

Discovery Clean Water Alliance



Meeting the Community's Need for a Regional Wastewater Program

Washington Association of Water & Sewer Districts
Fall Conference
September 17, 2025



Laying the foundation
for a **vibrant economy**
and **healthy environment**

Presentation Overview



- **Formation Process**
 - Context for Initial Discussions (2007)
 - Initial Study Process (2008-2009)
 - Detailed Business Planning (2010-2011)
 - Memorandums of Understanding (2012)
 - Implementation Phase (2013-2014)
- **Alliance Overview**
 - Organizational Structure
 - Governance
 - Finance
- **Reflections/Lessons Learned**
- **Alliance Successes**
- **Questions?**





Formation Process

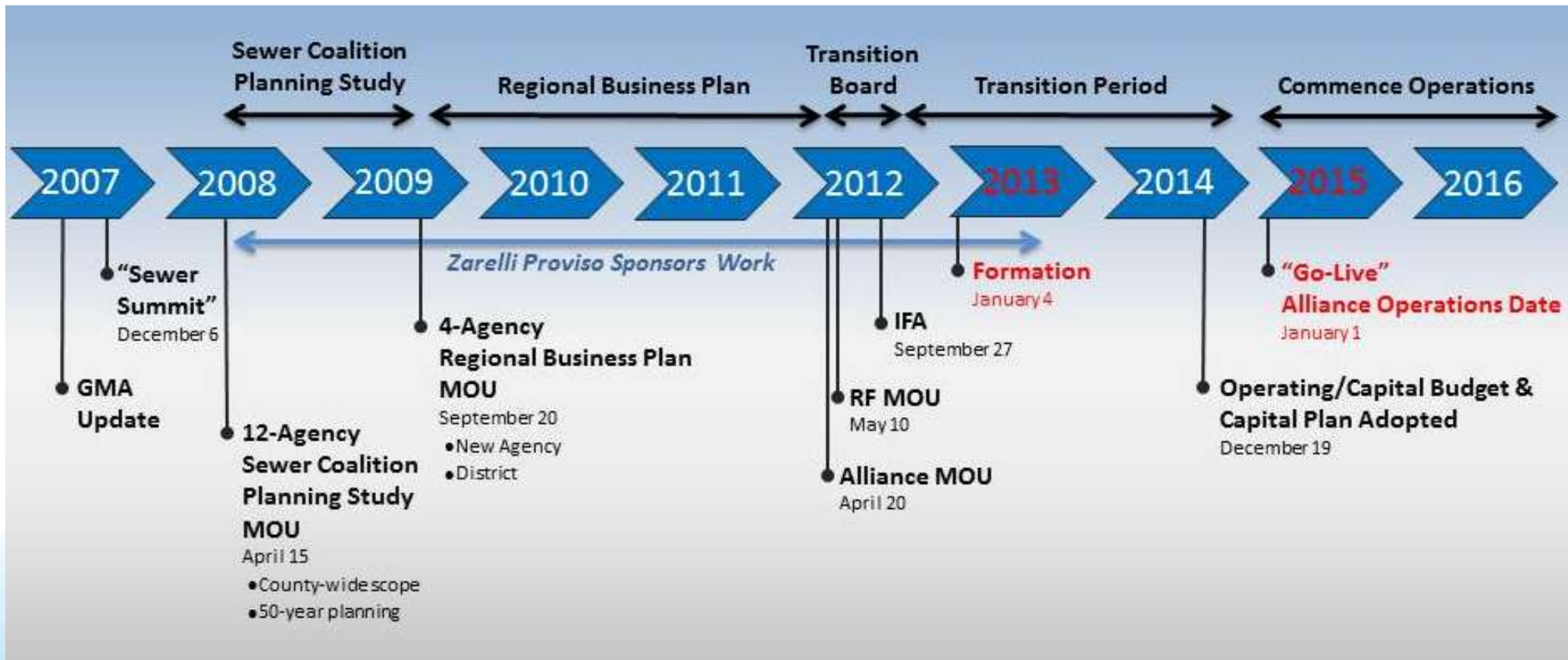


Formation Process

10-Year Timeline



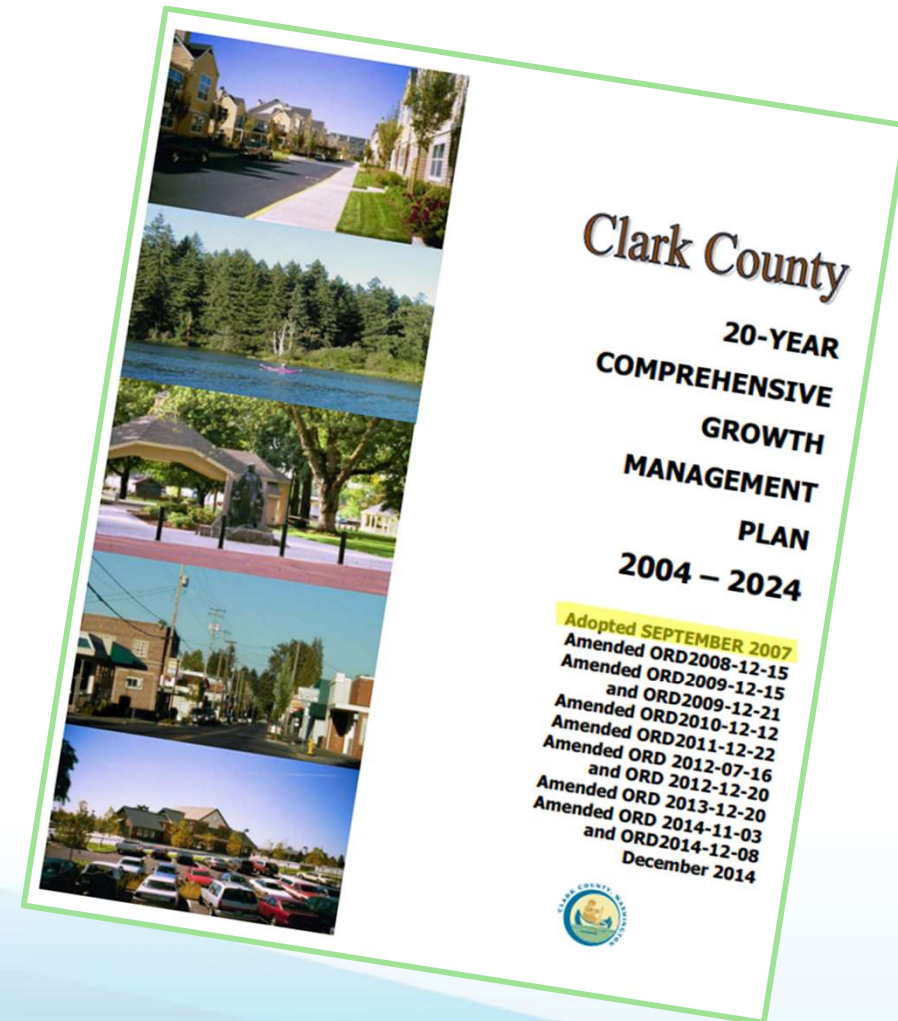
“Go slow at the beginning, so you can go fast at the end.”
– Former WA State Representative Jim Jacks (49th Legislative District)



Formation Process

Context for Initial Discussions (2007)

- 2007 Clark County Growth Management Act Update – September Adoption of 20-Year Comprehensive Growth Management Plan
 - Smaller communities wanted growth allocation
 - Had difficulty demonstrating ability to deliver infrastructure (especially wastewater)



Formation Process

Context for Initial Discussions (2007)

- Existing Regional Wastewater Program Challenges – Reactive Approach
 - Capacity management legal challenges
 - Project decisions for more expensive infrastructure due to schedule pressures
 - Decisions made by Clark County, but all costs passed on to regional system users (Clark Regional, City of Battle Ground)
 - Regional economic development opportunities unrealized (especially I-5 corridor through Ridgefield, wastewater limited)



Formation Process

Context for Initial Discussions (2007)

- Result – “Sewer Summit” December 6, 2007
 - 12 local agencies: “We need to do something different”
 - Community asked District to host and facilitate regional study process

WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD SEWER SUMMIT	
