



\$490,000 Stimulus to Grow Trees in Nev. Yields Just 1.72 Permanent Jobs

However, the project yielded not even two permanent jobs, and created only 11 short-term jobs, according to the Nevada State Division of Forestry. "Looking at the failure of the stimulus to live up to its promises, not just in Nevada, but throughout America, I think the question becomes, 'Is there any good use of stimulus money?'" asked Douglas Kellogg, communications manager for the National Taxpayers Union.



"If the question is 'was this a job-creating project?' the answer is 'no, it wasn't,'" contended Bob Conrad, an officer for the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. "It was one of a number of projects that we do believe helped improve natural resources in the state," he added, noting that the project's primary goal was to provide trees to parks, schools, and government offices, as the state nursery grew about 2,000 trees.

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So the "stimulus" money was not aimed at stimulating Nevada's economy, but merely scattering the government's landscape with more aesthetically pleasing greenery.

The project also is providing Spanish-language training for Hispanics in the landscaping industry to "develop employability skills and increase job retention." However, Conrad could not predict how many jobs were created as a result of their efforts. "We had to put together projects within very specific parameters. If the particular project you're referring to didn't create jobs necessarily, that's really something that's beyond the parameters of the program and it's really something you'd have to ask the federal government, the U.S. Forest Service," he commented.

In another area of the state, the American Recovery and Investment Act of 2009 (ARRA), President Obama's \$787 billion artifice, provided the city of Henderson with \$60,000 to administer surveys and inventory the trees in city parks.

The *Henderson Press* [reported](#):

The money comes in the form of two grants, one of which requires a \$25,000 match from the city, bringing the project to \$85,000 total. The Henderson City Council approved the grant agreements with the Nevada Division of Forestry, which dispersed the federal funds, on July 19.

According to the grant agreement, "the tree inventory would include mapping, species



Written by [Brian Koenig](#) on August 23, 2011

identification, health evaluation and maintenance prioritization."

"Due to a continued economic downturn from decreasing sales and property tax revenues," officials said the city does not have the funding or resources to train personnel and volunteers. "This effort is part of the City Strategic Goal to promote and incorporate practices, policies and procedures that support sustainability," the city wrote in a justification letter.

But again, the number of jobs created by the stimulus money was sparse.

In January 2009, White House economists [claimed](#) the ARRA would create 3.3 million net jobs by 2010. But by January 2010, 3.5 million more net jobs had been lost, spiking the unemployment rate above 10 percent. The Heritage Foundation [explained](#) that the government's failure to "spend its way to prosperity" is not an isolated occurrence:

- During the 1930s, New Deal lawmakers doubled federal spending — yet unemployment remained above 20 percent until World War II.
- Japan responded to a 1990 recession by passing 10 stimulus spending bills over 8 years (building the largest national debt in the industrialized world) — yet its economy remained stagnant.
- In 2001, President Bush responded to a recession by "injecting" tax rebates into the economy. The economy did not respond until two years later, when tax rate reductions were implemented.
- In 2008, President Bush tried to head off the current recession with another round of tax rebates. The recession continued to worsen.
- Now, the most recent \$787 billion stimulus bill was intended to keep the unemployment rate from exceeding 8 percent. In November, it topped 10 percent.

Why do the government's efforts generate such dismal results? The Heritage Foundation notes that it's because the government lacks competitive forces, while private businesses — where real job growth lies — must compete amongst themselves to remain solvent, which means striving to produce superior goods and services for the consumer. Simply put, without competition, the motive for efficiency and quality control, and better service to consumers, is tossed out the window.

When all is said and done, it appears that Democratic Senator Harry Reid's home state — with its comatose [12.9 percent](#) unemployment rate — won't find a whole lot of economic relief from the government's fiscal efforts.

And apparently President Obama wasn't kidding about the "shovel-ready" jobs. After all, you need a shovel to plant a tree.



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