



October 2, 2024

Department of Ecology
Water Quality Program
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

RE: NE Highway 99 (NE 78th to 86th Street) Water Quality Retrofit Grant

Dear Grants Manager:

The Clean Water Commission's mission is to work with our community and leadership to improve and protect Clark County watersheds from the impacts of stormwater runoff, point and non-point pollution sources, and other risks to the ecological integrity and quality of our surface water resources. With that in mind, the Clean Water Commission strongly supports *Clark County's NE Highway 99 Water Quality Retrofit* grant proposal, which will improve water quality in Cougar Creek, a tributary of Salmon Creek.

This project will provide treatment for total suspended solids (TSS) and total phosphorus, along with toxic metals and other pollutants. The project proposes to retrofit approximately seven existing catch basins with media filter cartridge units and install a large filter vault to capture and treat runoff from twelve additional catch basins. The long-term cost effectiveness of the cartridges has been well proven. The project expectation is the removal of thousands of pounds of total suspended solids and significant amounts of other pollutants, that now discharge directly into Cougar Creek.

Cougar Creek is inaccessible to migratory fish but contributes significant flow to Salmon Creek and impacts water quality in the salmon-bearing mainstem. The pollutants also heavily impact juvenile salmonids and macroinvertebrate communities within the waterway. Salmon Creek is subjected to multiple active TMDLs for turbidity, bacteria, and temperature. The proposed water quality retrofit facilities will not only provide TSS treatment but will reduce nutrient loadings, resulting in the reduction of the dissolved oxygen demand within the Salmon Creek watershed.

With the goal of enhancing water quality in the Salmon Creek watershed, the Commission has endorsed similar projects in previous years which were approved by the Clark County Council. We encourage you to approve this proposal, since it will have a significant and lasting impact on not only our area's water quality but our restoration of salmonid fish habitat.

Sincerely,

Ted Gathe
Chair, Clean Water Commission
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cc: Devan Rostorfer
Clean Water Commissioners