Thursday, December 6, 2007 3:00 PM	
First Church of God Kings Way High School 3300 NE 78 th Street Vancouver, WA	
2:30 p.m.	Arrive, Sign in & Light Refreshments
3:00 p.m.	Begin WWMAB Meeting and Welcome
3:05 p.m.	Introductions and Expectations
3:25 p.m.	What is Our Present Situation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Current flows – Current treatment capacity – Projected 2050 flows
3:45 p.m.	Problem Statement—What does it mean and are there potential functions that a regional utility could perform to increase efficiencies and decrease costs?
4:00 p.m.	Break – Light Meal
4:15 p.m.	How Do We View Our Present Situation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report and discuss common interest and needs of jurisdictions – Ownership and/or control of treatment – Availability of treatment capacity – Representation – Long-range planning – Coordinated planning – Boundaries – What's the benefit – Cafeteria of services – County role
Question: Is there a role for a Regional Consortium of Utilities?	
5:00 p.m.	How Do We Move Forward From Our Present Situation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 50-Year Wastewater Vision and Framework – Foundation Principles for Regional Consortium
5:45 p.m.	What are our headlines?
6:00 p.m.	General discussion
6:30 p.m.	Wrap-Up
6:45 p.m.	WWMAB Business Items
7:00 p.m.	Adjourn

Formation Process

Initial Study Process (2008-2009)

- Seed Money – Zarelli Proviso – “Clark County Regional Sewer Cooperative”
- 20- and 50-Year Visioning to Understand Scale/Cost for Infrastructure Needs



Formation Process

Initial Study Process (2008-2009)

- Regional Tours
 - Regional agency focus
 - Biosolids program focus
 - Information sharing
 - ✓ Key message: “This is possible”
 - Relationship building important
 - ✓ Traveling, eating, learning together broke down barriers



Formation Process

Detailed Business Planning (2010-2011)

- Listen Carefully
 - Focus on interests, not positions
 - Treat all partners as “clients”
 - ✓ Understand needs and perspectives
 - Community values survey

