

Oregon Water Resources Department
Water Conservation, Reuse and Storage Grant Program
Evaluation for September 2, 2008 Applications

APPLICANT:	City of Ashland		
STUDY TYPE:	Water Conservation and Reuse		
APPLICATION NO.:	GC0010 09		
STUDY NAME:	Right Water Right Use Planning Study		
BASIN:	Rogue	WRD DISTRICT:	13
WRD FUNDS REQUESTED:	\$225,000	TOTAL COST:	\$452,500

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:

The City of Ashland has two fundamental water challenges associated with long-term community sustainability: 1) Provide reliable and safe potable water for anticipated community growth; and 2) Improve the health of Ashland Creek and Bear Creek by increasing summer streamflows and lowering temperatures to improve fish habitat.

Ashland's proposed study is a holistic approach to water use. The goal of the study is to define the interrelationships between all of the available sources of water, including the use of irrigation water and recycled/reuse treated effluent, to offset irrigation demand within the City. Additionally, the study seeks to specifically identify benefits and challenges of using irrigation water with the existing construct of providers and regulatory oversight.

The study will define the *Right Water for the Right Use* by evaluating all the environmental parameters, all of the community needs, promoting acceptability of using recycled water, and ultimately developing a sustainable conservation and irrigation program to meet the City's needs to 2058.

APPLICATION REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION:

This was the only "combination" application in the group: both a water conservation and a reuse feasibility study. The Application Review Team recognized the holistic approach of this application and found that it had a clear goal that was consistent with the intent of SB 1069. Although the goal to conserve limited potable water supplies and utilize available water resources to maximize community and environmental benefits was clear, the potential impact of the associated project was not as well defined. There could be 2.2 million gallons per day of Class A treated water available for irrigation use and Bear Creek could benefit from the additional flows.

The team recognized that unlike many potential studies, this study could not begin immediately, but it could begin within three months of being awarded a grant. The team found that the last four study tasks: develop justification for the preferred alternative; develop final report and present to the City Council; coordinate with Ad Hoc Water Reuse and Conservation Task Force; and report to the Ashland City Council every 6 months went beyond the feasibility study component and were not consistent with SB 1069.

The study is a priority for funding under SB 1069 because it is identified on the Department's statewide water assessment and inventory of potential conservation opportunities. The study could begin within three months of

receiving grant approval and be completed by June 2010.

Application Review Team Funding Recommendation: Do Fund: Medium Priority at \$177,750. Do not fund the last four tasks: Develop justification for the preferred alternative; Develop final report and present to the City Council; Coordinate with Ad Hoc Water Reuse and Conservation Task Force; Report to the Ashland City Council every 6 months.

COMMENTS:

Letters of support for this application were received from Senator Alan Bates, Representative Peter Buckley, and Frances Oyung on behalf of Bear Creek Watershed Council. These letters indicate that the planning study would allow Ashland to seek a comprehensive solution to its water constraints of limited storage capacity; wastewater treatment plant effluent currently not meeting water quality standards for temperature; potable water source vulnerable to floods, drought, and climate change; and, stakeholder’s perceptions of the use of treated effluent as an irrigation water source.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Do Fund at \$168,863. Do not fund the last four tasks: Develop justification for the preferred alternative; Develop final report and present to the City Council; Coordinate with Ad Hoc Water Reuse and Conservation Task Force; Report to the Ashland City Council every 6 months.

The staff recommendation reflects a 5 percent across the board funding reduction on all studies.

Commission Action:

On December 5, 2008, the Water Resources Commission took action to:

“Release funding to all feasibility study applicants the Commission authorized at its’ November 20 meeting, at a level representing 95% of staff recommendations, and move forward with grant agreement negotiations and signatures.”

This feasibility study received an award amount of \$160,419.