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Water Quality Protection • Surface Water Management • Wastewater Collection & Treatment

2010 SWMACC Ratepayer Survey

A REPORT FOR

Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County

BY



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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an online survey conducted among resident homeowners in the Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County (SWMACC) area. The research was conducted by CFM Strategic Communications, Inc. (CFM) on behalf of Water Environment Services (WES). Research objectives were to assess the priorities for water management issues, priorities for SWMACC performing potential new surface water management services beyond those required by regulation and price sensitivity for paying for new services.

CFM worked with WES to design the research methodology, write the questionnaire and manage the research data collection process.

A total of 222 people accessed the survey between November 8, 2010 and December 6, 2010. Of those, 162 passed screening questions designed to ensure individuals were residents and homeowners in the SWMACC area. Potential respondents came from two sources. The Stafford Hamlet provided a list of 286 email addresses. Of those, 71 accessed the survey and 55 passed screening questions. The second group was recruited by a direct mail piece sent to more than 2,000 ratepayer households in the SWMACC area. A total of 151 persons responded to the direct mail piece and 109 passed the screener.



SUMMARY

Expanding Surface Water Services

Almost all ratepayers (90%+) in the SWMACC area are aware households pay fees to the district to manage surface water in the area. Of those aware, two in three know the rate is \$24 every six months.

Among those surface water services required by regulation, at least two in three ratepayers rate as high priorities active water resource management efforts, such as infrastructure maintenance, stream side restoration, prevention, monitoring and flood control.

More than half rate as higher priorities three proposed new services – improving under-performing infrastructure, public education and partnerships to improve habitat.

Overall, 60% say they are willing to pay \$1 more per month to fund additional surface water programs. However, opinions varied by email source. Those from the Stafford Hamlet list (72%) were willing to pay more than those recruited from the community (50%). These results suggest that a majority of ratepayers support increasing fees to expand surface water management beyond those services required by regulation.

General Topics

The economy and residential growth are the most important issues facing the SWMACC area.

More than 80% of the ratepayers are very/somewhat interested in issues related to the Tualatin River and local streams.

Both SWMACC (79%) and WES (89%) are well known in the community.

About a third of the community has volunteered to work on a local environmental effort. More than half say they are willing to volunteer on future local environmental programs.

GENERAL PERSPECTIVE

Rating Problems

Among seven potential problems, maintaining a strong economy (81% major/moderate problem) is rated the most important followed by:

- Residential growth (64%);
- Maintaining clean rivers and streams for health fish and wildlife (59%);
- Condition of major roads and highways in the county (55%); and,
- Maintaining clean rivers and streams for human recreational use (54%).

Please tell me if you think each of the following is a major problem, moderate problem, minor problem or not a problem at all in your area.			
	% Major/Moderate Problem		
	All	General Population	Hamlet
Maintaining a strong economy	81%	85%	71%
Residential growth	64%	62%	67%
Maintaining clean rivers and streams for healthy fish and wildlife	59%	54%	69%
Condition of major roads and highways in the county	55%	57%	47%
Maintaining clean rivers and streams for human recreational use	54%	49%	62%
Surface water management	40%	36%	45%
Adequate and clean drinking water	33%	35%	29%

Less important problems were:

- Surface water management (40%) and
- Adequate and clean drinking water (33%).

Opinions about problems varied slightly by source of recruitment. The economy was the most important problem among those from the general population list,



while those from the Hamlet list were equally concerned about the economy and water management issues.

Interest in Rivers and Streams

More than eight in ten of all groups said they were very or somewhat interested in issue related to the Tualatin River and local streams.

How interested are you personally in issues related to the Tualatin River and local streams in your area? Would you say you are...?

	All	General Population	Hamlet
Very interested	45%	43%	49%
Somewhat interested	40%	38%	43%
Not too interested	11%	14%	4%
Not at all interested	5%	6%	4%

Awareness of Agencies

Awareness of both Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County and Water Environment Services is high. These results should be used as guidelines. The names of both agencies were widely used in promoting participation in the online survey.