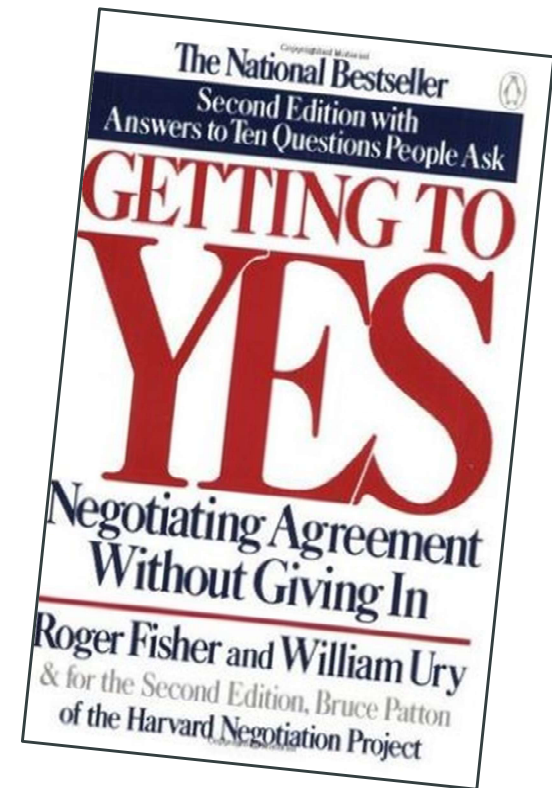
% of respondents indicating high or very high level of importance per value

Ensure reliable, predictable service for all customers	89%
Manage financial resources in a responsible, efficient, equitable manner	86%
Operate utility to protect public and environmental health and safety	82%
Optimize the use of existing facilities	80%
Maintain financial transparency	79%
Use new technology to achieve system efficiency, environmental protection	77%

Formation Process

Detailed Business Planning (2010-2011)

- Important Building Blocks
 - Independent legal counsel
 - Credible financial information
 - Regional wastewater examples
 - ✓ Core issues are common



Formation Process

Memorandums of Understanding (2012)

- Alliance MOU – April 2012
- Ridgefield MOU – May 2012

APPROVED

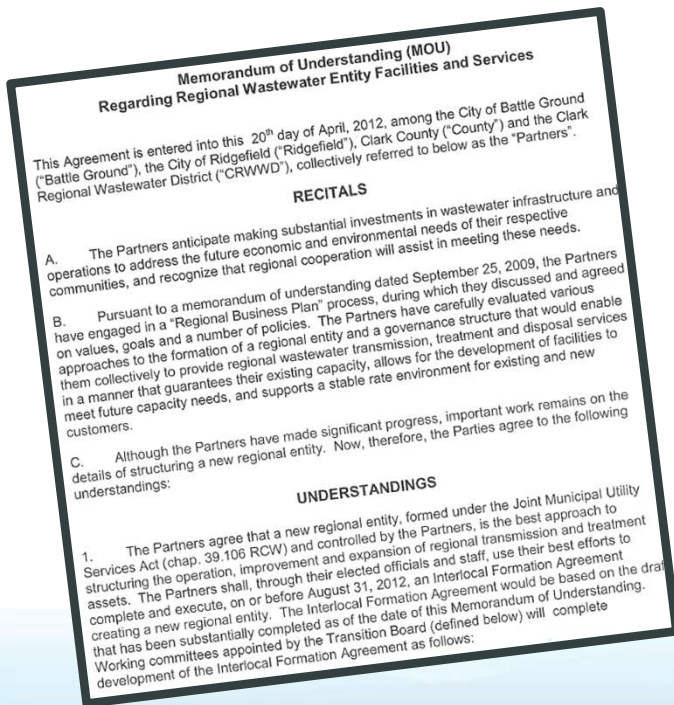


Formation Process

Memorandums of Understanding (2012)

- Agreement in Principle
 - Formation of new entity under Joint Municipal Utility Services Act (RCW 39.106)

- ✓ Scalable for any municipal water service in Clark County
- ✓ Any municipal entity or tribe could become a Member
- ✓ Important outcome for Clark County
- ✓ Regional infrastructure defined



Formation Process

Memorandums of Understanding (2012)

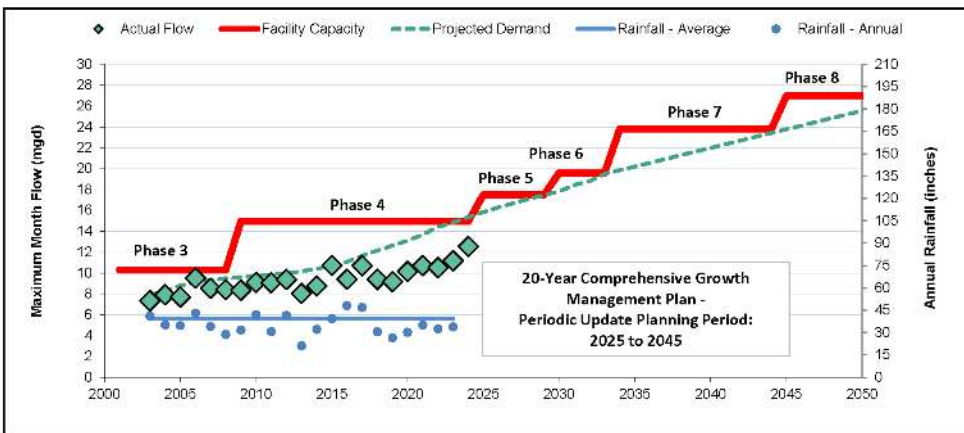
- Agreement in Principle
 - Asset based financial model
 - ✓ Clear definition of capacity ownership
 - ✓ Clear cost allocation model
 - ✓ Clear voting structure for capital investments
 - ✓ Important for Battle Ground and Clark Regional



