



Discovery Clean  
Water Alliance

**jla**  
Public Involvement

# DISCOVERY CLEAN WATER ALLIANCE

## 2024 ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

Prepared for:

Discovery Clean Water Alliance

Prepared by:

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**July 2024**



## INTRODUCTION

Since 2017, the Discovery Clean Water Alliance hosts an annual open house at the Salmon Creek Treatment Plant (SCTP). These open houses are focused on sharing information with nearby neighbors about the plant's role in managing the region's wastewater as well as providing updates on ongoing construction activities. The SCTP is owned by the Discovery Clean Water Alliance, a partnership formed in 2013 between Clark County, Clark Regional Wastewater District, and the cities of Battle Ground and Ridgefield.

This year, staff shared progress updates on the Columbia River Outfall and Effluent Pipeline project and the Secondary Treatment Process Improvements project as well as introduced the Asset Management Program.

This year's open house was held on June 4 from 6 pm – 7:30 pm at the Salmon Creek Treatment Plant with an online version available through July 2, 2024. [The online open house](#) is still available for public viewing, though closed for comments.



*Alliance staff greet folks as they arrive at the open house.*

## OVERALL PARTICIPATION AND NOTIFICATION

Overall, approximately twenty people attended the in-person open house. Participants did not leave any written comments. Twenty-four people visited the online open house, and nine people completed the survey. Between the two events, eleven people signed up for email updates (five had already subscribed).

Those who visited each station in the online open house or attended the in-person event were provided an Alliance magnet and a gift of their choice.

Community members were informed about the open house through the following:

- Posts on the Alliance website.
- Postcards distributed to residents near the SCTP.
- Announcement in the quarterly e-newsletter that has over 120 subscribers.
- A reminder email via the e-newsletter list to participate in the online open house.



# FEEDBACK SUMMARY

## IN-PERSON OPEN HOUSE

Open house participants had the opportunity to visit information stations and take a tour of the treatment plant. For a list of the display boards presented at each information station, see [Appendix A](#).

Three tours were led by different District staff during the open house. Nearly all participants went on a tour. Participants did not leave any written comments; however, they were able to ask questions directly of staff. The majority had general questions about plant operations, ongoing construction projects, and biosolids. A few participants asked how to properly dispose of pharmaceutical medicines, and the team shared Clark Regional Wastewater District resources on how to properly dispose of pharmaceuticals.



*John Peterson, General Manager, takes a group on a tour of the facility.*

## ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

The online open house was available between June 2 – July 2, 2024. The information reflected the content shared during the in-person open house with an opportunity to complete a survey for a free gift. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and provide general comments, which is summarized below. See [Appendix B](#) for the full text of comments.

### 1. What questions or comments do you have about the treatment plant? What do you want more information about?

Of the nine people that participated in the online open house, five provided a response. Two people offered praise for the Alliance’s work, and one person noted they were impressed to learn the SCTP facility serves over 50,000 people.

Several participants had questions, which are summarized in the chart below along with the staff’s response:

Questions	Responses
How do you keep it from smelling?	Odor control at wastewater treatment plants is a complex process. At SCTP, there are primarily two approaches utilized to filter odors: bio-