Before this survey, were you aware or not aware of Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County, or SWMACC?

	All	General Population	Hamlet
Aware	79%	81%	74%
Not Aware	21%	19%	24%
Not sure	<1%	--	2%

Before this survey, were you aware or not aware of an agency called Water Environment Services or WES?

	All	General Population	Hamlet
Aware	89%	93%	82%
Not Aware	8%	6%	11%
Not sure	3%	1%	7%



SWMACC SERVICES

Awareness of Surface Water Fees

Almost everyone is aware homeowners pay a fee to help manage surface water in the area.

Among those aware of the fee, roughly two in three know the correct amount, \$24 every six months.

And before this survey, were you aware or not aware your household paid fees to manage surface water in your area?

	All	General Population	Hamlet
Aware	96%	97%	93%
Not Aware	4%	3%	7%

IF AWARE: Area homeowners pay a fee every six months for these services. To the best of your knowledge how much do homeowners pay for SWMACC services?

	All	General Population	Hamlet
\$20 every six months	<1%	1%	--
\$24 every six months	65%	67%	61%
\$28 every six months	7%	9%	2%
\$32 every six months	2%	1%	4%
Not sure	19%	15%	27%
Wasn't aware of the fee	7%	7%	6%



Rating Current SWMACC Services

Among seven
SWMACC services,
more than six in ten
rated six services top
priorities. People
from the Hamlet list
rated five potential
services higher
priorities than those
from the general
population list.

The following are some of the services SWMACC provides to the area. How would you rate the priorities for each?

	High/Moderate Priority		
	All	General Population	Hamlet
Maintenance of existing stormwater infrastructure	75%	74%	77%
Protecting wetlands and stream side vegetation for healthy fish and wildlife	75%	69%	88%
Erosion prevention and sediment control	70%	67%	77%
Environmental monitoring	69%	64%	78%
Flood control management	67%	67%	67%
Development plan review and permitting	60%	57%	65%
Education and outreach	48%	47%	52%

Priorities for New Services

Among eight potential new services some have proposed SWMACC undertake, a majority rate three high priorities – enhance stormwater infrastructure to improve water quality, public education and outreach geared toward the proper

Some people have requested SWMACC expand the services it offers to the area. The following is a list of potential services. What priority would you give to each?			
	High/Moderate Priority		
	All	General Population	Hamlet
Enhance under-performing stormwater infrastructure to protect water quality.	60%	57%	64%
Public education and outreach geared toward the proper disposal of pollutants (paints, petroleum products, fertilizers etc.)	58%	54%	65%
Partnerships with agencies, nonprofits and volunteer groups to make strategic, targeted improvements in aquatic habitat and biological communities.	56%	51%	66%
Partnerships with private landowners and watershed councils on project implementation.	49%	42%	60%
Wetland, riparian area, and in-stream restoration projects.	47%	41%	58%
Inspect dams and culverts to identify barriers to fish passage.	45%	42%	54%
Install additional water quality treatment facilities.	34%	32%	39%
Sweeping curbed public streets.	26%	28%	22%

disposal of pollutants and partnerships to improve aquatic habitat and biological communities. More than four in ten rated partnerships with landowners and watershed councils, wetland, riparian are and in-stream restoration projects and inspections to identify barriers to fish passage as high priorities. Less than four in adding water quality treatment facilities and street cleaning as high priorities.



People from the Hamlet list rated six of seven projects higher priorities than those from the general population.

Price Sensitivity

When people were asked how much more per month they were willing to pay for one or more of the proposed new services, 32% said they would pay an additional \$5/month, 8% said an additional \$3 per month and 17% said \$1 per month

Would you be willing to pay an additional \$5, \$3 or \$1 a month to pay for one or more of the services tested?