Formation Process

Memorandums of Understanding (2012)

- Agreement in Principle
 - Professional wastewater program management
 - ✓ Opportunity to establish professional wastewater program
 - Capacity management
 - Asset management/Repair and replacement
 - Operations and maintenance
 - Biosolids program
 - ✓ Important outcome for Clark Regional



Formation Process

Memorandums of Understanding (2012)

- Agreement in Principle
 - Capacity for economic investment



✓ Solid plan for strategic capital investments



✓ Important outcome for Ridgefield and larger region



Formation Process Implementation Phase (2013-2014)



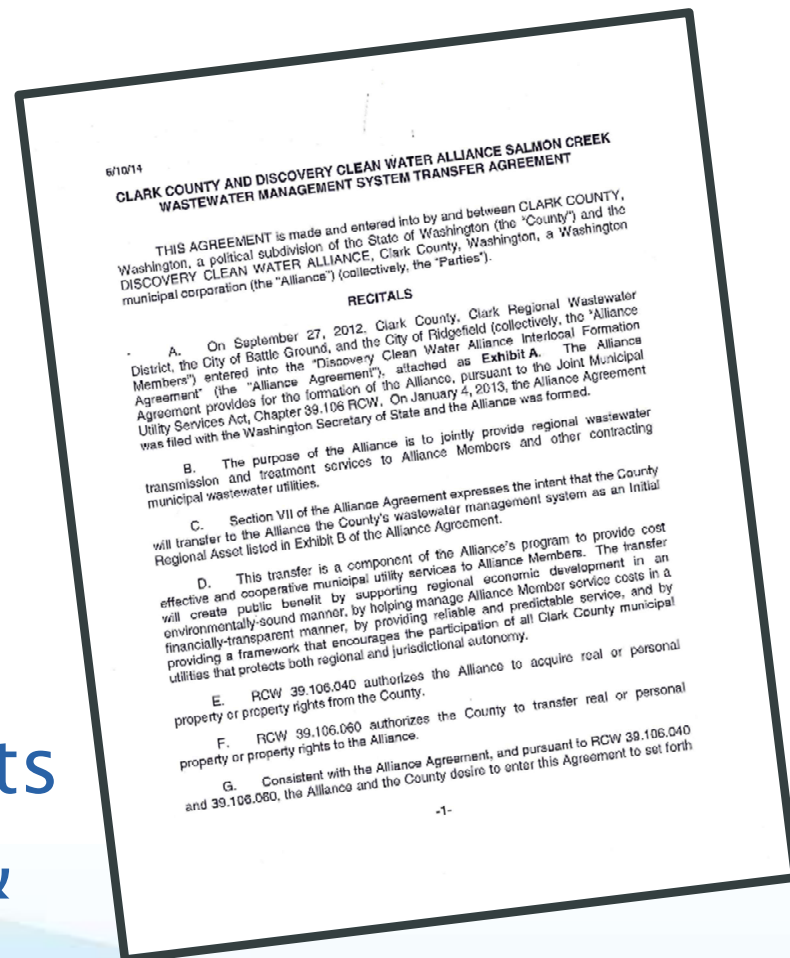
- Significant Transition Activities

- Transfer assets

- ✓ Physical assets
 - ✓ Easements
 - ✓ Property rights
 - ✓ Permits re-assigned
 - ✓ Contracts re-assigned
 - ✓ Personal property

- Establish operating contracts

- Establish initial Operating & Capital budgets



Formation Process

Implementation Phase (2013-2014)



- Transition Board
 - Members began meeting as a “Transition Board”
 - Focus was development of business structure
 - ✓ Interlocal Formation Agreement (IFA)
 - ✓ Several Board Resolutions to define basic business functions
 - Board rules & operating procedures
 - Public records
 - Investment & debt policies
 - Appointment of treasurer



Formation Process

Implementation Phase (2013-2014)



- Key Outcomes

- Discovery Clean Water Alliance formed January 4, 2013

- ✓ Member Agencies

- City of Battle Ground
- City of Ridgefield
- Clark County
- Clark Regional Wastewater District



- ✓ “Regional Assets” transferred from Battle Ground, Ridgefield, Clark County
- ✓ Full operations established January 1, 2015
- ✓ Board meeting and stakeholder input process established (“Standing Committees”)