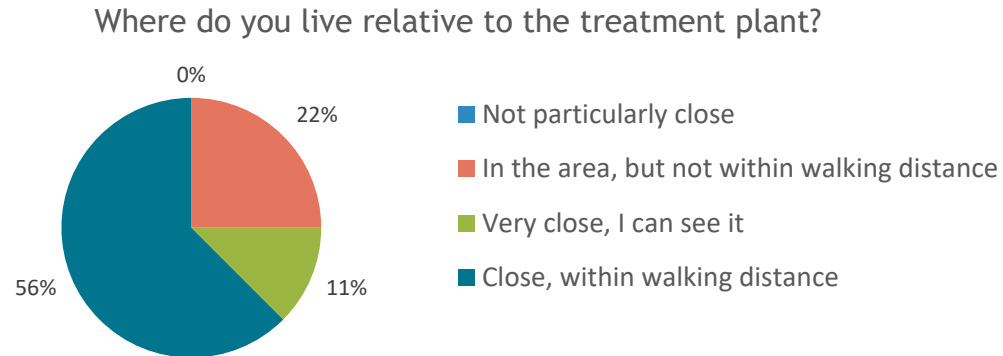


	<p>trickling towers (a biological treatment process) and activated carbon vessels (a physical treatment process). These systems use large fans to pull odorous air out of buildings or tanks and push the air through the towers or vessels where the odorous compounds are removed. You can learn more about the SCTP Odor Control project on <a href="#">our project webpage</a>.</p>
<p>Where does solid waste go after it's been collected and what is it used for?</p>	<p>The SCTP produces two forms of "solid waste". There is a small amount of trash and debris collected from the influent screens at the front portion of the plant. This material goes to the municipal landfill, as with other garbage picked up at your house or business. The official term "solid waste" usually refers to garbage and recycling.</p> <p>The wastewater treatment process also removes organic wastes at several steps in the treatment process. Those materials are further treated to federal standards to create a soil amendment product called "biosolids". Biosolids from SCTP are hauled offsite and applied to farmland, providing key nutrients back to the soil. This process is closely monitored and regulated by Washington's Department of Ecology.</p> <p>See <a href="#">the Department of Ecology's Biosolids webpage</a> for more information.</p>
<p>Where does Vancouver fresh water come from?</p>	<p>In general, most of the drinking water in Clark County comes from groundwater sources, with only a very small amount coming from surface waters. Please see the links below for additional information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Clark County Water Service and Jurisdiction list</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Clark Public Utilities Residential Water Service</a></li><li>• <a href="#">City of Vancouver Drinking Water Source</a></li></ul>
<p>How can people keep our waters safe?</p>	<p>Everyone can help protect our wastewater system and the environment by making informed choices at home. Only human waste and toilet paper should be flushed down the toilet; everything else belongs in the trash, including wipes, which can cause difficulties for the treatment system and cause costly blockages, sewer backups and overflows. In the kitchen, cooking oils and grease should be cooled and disposed in the trash. Contact the District for a free Freeze the Grease kit. Choosing cleaning and personal care products that are free from harmful chemicals also helps protect our waters. You can learn more on <a href="#">DCWA's Pollution Prevent page</a>.</p>



## 2. Where do you live relative to the treatment plant?

Over half of the participants said they live “**Close, within walking distance**” (56%).



## NEXT STEPS

Overall, participants were appreciative of the opportunity to talk with staff and learn more about the Salmon Creek Treatment Plant. It is recommended that the Alliance continue to host an annual open house and online open house effort in the future. Quarterly e-newsletters will be published throughout the year to provide project updates and other relevant news to neighbors.



## APPENDIX A: DISPLAY BOARDS

Below are the display boards presented at the open house.



**Welcome to the  
Salmon Creek  
Wastewater  
Treatment Plant**

**June 4, 6:00–7:30 p.m.**

**6:00–7:30 p.m.**  
View information displays and visit with staff.

**Starting at 6:15 p.m.**  
Guided tours of the facility.

**Learn about plant operations,  
current and future projects.**



**Thanks for attending!**  
Visit all stations to  
receive a thank you gift.



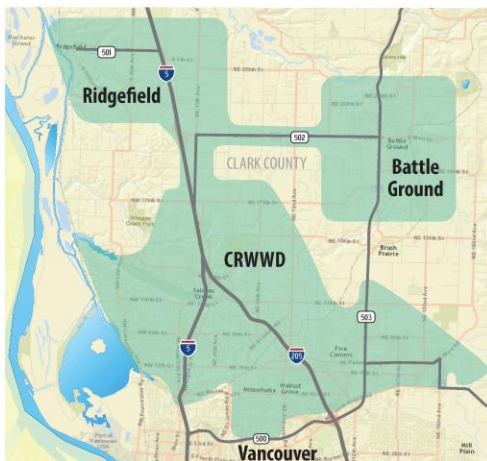
## Discovery Clean Water Alliance

The Alliance is a regional partnership created to improve sewer service delivery through joint ownership and management of regional wastewater assets. The Alliance was formed in 2013 to jointly manage wastewater infrastructure critical to the region’s economic and environmental health.



