Airway Height Water Reclamation Plant
August 29, 2007
Public Meeting Summary

Sarah Hubbard-Gray, GeoEngineers public involvement task leader and facilitator, started the meeting and provided an outline of the meeting. Albert Tripp, City of Airway Heights Public Works director, gave a presentation that covered 1) an introduction, 2) background on the water reclamation plant project, and 3) an overview of the project's funding and schedule. Dennis Fuller, Century West Engineering project manager, continued the presentation and 1) described what water reclamation and reuse is, 2) provided an overview of the reclaimed water regulations, 3) provided examples of water reclamation and reuse facilities around the state, 4) provided an overview of the Airway Heights Water Reclamation Plant, and 5) reviewed the treatment technology that will be used.

Craig Riley, Washington State Department of Health reclamation and reuse program lead, provided an overview of his role and the department's support of the project. Lucy Peterschmidt, Washington State Department of Ecology water reclamation and reuse water quality program lead, provided an overview of Ecology's support for the project and Ecology's requirements for permitting and monitoring.

Sarah Hubbard-Gray then reviewed "what's next" and opened up the meeting to questions. Following the large group question and answer session, meeting attendees were invited to visit the displays, discuss ideas and concerns with the project team, and fill out the meeting questionnaire.

Twenty (20) people signed in for the meeting. Six (6) participants filled out the meeting questionnaire.

The following sections provide 1) a summary of the questions asked and answers provided during the large group question and answer session, and 2) a summary of the responses provided via the meeting questionnaires.

Summary of Question & Answer Session

Sarah Hubbard-Gray, GeoEngineers public involvement task leader, facilitated the question and answer session. Below is a summary of the questions asked and project team responses.

A variety of questions regarding **water quality and treatment process associated with achieving Class A reclaimed water** were asked and the following explanations and clarifications were provided:

- The Water Reclamation Plant will reclaim water to Class A standards which is acceptable for aquifer recharge.

- In 1997, a statute with standards was developed. Ecology is currently updating the statute to reflect today's regulations. There are two major elements: 1) direct aquifer injection and, 2) surface percolation.

- The Water Reclamation Plant will use surface percolation. Wastewater will be percolated into the soil just below the ground surface, to avoid surface ponding that could attract birds and result in airplane hazards. It will infiltrate through the sandy soil, which extends approximately 125 feet in the paleochannel. Percolation through the sandy soil will treat it to Class A+. As the water travels from the surface through the soil additional treatment will be provided.

- All wastewater that goes to the storage tank will be disinfected with UV and then chlorine. The plant will use sodium hypochlorite.

- The reclaimed water stored in the aquifer will be used for irrigation, commercial uses, and city wells. The water reclamation plant will include redundant processes and groundwater monitoring will be conducted regularly to ensure groundwater quality protection.

- Regulators will need to know what the reclaimed water put into the ground is being used for. Regulators will ensure that water rights and health requirements and issues are addressed.

A variety of questions regarding **monitoring wells near the Water Reclamation Plant** were asked and the following explanations and clarifications were provided:

- The Water Reclamation Plant will conform to groundwater recharge criteria, which requires extensive ongoing monitoring.

- The City will need to implement monitoring during design and operation. Monitoring wells will be required at distances adequate to ensure that both water right and water quality issues are addressed. At this point, the actual location of the monitoring wells has not been determined.

- Wastewater is currently flowing into the City of Spokane wastewater plant which discharges into the Spokane River, which does not replenishing any local groundwater. With the new Airway Heights Water Reclamation Plant, the reclaimed water will recharge the aquifer.

A variety of questions regarding the **construction of the Water Reclamation Plant** were asked and the following explanations and clarifications were provided:

- It was explained that percolation into the paleochannel will not be impeded by construction activities, and that typical construction does not occur at depths of concern.

- Once the facility is constructed and is operating, the City of Airway Heights will send out the sewer bills and customers will start paying the City of Airway Heights rather than the City of Spokane. Wastewater will be treated locally and the reclaimed water will be reused locally.

Meeting Questionnaire Responses

Six (6) public meeting participants filled out and returned meeting questionnaires which added further clarity to the comments and perspectives that were expressed verbally during the meeting. Participants unanimously felt the first public meeting provided good opportunities for them to share comments.

Here are some highlights of the comments and perspectives provided by the meeting questionnaire respondents:

- 100% of respondents would like to see educational components including tours of the plant incorporated into the design of the Water Reclamation Plant;
- 100% of respondents support the design of the plant using reclaimed water to minimize the amount of water withdrawn from the aquifer; and,
- Over 66% of respondents would likely visit the plant to learn more about water reclamation and reuse, and the efforts to protect our local water resources.

Varying opinions and suggestions were raised regarding landscaping and who would use the reclaimed water. There was strong support for providing public access to the site, incorporating attractive landscaping, and incorporating public education elements. A couple individuals would like to see fishing ponds incorporated into the design.

The City of Airway Heights staff and consultant team will consider the comments and perspectives during the design and construction of the Water Reclamation Plant. The final draft of the Water Reclamation Plant design will be presented at a second public meeting in Fall 2007.