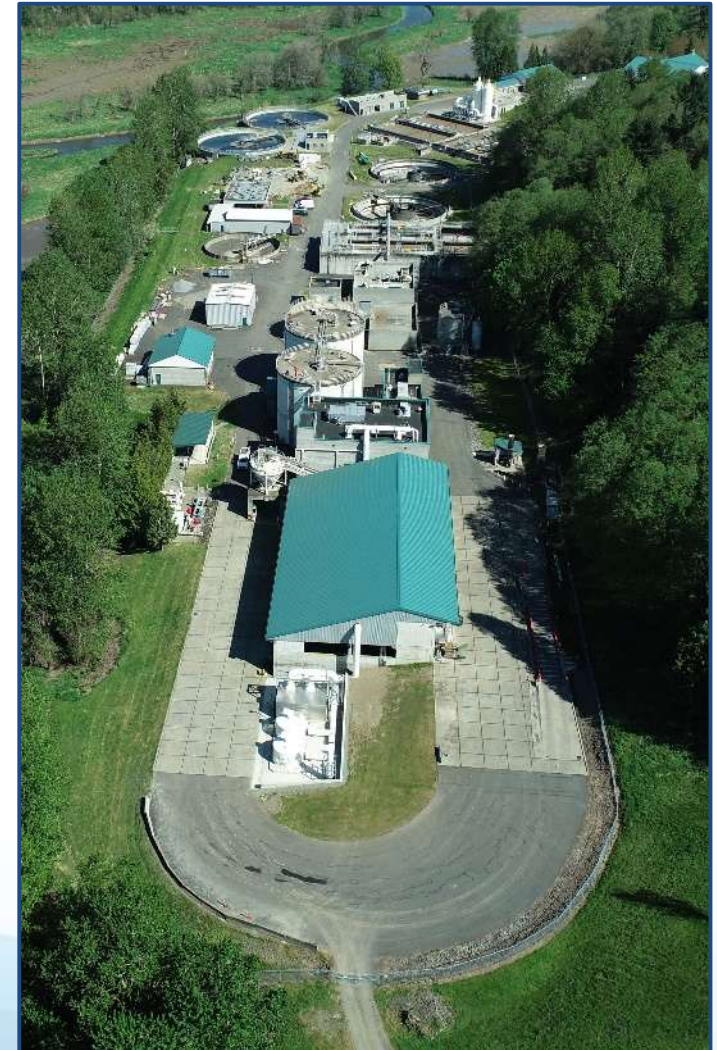
Alliance Overview



Alliance Overview

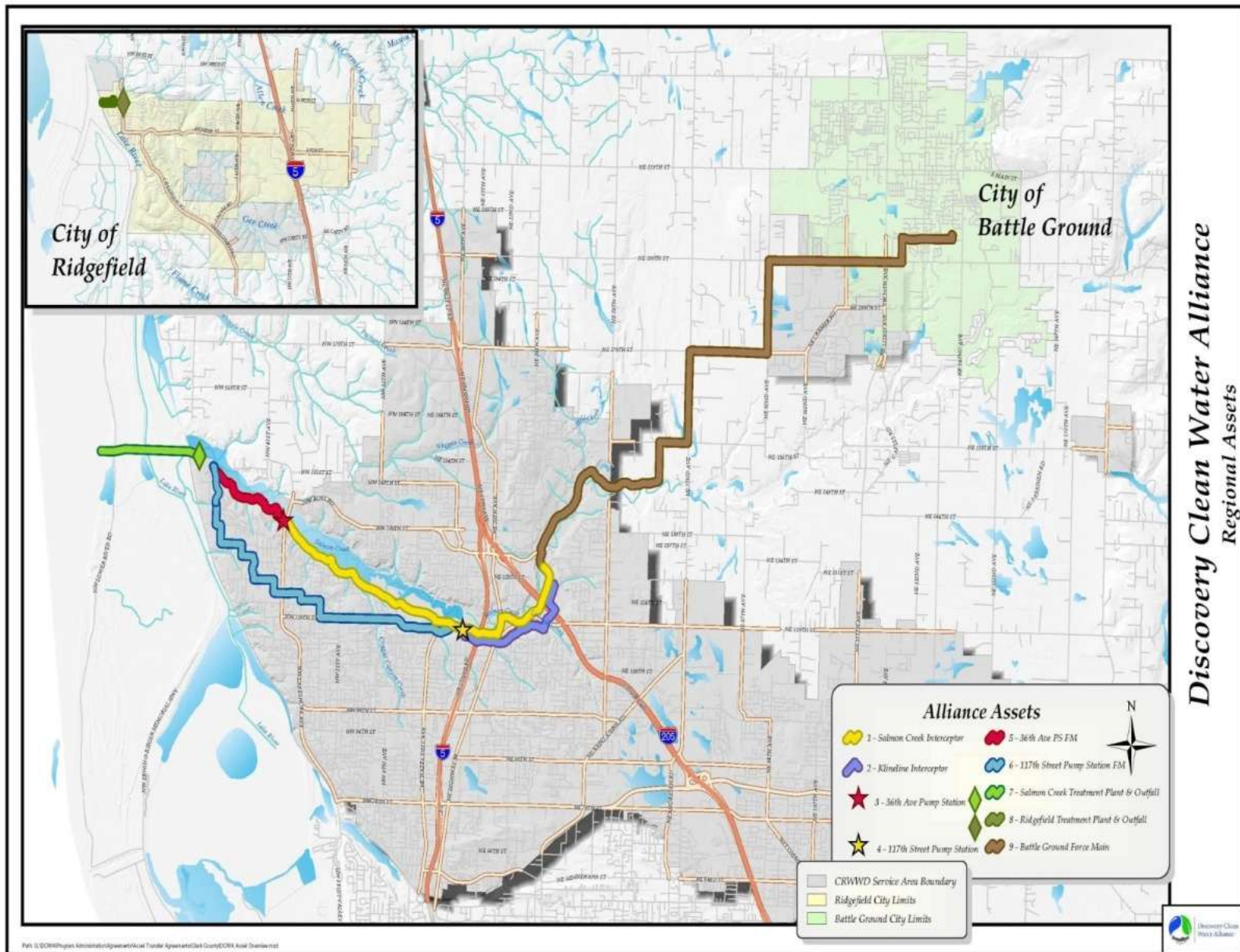
Organizational Structure

- Regional Board
 - 4 “Directors” – one from each “Member”
 - Independent legal counsel
- Regional Assets Owned by Alliance - \$181M (2024)
 - 2 regional treatment plants
 - 2 regional pumping stations
 - 6 regional pipeline systems



