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**[Environment - Clean Water
Initiative]**



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Record Type: Record

To: Bradley M. Campbell/CEQ/EOP, Wesley P. Warren/CEQ/EOP

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Subject: Urban Environmental Initiatives.

EPA has prepared at the request of the urban task force a set of small water quality initiatives for urban areas. Early estimates are that these items would cost about \$30 to \$60 million per year. I believe they would fit nicely into your larger **Clean Water Initiative** that is being included in the President's FY98 budget. Can you review these initiatives, some which I believe EPA may already be planning to include in the Clean Water Initiative, and decide if you think they could be added to the larger Water Initiative? A brief description of these proposals follows:

Water Quality: Urban areas place high demands on water resources (for recreation, commerce, and as a drinking water source). Urban water resources are often plagued by pollution. There are options which can help cities manage their water resources:

- 1. Watershed Tools:** The Conference of Mayors recently urged EPA to provide tools -- technical and financial -- to help cities address water quality problems. EPA can provide tools that will help them develop and implement a holistic watershed-based strategy for addressing problems, guidance for restoring urban streams and a catalog of best management practices for addressing polluted runoff. Successful watershed strategies can serve as models for other cities which face water quality issues;
- 2. Controlling Storm Water Runoff:** Urban water areas (streams, creeks, and beaches) are often polluted by sewage and storm water discharges. Increasing green areas -- linked to EPA's proposal on parks and greenways -- can help control storm water runoff. Improvements in infrastructure to deal with storm water problems -- collection systems, retention ponds -- require large capital investments.
- 3. Urban River Corridors and Wetlands Restoration Projects:** The Urban river Corridors and Wetlands Restoration efforts are a tailored approach to improve the human and health and economic opportunities in urban communities. EPA has already made small grants to a number of cities and municipalities for these types of projects. Additional grants -- \$50,000 to \$100,000 -- to local communities can provide the necessary funding for projects which will positively impact cities' water resources. These projects would provide employment opportunities for residents, improve the economic welfare and technical competence of local residents and empower the community to build for a better future. Restored areas can serve to attract and sustain business as well as provide outlets for recreation.

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