Design Work is Underway

We have completed information and data gathering to verify pipeline location and design. This included surveying, geotechnical exploration, environmental analysis, and determining permit and easement needs.

There is a great deal that needs to be completed before construction can begin, including detailed design and engineering, acquisition of the necessary permits and easements, and selecting a construction contractor.

Project Schedule

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Stay Up to Date

Throughout the project, interested community members can follow progress and provide feedback through the Alliance website, www.discoverycwa.org, and at public events. The event schedule will be posted online.

For More Information

Contact Dale Lough, Alliance Capital Program Manager, Clark Regional Wastewater District at (360) 993-8856 or dlough@crwwd.com.

Columbia River Outfall and Effluent Pipeline Project

This project builds on decades of planning to ensure we can meet the region’s long-term wastewater treatment needs and continue safeguarding public health, environmental quality and our community’s economic future.

The project will upgrade the transmission pipeline system from the Salmon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant to the Columbia River and improve water quality in the Columbia River.

Project Overview

The Salmon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant treats wastewater from approximately 120,000 Clark County residents. All wastewater received at the plant is treated to a high standard. Clean water, or effluent, is conveyed and discharged into the Columbia River via a 30-inch pipeline and submerged diffuser. The conveyance pipeline and diffuser were built in 1974. The Columbia River Outfall and Effluent Pipeline project will plan and build a larger transmission pipeline and improved discharge system.

The new conveyance pipeline will be big enough to ensure continued reliable service at a stable, affordable rate by planning for the long-term and avoiding the increased cost of isolated improvements.

The pipeline and diffuser are needed for future increased plant capacity to support planned growth in the community, as well as to ensure adequate mixing and dilution of treated water discharged into the Columbia River. The project will also reduce ongoing maintenance at the discharge location and allow future decommissioning of Ridgefield’s aging wastewater treatment plant.

About the Alliance

The Discovery Clean Water Alliance is a regional partnership made up of Clark County, Clark Regional Wastewater District, and the Cities of Battle Ground and Ridgefield. It was formed in 2013 to improve sewer service delivery to the partners’ customer bases by leveraging existing resources, controlling future capital costs, and stabilizing rates. The Alliance brings operation and expansion of treatment/transmission services under joint ownership, allowing for shared decision-making between the partners and better long-term regional planning. For more information about the Alliance, visit the website at www.discoverycwa.org.
Project Design and Pipeline Route
The first task of this project was to determine the preliminary design and preferred route for the new conveyance pipeline. This step in the process has been in discussion for over two decades and is now complete.

The route of the replacement pipeline is parallel to the existing effluent pipeline. However, permitting the route for the pipeline is complicated because it must cross private property, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, existing utility lines, Salmon Creek, Lake River, and two road rights of way. A variety of permits will need to be obtained before construction can begin. We are negotiating with property owners for easements. The community will be kept informed as the process moves forward.

Improved Water Quality: Discharge Mechanism
An improved river discharge assembly, called a diffuser, will be built at the end of the replacement effluent pipeline. We’ve worked closely with the Department of Ecology to determine the best location and design for the outfall (discharge location). The diffuser and pipe will improve Columbia River water quality by better diluting and mixing discharges of treated water. The mixing zone will meet stringent standards set by the Department of Ecology to ensure clean water for swimming, boating, fishing, and aquatic resources.

Aligning Planning Considerations with Community Values
Special care is being taken to make sure that construction, installation, and operation of the replacement effluent pipeline and outfall will be environmentally sound, cost-effective, fiscally responsible, and address neighbor and ratepayer concerns. The new pipeline will require minimal energy and maintenance to operate. The existing pipeline will be retained to facilitate continuous treatment plant operation during the transition and routine maintenance.

Project Benefits
The project will:
- Ensure continued reliable service at a stable, affordable rate by planning for the long-term and avoiding the increased cost of isolated improvements.
- Support planned growth within the community.
- Ensure adequate mixing and dilution of treated wastewater discharged into the Columbia River.
- Manage shoreline stability at the discharge point.
- Enable future decommissioning of Ridgefield’s aging wastewater treatment plant and outfall into Lake River (after additional projects are in place).

Funding
In 2018, the Alliance adopted a comprehensive Capital Plan that brings the partners’ facility assets, including the Salmon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant and discharge facilities, under Alliance ownership. Planning and design costs for the Columbia River Outfall and Effluent Pipeline Project are covered in the Capital Plan.

In total, the project is anticipated to cost approximately $25 million. Those costs are allocated to the local agencies that own the capacity within the facility – the City of Battle Ground and the Clark Regional Wastewater District. The City and the District have included the project costs in long range financial planning efforts to ensure affordability of rates and charges.

Planning for the Future
It’s important to plan for the future. Our community expects dependable, affordable sewer services that are essential to our quality of life. Our personal health, the community’s economic health, and the health of our rivers and environment depend in large part on treating the wastewater we all generate so that it can be returned safely to the environment. To effectively meet our growing need, the Alliance is already underway with a Phase 5 program which includes the outfall and effluent pipeline replacement project.

Staying ahead of the reliability and resiliency needs is vitally important. By proactively planning now, the Alliance ensures that ample wastewater treatment facilities will be in place to continue to provide reliable service at an affordable cost well into our future.