Alliance Overview

Organizational Structure



Alliance Overview

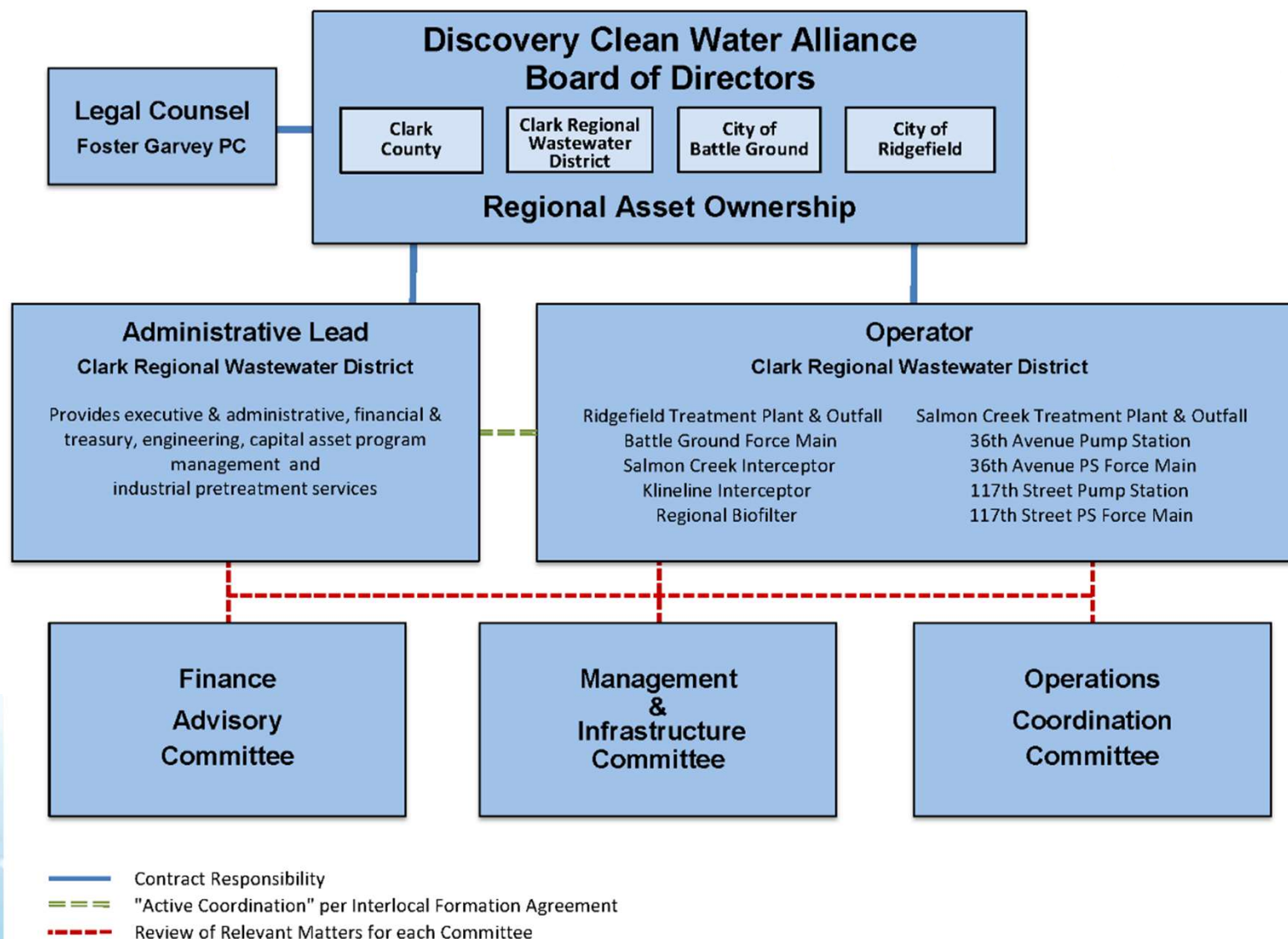
Organizational Structure

- District as Contract Service Provider
 - Administrative Lead
 - ✓ Executive/Administrative
 - ✓ Finance/Treasury
 - ✓ Engineering/Capital Program
 - ✓ Regulatory Compliance/Industrial Pretreatment
 - Operations
 - ✓ Initial Operators: Ridgefield (thru 2017) & Clark County (thru 2021)
 - ✓ Current Operator: Clark Regional operates all Regional Assets
- Board Appointed Standing Committees



Alliance Overview

Organizational Structure



Alliance Overview

Governance

- House and Senate Framework
 - Key Concept for “Significant Decisions”
 - ✓ Board votes must pass two tests
 - House Filter – Majority of Treatment Facility Allocated Capacity
 - ✓ Today – Clark Regional owns 78% of treatment capacity (both plants)
 - Senate Filter – Majority of Directors voting (typically 3 of 4, could be 2 of 3)



