

Hoquiam Could Receive Department of Ecology Loan to Repair Forcemain **Local News**

Posted by: David Haviland

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HOQUIAM, Wash. - It looks like Hoquiam is close to receiving a loan to replace the city's Wastewater Forcemain. Hoquiam is one of 58 clean water projects selected by the state Department of Ecology to receive a share of \$89 million in loans and grants beginning in the state's next fiscal year 2013. Hoquiam will pay a %2.7 interest rate over 20 years on the loan in the amount of \$1,452,379. Ecology invites comments about its proposed funding list. Email comments to Joseph Coppo at joseph.coppo@ecy.wa.gov or mail them to Joseph Coppo Department of Ecology Water Quality Program P.O. Box 47600 Olympia, WA 98504-7600 Ecology must receive all comments no later than 5 p.m., March 12, 2012.

Ecology will hold a public meeting about the proposed list at 10 a.m., Feb. 27 at the Pierce County Library, PAC - Processing and Administrative Center, 3005 112th Street in Tacoma.

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) has selected 58 clean water projects to receive a share of \$89 million in loans and grants starting in the state's next fiscal year 2013, which begins July 1.

The projects include upgrades and expansion of sewer plants and collection systems; sewage system improvements; water re-use facilities; water cleanup projects; stormwater and groundwater projects; stream-side restoration projects; public clean water education projects, and more.

The funding not only helps protect an irreplaceable asset - our clean water - but it also provides jobs. State financial managers calculate that 11 jobs in Washington are created for every million dollars spent in construction and design funding, supporting 979 jobs statewide for this round of projects. Over half of these are likely to be local construction jobs.

The 58 finalists represent the top-priority clean water projects. Ecology received 100 project proposals totaling \$104 million in requests.

The cities of Granger, Mabton and Snohomish were top picks to receive loan and grants for wastewater treatment plant projects.

Other highlights of funding include:

* 16 communities will share \$48 million for design/construction of wastewater treatment facilities.

* Six wastewater treatment projects qualify for hardship status. They may receive grants, forgivable principal loans that do not have to be paid back, and loans with low or zero interest rates.

* 19 projects get funding to solve "non-point" pollution that comes from diffuse, hard-to-trace sources, where runoff picks up pollution and carries it into downstream waters.

Funding for Ecology's integrated loan and grant program comes from a combination of dedicated state and federal monies. Of the \$89 million total, \$13 million comes from the Centennial Clean Water Program, which is funded through state bonds. The federally funded Clean Water Section 319 Nonpoint Source Fund provides \$1.9 million. The Washington State Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund, a combination federal grant, state match and interest and loan repayments, provides \$74 million.

The state's nationally recognized integrated funding process integrates multiple funding programs into one-stop shopping for communities that need financial assistance to pay for clean water projects.

Project descriptions and funding amounts can be found in a document titled the State Fiscal Year 2013 Draft Offer List and Intended Use Plan (<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/1210006.html>).

Appendix 1 shows the list of projects and amounts proposed for funding. Appendix 2 shows maps of Western and Eastern Washington pinpointing projects proposed for funding. Appendix 3 provides ranked summaries of the projects.

Ecology invites comments about its proposed funding list. Email comments to Joseph Coppo at joseph.coppo@ecy.wa.gov or mail them to Joseph Coppo, Department of Ecology, Water Quality Program, P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600. Ecology must receive all comments no later than 5 p.m., March 12, 2012.

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The funding is contingent on a final state budget. Washington's last state budget allowed up to \$111 million in clean water loans and grants for fiscal year 2012.