### Members

- City of Battle Ground
- City of Ridgefield
- Clark County
- Clark Regional Wastewater District



### Service Area Assets

- Gravity interceptors
- Pump stations
- Force mains
- Treatment plants



# Where Do You Live?

Put a pin in the map!



www.discoverycwa.org

## What Happens at the Treatment Plant



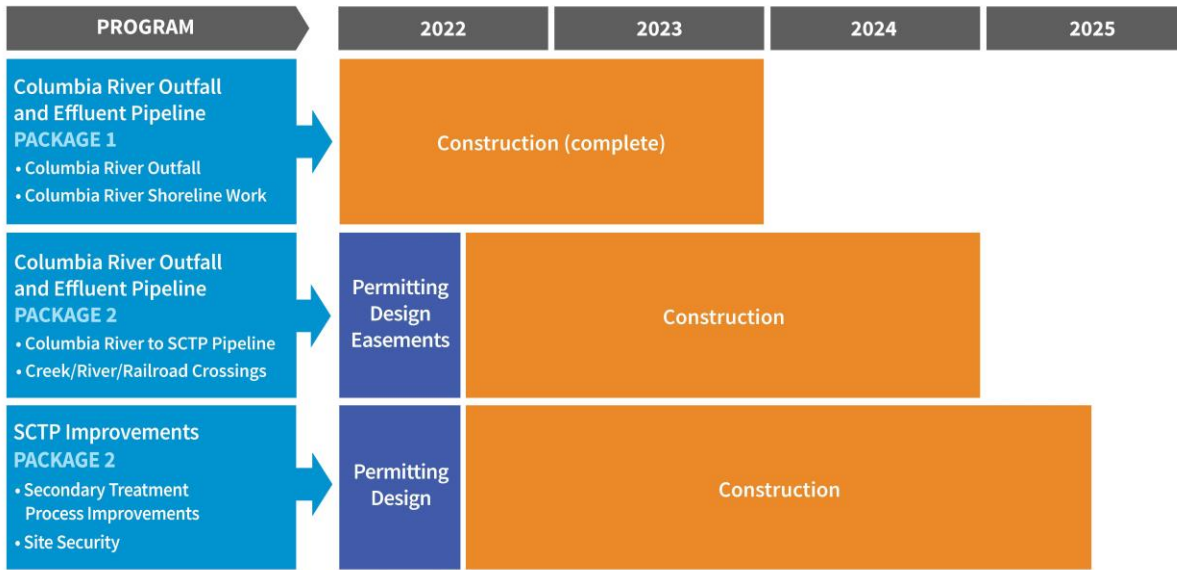
www.discoverycwa.org





# Discovery Clean Water Alliance

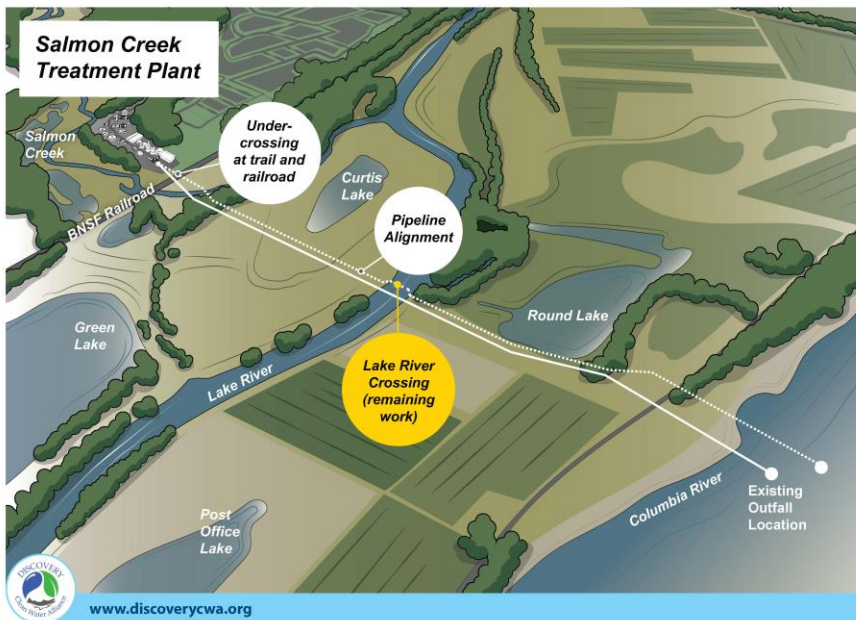
## Salmon Creek Treatment Plant (SCTP) Phase 5 Program Delivery Timeline



