

ARRA Recovery Plan ARS Buildings and Facilities U.S. Department of Agriculture Updated 06/07/2010

Objectives

The principal objective of the Agricultural Research Service's (ARS) Capital Project and Repair Plan under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) is job creation to help promote economic recovery through completion of \$176 million of critical deferred maintenance work at ARS facilities across the country. The Agency's Recovery Act program will create jobs and improve the quality and productivity of ARS research by helping to ensure that programs can be effectively and efficiently conducted at facilities that currently have critical deferred maintenance needs.

Public Benefits

By significantly contributing to the accomplishment of the ARS Strategic Planning Initiative to Improve Real Property Management, completion of this work will result in improved energy efficiency, reduction in current operation and maintenance costs, adherence to local health and safety standards, and elimination of further facility deterioration. Additionally, ARS research, which develops and transfers solutions to agricultural problems of high national priority, will be accomplished more efficiently and effectively.

The passage of the ARRA provides ARS with the opportunity to address the deferred maintenance on its research facilities which were identified in the ARS Capital Project and Repair Plan. The Plan was developed in accordance with the USDA, Agricultural Research Service Building Block Plan, as required by Executive Order (E.O.) 13227, "Federal Real Property Asset Management". This work will also reduce the backlog of critical deferred maintenance at ARS facilities by approximately 56 percent and slow the growth in deferred maintenance in ARS' facility portfolio.

Total deferred maintenance needs (other than routine maintenance) has been identified to be approximately \$316 million, of which \$199.2 million represents critical needs (e.g. work associated with critical systems such as HVAC, electric, roofing, exterior closure and plumbing involving maintenance to systems beyond simple repairs tasks and generally requiring system replacement). Therefore, ARS developed criteria to prioritize facilities that would be addressed with the \$176 million appropriated to ARS in Recovery Act funds. It was determined that the availability of a preexisting design, or a design in progress for addressing the deferred maintenance work, would allow the construction phase to begin much earlier resulting in faster job creation. Therefore, all facilities with an existing design that met at least one of the following program-related criteria were selected.

- 1) Unique national resources;
- 2) High priority research programs;
- 3) Essential research capacity; and
- 4) Research program critical to ARS support of action and regulatory agencies.

This represented a total of 15 facilities and \$154 million. These four program related criteria were then used to select from the remaining list of facilities without pre-existing design that would be included in the program. The criteria take into consideration the relative priority of the program(s) supported by the facility and the extent to which the program(s) enhances the ARS core capacity to conduct its research.

Measures

Data is collected quarterly by fiscal year. In some instances, targets will not be available until additional baseline data has been collected.

Measure	2009 Target	2009 Actual	2010 Target	2010 Actual	2011 Target	2011 Actual
1) Efficiency: Progress when compared to approved budgets.	100%	100%	100%	100%		
Explanation: ARS will complete all approved projects within the funds appropriated. Accomplishments are through March 31, 2010.						
Unit: Percent of program within \$176 million appropriation.						
2) Efficiency: Progress when compared to approved schedules.	80%	80%	80%	64%		
Explanation: ARS will execute awards and complete contracts in accordance with approved schedules on 80% of projects. Accomplishments are through March 31, 2010.						
Unit: Percentage of projects awarded within projected schedules established in July 2009.						
3) Output: The number of jobs created.	N/A	23	N/A	139		

<p>Explanation: The Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) has recognized the difference between recipients (contractors) reporting data that captures direct jobs and CEA estimates that capture direct, indirect and induced jobs. ARS has no control over either the CEA estimate or the number of jobs created and reported by the recipient of the ARRA funds. The Agency will report the job data as reported by the recipient.</p>	
<p>Unit: Jobs</p>	

Measure	2009 Target	2009 Actual	2010 Target	2010 Actual	2011 Target	2011 Actual
<p>4) Efficiency: Degree to which the agency meets USDA small business goals at the time of the award.</p>	Meet	Exceed	Meet	Exceed		
<p>Explanation: ARS will meet all small business goals in place for the fiscal year in which the contract is awarded.</p>						
<p>Unit: No data Available.</p>						
<p>5) Outcome: Improvement in the quality and productivity of research.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
<p>Explanation: The ultimate goal of research is to produce discoveries and methodologies that will benefit society. The critical maintenance performed at these facilities under ARRA will result in improvements in the working environment, which should enhance the ability of scientists and support staff to improve the quality and productivity of their work. USDA will develop tools (e.g. surveys) to determine this impact upon completion of the ARRA program.</p>						
<p>Unit: No data will be available until after the completion of the projects.</p>						

