



To: Clean Water Commission

From: Devan Rostorfer, Clean Water Division Manager

Date: February 6, 2024

Subject: Division Report – Clean Water Commission – February 2024

Greetings Clean Water Commissioners,

First and foremost, welcome aboard to our three new Clean Water Commissioners joining us this year! We are so excited to welcome Alejandra Cortes, Phil Struck, and Rudy Salakory to our team. We look forward to learning more about each of you and hearing your priorities and vision for clean water in Clark County.

As we are already entering the month of February, there is truly never a dull day in the Clean Water Division! Our division continues to support all of the great work we have historically supported, while also working on multiple new projects, and programs to protect and restore clean water in Clark County. I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to the staff who always go above and beyond to manage multiple complex projects all at once.

With the new year, new Public Works Leadership, and increasing interest in environmental topics from Clark County Council – it truly feels like a “renaissance” year for the Clean Water Division. This spirit of renaissance, recharge, and renewal is reinforced by our division’s focus on a Stormwater Rate Study in 2024.

Did you know that Clark County currently has the lowest stormwater rate in Washington State? This rate was originally established in 2000 and has only been increased one time in twenty-four years. When compared to neighboring jurisdictions in Clark County -Vancouver, Camas, Battle Ground, Washougal, and Longview – Clark County’s stormwater rate is currently 219-350% lower than cities nearby. Additionally, our stormwater rate is even lower than jurisdictions in Clark County that have no permit requirements, such as the City of La Center, which charges \$127 for its stormwater rate, which is nearly three times higher than Clark County.

This stormwater rate study is our highest priority for the Clean Water Division, because currently we are facing a structural deficit in our division’s budget, with fund balance depletion expected as early as 2026. What this means is that in order to maintain our current services, and make improvements to the services we provide, we need to increase our stormwater rate this year or we will face a very unfortunate future. This rate study is truly most important endeavor our division can take on and we need Clean Water Commission support.

With over \$219 million dollars of stormwater assets (as of 2018) we know that beginning to look at the 500 miles of underground pipes that make up over 60% of our asset portfolio value is essential. We also know that each year, development in unincorporated Clark County has increased the average number of stormwater facilities by 8 percent annually. At the end of 2023, the County has over 2000 public facilities,

and over 1,8000 private stormwater facilities that require consistent inspections, maintenance, operations, and/or repair.

In addition to infrastructure needs, the Clean Water division currently has no dedicated budget for lake management activities, and greatly needs additional resources for staff to provide education and outreach, technical assistance to residents and businesses in Clark County.

Our plan to take on this rate study will happen between now and August 2024. The Clean Water Division has presented our scope of work to Clark County Council on January 31, 2024. The PowerPoint and recording from this Council Work Session are available online. Between February and March, staff are working to identify our division's unmet needs and compliance risks, focusing on estimating costs to implement new stormwater permit requirements expected in July 2024, while also identifying where our division needs to build its capacity to provide stormwater services that address critical gaps and risks within our program.

With this information, our division will develop level of service scenarios to bring the Clean Water Commission for discussion in April, before we present these options to Clark County Council. The future of what the Clean Water Division works on will be contingent on the services Clark County Council wants our division to focus on. Based on the services they select, our goal is to have a final rate recommendation to take to the Commission and Council by July, for final adoption in August. This timeline is essential, in order to incorporate any rate increases into the 2025 tax assessment that will go out in February 2025.

While this rate study is the most important activity within our division – it isn't the only thing we are working on. The 18 staff that make up the Clean Water Division are ALWAYS working on many things. Attached to this Division report is a summary of some of the major Clean Water Division priorities and milestones for 2024. This roadmap is subject to change and evolve over the year. The goal for sharing this information is to help support the Clean Water Commission as you develop your 2024 Workplan for this calendar year.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts and working together to identify important milestones for information sharing to receive commission input and feedback on Clean Water Division activities, as well as critical milestones for the Commission to provide recommendations to Clark County Council.

As always, my door is open if you'd like to meet one-on-one at the Public Service Center or at a coffee shop in downtown Vancouver. I am also available through email at devan.rostorfer@clark.wa.gov, by phone at 564-241-0611.

Here's to a great year!

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Month	Clean Water Division Priorities for 2024
February 2024 *Note: Commission Meeting Feb. 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clark County Council Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clark County & Camas Interlocal Agreement for Lacamas Watershed – February 7, 2024 • RFPs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stormwater Code and Manual Update – February 21, 2024 ○ Microbial Source Tracking Laboratory – February 7, 2024 ○ Vancouver Lake Implementation – Select Consultant • Clean Water Commission – 2024 Workplan
March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Water Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Optional workshop/training TBD • Staff milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2024 Stormwater Management Plan ○ Stormwater Permit Annual Report to Ecology • RFPs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stormwater Code and Manual Update – consultant selection
April 2024 *Note: Commission Meeting April 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clark County Council Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stormwater Rate Study – Unmet Needs, Compliance Risks, and Level of Service options • Public Involvement / Open Houses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Heritage Farm Wetland ○ Philbrook Farms • RFPs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facilities Maintenance Services (Bioretention) – April 18, 2024 ○ Capital Project Engineering Design Services – April 24, 2024 • Staff Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stormwater Partners Interlocal Agreement
May 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Involvement / Open Houses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2025 Capital Plan ○ Stormwater Rate Study – TBD
June 2024 *Note: Commission Meeting June 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clark County Council Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stormwater Rate Study, Final recommended rate • Staff milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vancouver Lake Treatment Plan ○ Lacamas Lake Treatment Plan ○ Environmental Justice Plan for Pollution Prevention Assistance ○ NEW Phase I NPDES Stormwater Permit & Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington

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July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Water Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Optional special meeting – commission picnic and/or tour. • Staff Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Amendment to Lower Columbia Urban Streams contract with Ecology. ○ Final Grant Announcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heritage Farm ▪ Behavior Change Campaign ○ Poop Smart Clark
August 2024 *Note: Commission Meeting August 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clark County Council Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rate Study – Final Rate adoption • Staff Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget updates – TBD
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Involvement / Open Houses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2025 Stormwater Management Plan - TBD ○ Stormwater Rate - TBD
October 2024 *Note: Commission Meeting Oct. 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Water Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vancouver Lake Symposium – TBD • RFPs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stormwater Management Action Planning (SMAP)
November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 6-year Capital Plan update ○ Stormwater Partners Symposium – TBD ○ Pipe Asset Management Pilot - TBD
December 2024 *Note: Commission Meeting Dec. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Water Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New Commissioner Recruitment ○ Chair/Vice-Chair Appointments ○ Annual Report 2024 + 2025 Work Plan • Staff Milestones – Looking ahead to 2025. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stormwater Code & Manual Update ○ NEW Phase I Stormwater Permit Requirements ○ Pipe Asset Management ○ Stormwater Management Action Planning