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LOTT Wastewater Resource Management Plan

LOTT's Wastewater Resource Management Plan is an environmentally-based system for adding small units of capacity, responding just-in-time to actual measured conditions. New units of future treatment capacity will be gained at satellite plants treating water to Class A Reclaimed Water standards so the water can be put to beneficial use. The shift to this new approach will be supported through ongoing flow reduction programs and carefully managed reserve capacity in Budd Inlet.

Long-Range Planning Set a New Course for Wastewater Management

The LOTT Wastewater Alliance is beginning to change the way it manages wastewater for the Lacey-Olympia-Tumwater urban area. This change is the result of developing a long-range Wastewater Resource Management Plan.

The $7.8 million planning process began in September 1995, spanned more than three years and included a $3.1 million scientific study of Budd Inlet. In December 1998, all four LOTT Partners (Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Thurston County) voted to select "The Highly Managed Alternative" as the proposed plan.

The Plan is a product of public values and public comment received throughout the planning process. These included strong desires to protect the environment, control costs, make maximum use of LOTT's existing facilities before investing in new ones, use treated water as a resource, achieve a fair balance of costs between growth and current residents, and plan with a long-range perspective.

During 1999, the LOTT Partners finalized financing and governance structures for implementing the plan. That year, they acted to increase sewer connection fees and monthly rates. A new Interlocal Agreement for Wastewater Management by the LOTT Alliance gained final approval in January 2000. Based on the Agreement, LOTT began its transition from a paperwork partnership to a new entity – the LOTT Wastewater Alliance. In May 2000, the LOTT Board adopted a new mission statement. Transition to the new governance structure was complete effective July 1, 2001.

LOTT Wastewater Alliance

Highlights of the Plan

Reclaimed Water is the focal point of the Plan, providing a means for adding new treatment capacity while preserving an increasingly valuable resource -- water.

Reclamation

Groundwater Recharge

Future new treatment capacity will be built in small increments, in the form of small satellite treatment plants. The 20-year plan identifies construction of three satellites located throughout the Lacey-Olympia-Tumwater urban area. Each satellite will initially be built to treat one million gallons per day (mgd) and be expandable up to five mgd. Each new increment of capacity will be built "just in time" to meet new capacity needs – based on population and employment projections, remaining capacity in existing facilities, and other constantly measured factors.

The satellite plants will produce Class A Reclaimed Water – water that is clean enough for public contact and virtually all uses except drinking. The cleaned Class A water will be used for irrigation, commercial and industrial purposes, groundwater recharge, and environmental improvements such as stream-flow augmentation and wetland enhancement.

Adding new capacity in small increments will offer greater opportunities for alternative financing and equitable balancing of costs. It will also allow, to the extent practical, growth-related capital costs to be paid by that growth.

Discharge More in Budd Inlet

To gain maximum benefit from current treatment facilities, the Plan relies on increased wintertime discharge into Budd Inlet as reserve capacity. The Budd Inlet Scientific Study findings and further computer modeling verify that increased winter discharges will not have negative water quality affects on the Inlet. Increasing the wintertime discharge will allow LOTT to cost-efficiently manage peak flows that occur during high rainfall periods.

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Highlights of the Plan

To further maximize current facilities and reduce needs for new capacity as much as practical, LOTT will continue to support cost-effective:

Wastewater Flow Reduction

- Indoor Water Conservation projects, including rebates on appliances, fixtures, and systems that send less water "down the drain;"
- Inflow and Infiltration Flow Reduction projects, including main line and sidesewer repair or replacement; and
- Flow Diversion projects, including composting toilets, graywater separation, and other systems that divert flows out of the sewer system.

Inflow and Infiltration Reduction

As designed, the entire program needs to be continuously monitored and tightly managed. For that reason, the Plan is described as "The Highly Managed Plan."

About LOTT

The LOTT Wastewater Alliance helps preserve and protect public health, the environment and water resources by providing wastewater management services for the urbanized area of north Thurston County. Its four government partners (Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Thurston County) jointly manage wastewater facilities serving a 14,000 acre area and a population of over 80,000 people. Their joint efforts currently include a central treatment plant, major sewer lines, flow management and long-range planning.

For More Information

To learn more about LOTT's long-range plan or projects and programs that are part of that plan, you can:

- Visit LOTT's web site – www.lottonline.org, or
- Contact Karla Fowler, Program Manager by phone (360-664-2333 ext. 100) or e-mail (karlafowler@lottonline.org).

Public Values Guided LOTT Planning

In developing its plan, LOTT recognized the following public values. These values, expressed widely by citizens throughout the LOTT service area, were drawn from citizen surveys conducted early in the planning. LOTT sought a balance among these key values in preparing its long-range plan for managing the region's wastewater resource.

1. As a first priority, **maximize utilization of LOTT's existing treatment capacity**. Manage demand to avoid or delay the need for new treatment capacity.
2. Prepare a plan that **meets current and future wastewater needs** throughout the LOTT service area. Accommodate planned growth, consistent with LOTT's legal requirements.
3. Select wastewater facilities for the region's future that yield **maximum benefits to the environment**. Mitigate any potentially adverse impacts of new facilities.
4. Take all possible steps to **control facilities costs**. Carefully consider the lowest cost and most cost-effective alternatives, and evaluate the impact on LOTT ratepayers.
5. **Treasure LOTT's treated wastewater as a valuable, long-term resource** to be cleaned and restored, reused, then ultimately returned to the environment.
6. Clearly define, demonstrate and document the value to the community of new facilities needed for the future. Design any new LOTT facilities to **produce multiple benefits for the community**.
7. **Conduct a pro-active and open facilities planning process** that informs and involves citizens in planning and decision-making.
8. **Assure an equitable distribution of costs** for any new facilities between current ratepayers and new development.
9. Establish an organizational structure to build and operate the region's future facilities effectively and efficiently, and that **assures equitable and accountable representation of the public**.
10. **Integrate LOTT's facilities plan with other related local issues, plans, and infrastructure programs** to maximize regional cooperation and avoid duplication of effort and cost.