Alliance Overview

Governance

- Decision Categories

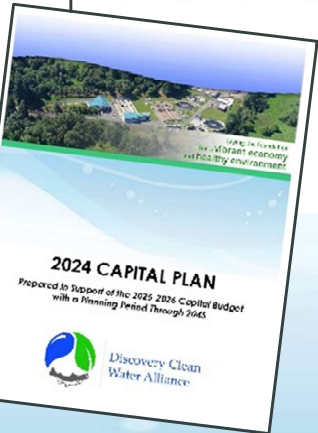
- Routine – Simple majority (3 of 4 or 2 of 3)
- “Significant Decisions”
 - ✓ Dual majority vote – 50% of both Senate and House filters



- Borrowing of money/issuance of bonds
- Change in Administrative Lead and/or Operator(s)
- Change in ownership of Regional Assets
- Adoption of Operating Budget, Capital Budget

- ✓ Dual super majority vote – 60% of both Senate and House filters

- Amendments to Interlocal Formation Agreement
- Amendments to financial policies
- Adoption of Capital Plan (and related allocation of costs)
- Change in allocated capacity



Alliance Overview

Finance – Asset Based Cost Allocation

- Allocated Capacity (or Capacity Ownership)
 - Defined for each Regional Asset
 - Only Clark Regional and Battle Ground own capacity today
 - Example: SCTP capacity (mgd)
 - ✓ Battle Ground: 3.47 (23%)
 - ✓ Clark Regional: 11.48 (77%)
 - ✓ **Total: 14.95 (100%)**

System Name	No.	Regional Asset Name	Regional Asset Description	Initial Capacity Allocations (MGD, MMF)		
				Existing Allocated Capacity		
				BG	CRWWD	Total
Salmon Creek Wastewater Management System (SCWMS)				10.10	28.08	38.18
	1	Interceptor System				
		Salmon Creek Interceptor	4.6 mile long gravity pipeline located on the south side of the Salmon Creek drainage. The interceptor collects and conveys wastewater from partner agencies to regional pump stations. The pipeline was constructed in segments from the mid to late 1970's (21-42-inch diameter pipe routed from Betts Bridge to 36 Ave).			
	2	Klineline Interceptor	1.8 mile long gravity pipeline located parallel to the Salmon Creek Interceptor. The pipeline was constructed in segments from 2002 to 2006 (48-inch diameter pipe routed from Salmon Creek Ave & NE 127 St to 117 St PS).	1780*	1620*	3400*
	2A	Regional Biofilter - Klineline Interceptor	Regional biofilter providing odor and control corrosion associated with the combined discharges of the St. John's Interceptor and Battle Ground Force Main. The biofilter utilized a two-cell engineered media configuration to treat the air phase odors prior to discharge. The facility capacity is expressed in CFM because the system is treating air flows rather than wastewater flows.			
				4.47	13.57	18.04
	3	Pump Station (PS) System				
		36 Avenue PS	Raw sewage PS located at 14014 NW 36 Ave in Vancouver, WA. The station pumps wastewater from the Salmon Creek Interceptor to SCTP. The pump station was constructed in mid 1970's and remodeled in 1994 and 2005.			
	4	117 Street PS (aka Klineline PS)	Raw sewage PS located at 1110 NE 117 St in Vancouver, WA. The station pumps wastewater from Salmon Creek and Klineline interceptors to SCTP. The pump station was constructed in 2008.	6.30	20.06	26.36
	5	Force Mains (FM) System				
Ridgefield Treatment System		36 Avenue PS FM	24-inch diameter FM routed from 36 Ave PS to SCTP. The FM runs approximately 1.4 miles along the south side of the Salmon Creek and discharges to SCTP. The pipeline was constructed in mid 1970's.			
	6	117 Street PS FM	Dual 30-inch diameter FMs routed from 117 St PS to SCTP. The FM runs approximately 4.9 miles along public rights-of-way to the SCTP. The pipeline was constructed in segments from 2004 to 2008.	3.47	11.48	14.95
	7	Salmon Creek Treatment Plant (SCTP) & Outfall				
			Secondary treatment plant originally constructed in the mid 1970s, with four major expansion phases. The plant is located at 15100 NW McCann Rd, in Vancouver, WA. The plant outfall is a 30-inch diameter pipeline routed west of the plant 1.3 miles, terminating in the Columbia River between mile 95 and 96.	0.00	0.70	0.70
Battle Ground Force Main System	8	Ridgefield Treatment Plant (RTP) & Outfall				
			Secondary treatment plant originally constructed in 1959 with several upgrades since then. The plant is located on West Cook St in Ridgefield, WA. The plant outfall is an 8-inch diameter pipeline routed west of the plant 0.2 miles, terminating in Lake River.	3.44	0.96	4.40
	9	Battle Ground FM (including odor control system for FM)	9 mile long 16-inch diameter FM with biocide chemical injection facility routed southwesterly from Battle Ground PS to Klineline Interceptor at Salmon Creek Ave. The pipeline was constructed in 1993.			

