



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 25, 2012

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Regional sewer partnership taking shape to spur economic growth in Clark County

CLARK COUNTY – A regional sewer partnership is quickly coming together to support job creation and economic development in Clark County.

Under terms of a recently signed memorandum of understanding, Clark County, Clark Regional Wastewater District and the Cities of Battle Ground and Ridgefield have agreed to form a new partnership, the *Discovery Clean Water Alliance*, by the end of summer 2012.

The Alliance would not replace existing sewer providers but instead regionalize major sewer lines and treatment plants, thus eliminating the need for duplicative facilities in each service area. Customers would continue to receive service and bills from their existing provider. Each provider would pay for its proportional share of wholesale conveyance and treatment costs to the alliance based on actual sewage flows.

This shared approach would enable partners to manage capital costs through more efficient use of existing sewer capacity and shared funding of future expansions. Financial modeling suggests this would help protect customers from future rate spikes associated with large projects, thereby promoting more stable rates over the next 20 years.

The agreement also protects ratepayers from having to foot the bill for projects that do not benefit them. Any repair, replacement or capital cost would be shared by only the partners who use that part of the system.

The partnership also should make it easier to complete infrastructure projects faster and at less cost for employment lands throughout the regional service area. One example is the Discovery Corridor Wastewater Transmission System along Interstate 5 in north Clark County. A recent feasibility study indicated that providing sewer service in this area could encourage development of multiple employment centers and potentially create thousands of jobs, consistent with the recently released Columbia River Economic Development Council's Economic Development Plan.

Over the next several months, elected officials from each agency will work together on a "Transition Board" to complete legal agreements, establish financial policies and take other steps toward formal creation of the alliance.

Additional information about the Discovery Clean Water Alliance is available at www.discoverycwa.org or upon request from the participating agencies.

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