

Wyo processes effect of stimulus funds



Vice President Joe Biden looks on as President Barack Obama signs the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009, during a ceremony at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in Denver. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

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CHEYENNE -- With President Obama's final authorization of the federal stimulus package on Tuesday, state officials said it was too early to know exactly how much stimulus funding is headed to Wyoming.

Obama signed the \$787 billion economic-recovery bill at a ceremony in Denver, saying it represented the "essential work of keeping the American dream alive in our time."

But at the state level, officials said it has been difficult to determine how and when Wyoming's portion of those billions of dollars will filter down to state programs.

"Right now, we're all kind of being flooded from information -- information from Congress, information from various national organizations that have been following this," said Lynne Boomgaarden, director of the Office of State Lands and Investments. "I have not seen yet one definitive document that says, 'Here are Wyoming's dollars.'"

Gov. Dave Freudenthal appointed Boomgaarden two weeks ago to head up the state's "reinvestment and recovery team." The group, which includes 25 people representing about 15 state agencies, has been meeting twice a week to figure out how to handle incoming stimulus funds.

There have been some estimates of Wyoming's share of the stimulus benefits. On Tuesday, the White House released a report estimating the bill will create or save 8,000 jobs in Wyoming.