

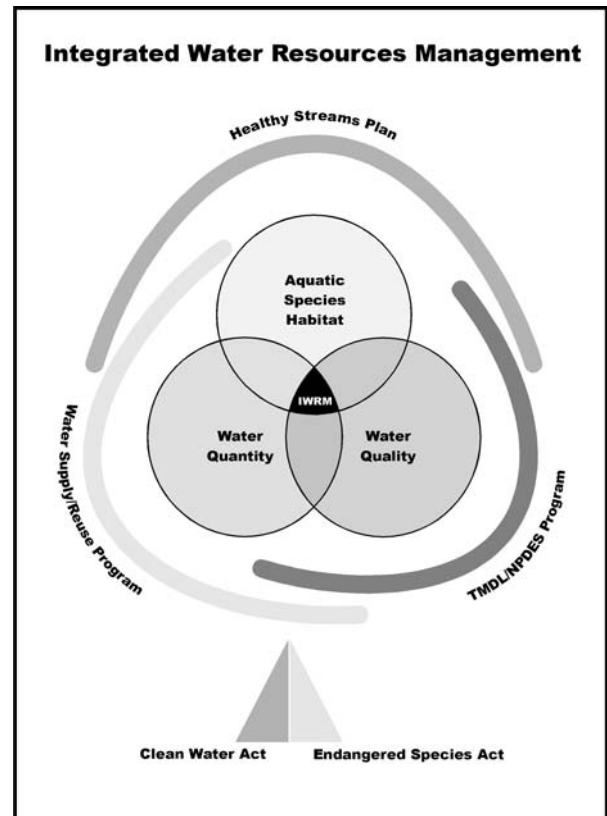
# Tualatin River Watershed-based Permit

## *Meeting the goals of clean water and healthy habitat*

### Reaching Beyond Water Quality

Environmental regulatory mechanisms are too often aimed at geographic units that are mismatched with the natural systems they are intended to protect. In addition, the implementation of environmental laws tends to focus on regulation-specific rules, at the cost of more holistic approaches to improving the overall health of the environment.

Clean Water Services, with the support of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), believes there is an opportunity to build a cohesive, watershed-based strategy that can help our community improve the health of the Tualatin River Basin in a more holistic, comprehensive fashion than the current regulatory process allows. In March 2004, DEQ issued the first integrated, municipal watershed-based permit in the nation to Clean Water Services. The permit covers Clean Water Services four municipal wastewater treatment facilities, the District's municipal stormwater discharge permit that it holds on behalf of Washington County cities and allows for Oregon's first water quality trading program. The new permit reaches beyond pollution control alone and recognizes the complex interrelationships between water quality (Clean Water Act), water quantity (water supply) and wildlife habitat (Endangered Species Act) and will help streamline and advance water quality programs in ways not possible under the current regulatory framework.



The U.S. EPA hopes that the investment in the Tualatin River Watershed-Based permit pilot project will again serve as a national model for the many basins across the county that are wrestling with the next generation of watershed health challenges.

### Why focus on Oregon's Tualatin River Watershed?

- In the last decade, Tualatin Basin residents have invested more than \$300 million in advanced wastewater treatment facilities and the establishment of a comprehensive surface water management utility. The investment has paid off—the river is healthier than it's been in generations.
- While water quality has improved, new, more complex challenges have arisen that cannot be solved through pollution control alone.
- The complex challenges facing the health of the Tualatin River Basin requires a cohesive, watershed-based strategy that reaches beyond the existing regulatory framework.

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- The Tualatin Basin’s successful track record of implementing complex water quality regulations through partnerships and collaboration is recognized as one of the most successful water quality case-studies in the nation.
- The watershed-based permit would allow regulators, permit holders and community stakeholders to consider the entire watershed, not just an individual pollution sources, when managing the basin.

### **The Permit includes new tools**

- The permit will enable us to use real-time, in-stream monitoring to closely match our level of wastewater treatment to the needs of river.
- Water Quality trading will allow us to work with our agricultural partners to improve the health of the river by investing resources where they will provide the biggest bang for the buck by trading the thermal loads from our treatment facilities for streamside shading improvements outside of the Clean Water Services’ boundary.
- Water quality trading to offset the thermal loads from our treatment facilities by releasing cold water from Hagg Lake.
- An expanded monitoring program will allow us to more quickly and efficiently meet the needs of the resource.

### **Project Funding**

The Pilot Project is funded through a EPA Clean Water Act Cooperative Agreement and with matching funds from Clean Water Services and support from Oregon DEQ.

### **For more information**

- Charles Logue, Clean Water Services’ Technical Services Department Director, (503) 681-3604; [loguec@CleanWaterServices.org](mailto:loguec@CleanWaterServices.org).
- Jerry Linder, Clean Water Services’ Chief Legal Counsel, (503) 681-3645, [linderg@CleanWaterServices.org](mailto:linderg@CleanWaterServices.org).
- Mark Jockers, Clean Water Services’ Public Affairs Manager, (503) 681-4450, [jockersm@CleanWaterServices.org](mailto:jockersm@CleanWaterServices.org).

**Who we are.** Clean Water Services is a public utility committed to protecting water resources in the Tualatin River Watershed. More than 473,000 customers enjoy clean water and healthy rivers and streams through innovative wastewater and stormwater services, flood management projects, water quality and stream enhancement projects, river flow management, fish habitat protection, and more.