* Values are in CFM (air flow rate in cubic feet per minute) for this Regional Asset

Alliance Overview

Finance

- Asset Based Cost Allocation
 - Operational costs shared by current actual flow contributions from Members
 - Capital costs for existing facilities by current capacity allocation or capacity “ownership” in those facilities
 - Capital costs for new facilities by incremental purchase of capacity
 - Administrative costs (not related to operations) are shared by capacity allocation in the treatment facilities





Reflections/ Lessons Learned



Reflections/Lessons Learned

- Built on Values of Community
 - Reliable service at affordable price
- Alignment of Authority and Responsibility
 - Voting system respecting all interests
 - Special rights for “Funding Members”
- State Level Support
 - Legislators/Zarelli proviso/Public Works Board
- Quality Process to Build Relationships First
 - Tours, workshops, time
- Quality Information to Support Decisions
 - Credible financial analysis, creative/respected legal

Reflections/Lessons Learned

- Safe Forum
 - District asked to host/facilitate process
 - Demonstrate value of sewer-only utility in context of competing general-purpose governments
- Leadership
 - Long-term vision
 - Put community first
 - Commitment to excellence in process and information





Alliance Successes



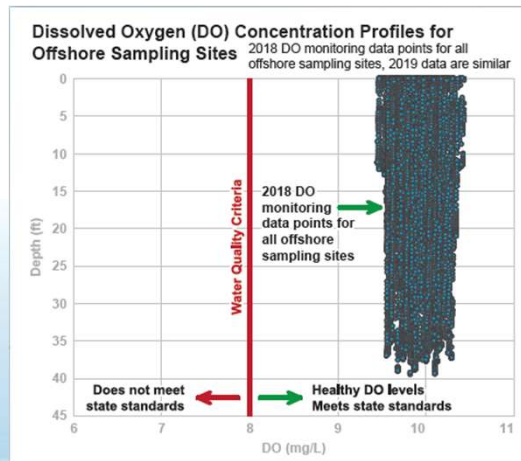
Alliance Successes



- 2015 Governor's Smart Communities – Partnership Award
- Development of Initial Asset Management Program
- Columbia River Water Quality Issue Resolution



Projects	Criticality Average "Consequence"	Criticality Ratings										Condition Average "Risk"	Condition Ratings										Total Score (Criticality & Condition Averages)
A-Upper Salmon Creek Interceptor	6.0	6	7	8	8	8	8	6	5	5	5	5.5	6	7	8	7	6	8	9	5	5	5	11.5
B-Middle Salmon Creek Interceptor	6.0	8	6	6	7	6	5	9	6	6	7	4.9	5	6	3	4	6	5	9	7	7	7	10.9
C-36th Avenue PS Pump Replacement	7.7	8	9	8	8	9	8	9	9	8	9	6.2	7	8	7	8	8	5	7	8	8	8	13.9
D-SCTP Programmable Logic Controller Replacement	7.4	8	8	9	6	9	7	9	8	8	9	5.8	8	8	9	5	8	4	7	7	7	7	13.2
E-SCTPO Columbia River Outfall Pipe Replacement	5.5	6	6	7	6	9	6	8	4	5	4	4.4	7	4	7	6	6	4	5	5	4	5	10.0
F-SCTP Dewatering Equipment Replacement	3.6	7	3	4	4	5	5	2	3	4	3	2.5	4	3	3	3	3	4	2	2	3	3	6.1
G- BGFM Valve & Vault Repair	5.0	8	5	4	8	6	7	8	3	3	3	6.3	8	8	7	8	8	7	9	8	6	7	11.3
H-Klineline Interceptor Regional Biofilter	6.1	9	8	6	8	7	4	7	7	5	6	5.7	6	7	5	8	4	7	9	8	7	7	11.8
I-SCTP Influent Bar Screen	2.5	3	3	3	3	2	4	1	3	3	2	2.6	3	3	3	2	2	6	1	4	3	4	5.0
J-SCTP UV System Replacement	4.3	8	7	4	7	8	4	3	1	3	2	2.3	2	3	4	3	2	5	3	1	2	3	6.6
K-SCTP Primary Sludge Pump Replacement	1.8	3	2	2	2	2	5	1	1	2	1	1.7	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	1	2	2	3.4



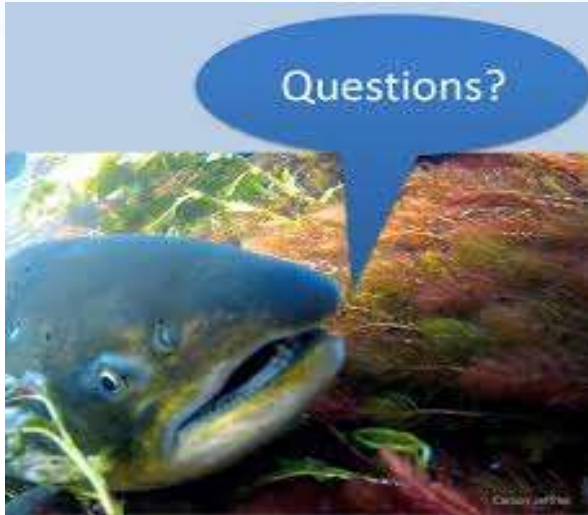
Alliance Successes



- Biosolids Program Update
- Salmon Creek Treatment Plant Phase 5 Expansion with Outfall Replacement (\$72M)
- Pretreatment Program Delegation
- Operational Consolidations: Ridgefield Treatment Plant & Salmon Creek Treatment Plant



Questions?



Additional Information

- **Discovery Clean Water Alliance Website:**
<https://discoverycwa.org>



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