Schedule and Milestones

ARS developed project implementation plans in July 2009. The goal was to award \$17 million by September 30, 2009; an additional \$23 million by December 31, 2009; an additional \$100 million by March 31, 2010; and an additional \$23 million by June 30, 2010. A contingency reserve of approximately \$11 million will be held for change orders typically expected in construction of this type. These contingency funds are intended for necessary modifications to the contract and will be executed in conformance to the contract. Contingency funds identified as surplus will be used to fund additional critical deferred maintenance needs. As of March 31, 2010 sufficient funds were made available from favorable bids to fund an additional phase of work at the Beltsville Area Research Center, as well as award two new projects to re-commission a facility in Poplarville, MS, and in Beltsville, MD as well as exercise several bid options dealing with critical deferred maintenance on previously identified projects. In addition, any funding remaining after the completion of all projects will either be returned to the Treasury or used to complete additional projects, based upon ARS' priority list.

In November 2008 the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) began planning for the possibility of an Economic Recovery Plan that would focus on facilities. Upon passage of the ARRA in February 2009 ARS refined the potential project list to match the Appropriation Language that limited work to critical deferred maintenance. In June 2009 approval was received from the Office of Management and Budget and the USDA Office of the Secretary to proceed with the proposed project list. The list originally included 38 projects located at 36 locations within 28 states; as a result of favorable bids we have increased the number of projects to 41 at 37 locations.

Milestones

Milestone	Result	Quarterly Obligation	Cumulative Obligation*
Obligate \$17 million by 9/30/2009	Not Met	\$7.8 million	\$7.8 million
Obligate an additional \$23 million by 12/31/2009	Not Met	\$5.3 million	\$13.1 million
Obligate an additional \$100 million by 03/31/2010	Not Met	\$27 million	\$40.1 million
Obligate an additional \$86 million by 6/30/2010	N/A	N/A	N/A
Obligate an additional \$39 million by 9/30/2010			

*Contingency allowance of \$11 million not captured in milestone table above.

Projects and Activities

As stated above, critical deferred maintenance is work associated with critical systems such as HVAC, electric, roofing, exterior closure and plumbing. It involves maintenance to systems beyond simple patch and repair tasks and generally requires system replacement. Completion of this work will, in many cases, result in improved energy efficiency, reduction in current operation and maintenance costs, and arrested further deterioration of ARS facilities.

The designs for all the facilities in the ARS Recovery Act program will meet current building codes, including those related to energy conservation, and will meet or exceed all health and safety requirements.

The proposed list of projects includes work at 36 locations in 28 states and the District of Columbia. Based on Council of Economic Advisors estimates the projects are estimated to generate approximately 1,900 jobs. All contract awards will be made to commercial entities (Architect-Engineering firms, and construction firms). No Recovery Act funds will be used for ARS salary and expenses. Contract support related to design, design review, and construction contract oversight will be by acquired Recovery Act funds.

Review Process

ARS established a coordination and communication team – the ARS Department of Agriculture Recovery Team (ARS DART) – and charged it with monitoring the implementation of the ARS Recovery Act program to ensure consistent and strict compliance with the intent of the Recovery Act, as well as the OMB Implementation Guidelines. The team is overseen by an ARS Associate Administrator and includes representation from the Office of the Undersecretary for Research, Education and Economics (REE). This team currently meets on a quarterly basis. Weekly accomplishment reports are submitted to that office.

Cost and Performance Plan

ARS will adhere to all USDA and OMB direction regarding posting of Recovery Act information and status. Extensive use of the internet is expected to be the primary information sharing tool.

All ARS managers directly responsible for implementing the Recovery Act have in their Performance Standards a goal addressing their responsibility to provide overall leadership and proactive management of the \$176 million ARS Recovery Act program.

Energy Efficiency Spending Plans

To the extent feasible, and within the definition of critical deferred maintenance, all designs will meet current codes, specifically the Energy Policy Act 2005 and the Energy Independence and Security Act 2007. All projects will comply with the appropriate statutes such as the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Endangered Species Act, as well as others.

Program and Award Types

No Data Available