates would be required to manage stormwater and preserve water quality. That investment would inject a quarter of a trillion dollars into the economy, create nearly 1.3 million direct and indirect jobs in related sectors and result in 568,000 additional jobs from increased spending.

Further, the report notes that this is the best moment to make the investment. With the recession creating a shortfall of 11.1 million jobs that would be needed to keep pace with the population and 9.1% unemployment, these are jobs that are critically needed. Moreover, the cost of financing these essential upgrades is at historic lows, and the still-struggling economy means much cheaper construction costs. Investing in green infrastructure approaches that more closely mimic natural systems is part of the solution – and further provides the additional benefits of reducing pollution of creeks and other waterways, saving energy, and increasing green space in urban areas.

“Cleaning our environment and putting people to work has always been the value proposition of the green economy,” said Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins, CEO of Green For All. “This report demonstrates that there’s a massive opportunity to ensure clean water, improve the economy, and put people – particularly low-income workers – back to work.”

“Our nation’s water and wastewater systems are deteriorating, with impacts on human and environmental health,” said Eli Moore, co-director of the Pacific Institute Community Strategies for Sustainability and Justice Program. “Investing in these systems can promote the long-term sustainability of our precious water resources.”

“America’s failing infrastructure has a direct impact on clean water, river health, and communities,” said Gary Belan of American Rivers. “By investing in smarter, more cost-effective water infrastructure that works with nature, not against it, we can improve the health of rivers and communities, and put people back to work in the process.”

"The time for investment is now. Every day we wait adds additional cost to the economy and harm to the health and well-being of American families," said John Irons, Research and Policy Director of Economic Policy Institute.

The full report is available at **<http://bit.ly/WaterWorksReport>**. Report authors are available to answer questions or provide additional information; to contact an author, please call Mary Creasman at (510) 663-6500, x336.