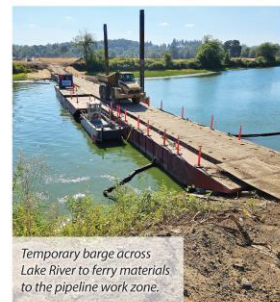
[www.discoverycwa.org](http://www.discoverycwa.org)

## Columbia River Outfall and Effluent Pipeline

This spring, we will start the final work to install a new effluent pipeline, including crossing Lake River, which carries wastewater from the treatment plant to the new outfall in the Columbia River.



Tie in point of the new 42" piping at the Salmon Creek Treatment Plant.

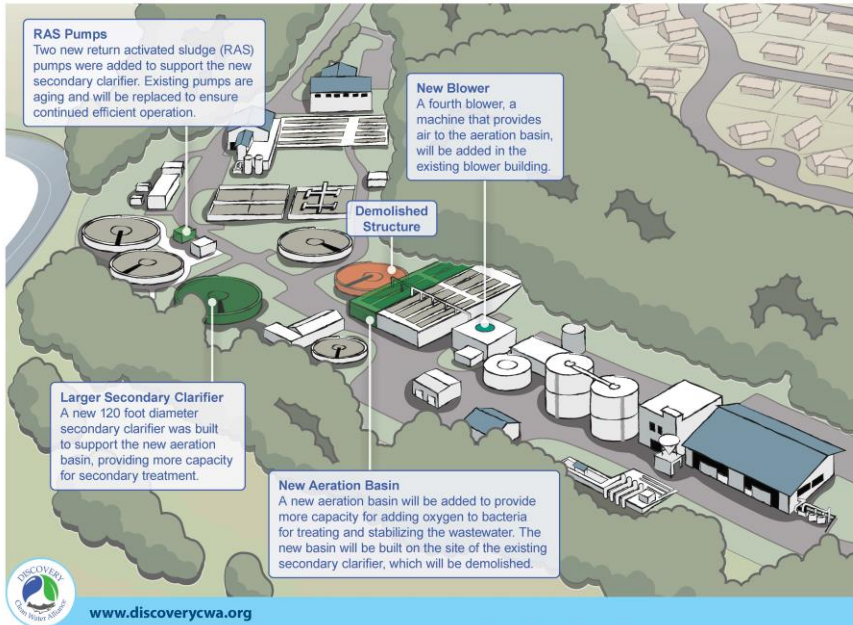


Temporary barge across Lake River to ferry materials to the pipeline work zone.



## Secondary Treatment Process Improvements

This project includes several updates to the treatment plant to increase its capacity to serve the growing region. We are currently in the process of building a new aeration basin.



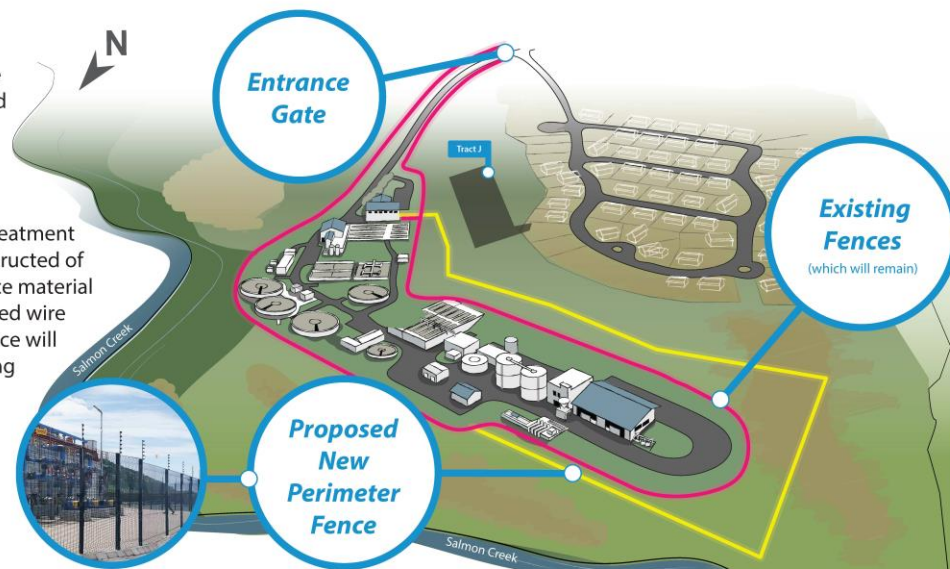
New stainless steel Secondary Clarifier.



Excavation of the site where Aeration Basin #7 will be built.

## Secondary Treatment Process Improvements

A new perimeter fence will be installed around the treatment plant. The new fence is intended to create a safer, more secure environment for the treatment plant and will be constructed of black vinyl coated fence material with three strand barbed wire across the top. The fence will be 8 feet high, including the barbed wire.





## Asset Management Program Overview

Asset management calls for effectively and sustainably managing our critical infrastructure components. This ensures the long-term reliability, safety, and viability of essential utility services.



The Salmon Creek Treatment Plant requires complex equipment, pumps, buildings, electrical equipment, instrumentation, and computer systems to properly treat wastewater and process biosolids. ***If these assets stop working, wastewater treatment is compromised and the plant could exceed its permitted requirements.***

### We harnessed modern asset management approaches to:

- Upgrade our maintenance management software to allow us to better track assets.
- Add and track condition data for 938 major assets within the treatment plant — which we continue to gather by physically examining them on a regular basis.
- Use statistical modeling to forecast the range of expected costs to replace assets before they fail.
- Develop and prioritize Repair and Replacement projects based on data-driven conditions, expected useful life, and obsolescence.





# Protect your health and the environment

Simple changes you can make around the house.

Each of us plays an important role in keeping our waterways healthy. From the products we purchase to how we dispose of them, our choices impact what ends up in our water.

Below are some actions you can take to help keep our water healthy and safe.

**In the Bathroom**

- Only flush toilet paper, everything else goes in the trash.
- Don't flush prescription drugs or other medications.

**WHEN SHOPPING:**

- Choose products with the EWG VERIFIED™ mark.
- Avoid products with plastic micro-beads, synthetic fragrances, parabens, or phthalates.





**In the Garden**

- Use pesticides carefully and as a last resort.
- If you must, spot-spray on pests; don't spray pesticides over large areas.
- Dispose of pesticides at your local household hazardous waste facility.
- Scoop, bag, and trash pet waste.

**WHEN SHOPPING:**


- Choose neem oil as a natural pesticide.

**In the kitchen**

- Put fats, oils, grease, and grit in the trash—not down the sink.
- Cook at lower temperatures if using older non-stick pans.

**WHEN SHOPPING:**

- Look for products with the EPA Safer Choice label.
- Choose stainless steel, cast-iron, or cookware with a ceramic coating.
- Avoid products with "PTFE" or "FLOURO."



For more information, contact:  
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Learn more: [www.crwwd.com/pollution-prevention](http://www.crwwd.com/pollution-prevention)



[www.discoverycwa.org](http://www.discoverycwa.org)



## APPENDIX B: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Below are the unedited, unabridged comments that participants submitted in the online open house.

### What questions or comments do you have about the treatment plant? What do you want more information about?

1. Thank you for this amazing tour. I look forward to the next open house. Question: Where is the solid waste transferred to? What is the solid waste used for? Where does our Vancouver fresh water come from?
2. I would like to see more ways people can keep our waters safe, or maybe have it more known for what people should be doing to keep our waters safe.
3. Thank you for offering your annual onsite/online open house. It is always interesting to learn about your improvements to ensure our water quality. I always appreciate the at-home suggestions for helping our environment. Keep up the good work!
4. I want to take the time to say thank you for all that you do and cannot believe that this type of facility that serves over 50,000 homes and businesses only has 19 full-time staff. Great job!
5. I live relatively close by. How do you keep it from not smelling?