	All	General Population	Hamlet
Yes, would pay \$5 per month	32%	27%	42%
Yes, would pay \$3 per month	8%	6%	13%
Yes, would pay \$1 per month	17%	17%	17%
Not willing to pay more	40%	49%	23%

more. 40% were not willing to pay more. Opinions about additional fees differed significantly by source of respondent. Seven in ten (72%) of those from the Hamlet list were willing to pay at least a \$1 per month more for additional services, compared to half (50%) of those from the general population list.

Community Involvement

More than three in ten of all groups say they have participated in local environmental projects during the past three years.

Willingness to participate is strong, with more than half saying they would volunteer to help with an environmental project.

During the past three years, have you or an immediate member of your family ever volunteered to participate in an environmental program, such as a neighborhood clean up, streamside restoration or tree planting?

	All	General Population	Hamlet
Yes, have participated	36%	39%	31%
No, have not participated	62%	59%	67%
Not sure	2%	2%	2%

Would you be willing to volunteer in a property owners' environmental stewardship program? Involvement would include such actions as planting trees and other native plants and removing invasive plants on your property.

	All	General Population	Hamlet
Yes, willing to participate	55%	56%	55%
No, not willing to participate	45%	44%	45%



S1. In which county do you reside?

1.	Clackamas	Continue	99%
2.	Washington	Continue	<1%
3.	Multnomah	Terminate	1%
4.	Yamhill	Terminate	--
5.	Other	Terminate	--

S2. Do you rent or own your current residence?

1.	Rent	Terminate	1%
2.	Own	Continue	99%

S3. Which of the following best describes the area where you live?

1.	Within the City of Rivergrove		10%
2.	Within the City of West Linn	Terminate	2%
3.	Within the City of Lake Oswego	Terminate	6%
4.	Within the City of Wilsonville -	Terminate	<1%
5.	Unincorporated area North of Borland Road		47%
6.	Unincorporated area South of Borland Road		22%
7.	West of I-5		6%
8.	None	Terminate	4%
9.	Not sure	Terminate	4%



The Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County or SWMACC was created to address water quality regulatory requirements put in place by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) to address environmental concerns regarding fertilizer, bacteria, dissolved oxygen and toxics in the Tualatin River Basin. Water Environment Service of Clackamas County, or WES, currently provides District customers with the following water quality management services. These services are required by DEQ in order to meet these regulatory requirements and are paid for through District rates.

- Environmental monitoring
- Development plan review and permitting
- Erosion prevention and sediment control
- Maintenance of existing infrastructure
- Public education and outreach

Please tell me if you think each of the following is a major problem, moderate problem, minor problem or not a problem at all in your area. (ROTATE)

	Not a Problem	Minor Problem	Moderate Problem	Major Problem	Not Sure
1. Maintaining clean rivers and streams for healthy fish and wildlife	20%	16%	28%	31%	5%
2. Maintaining clean rivers and streams for human recreational use	23%	21%	31%	23%	3%
3. Residential growth	17%	19%	28%	36%	<1%
4. Maintaining a strong economy	7%	11%	24%	57%	1%
5. Condition of major roads and highways in the county	19%	25%	32%	23%	2%
6. Adequate and clean drinking water	42%	21%	22%	11%	4%
7. Surface water management	31%	25%	26%	14%	4%

8. How interested are you personally in issues related to the Tualatin River and local streams in your area? Would you say you are...?

1. Very interested	45%
2. Somewhat interested	40%
3. Not too interested	11%
4. Not at all interested	5%
5. Not sure	--



9. Before this survey, were you aware or not aware of Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County, or SWMACC?

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-----|
| 1. | Aware | 79% |
| 2. | Not Aware | 21% |
| 3. | Not sure | <1% |

10. Before this survey, were you aware or not aware of an agency called Water Environment Services or WES?

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-----|
| 1. | Aware | 89% |
| 2. | Not Aware | 8% |
| 3. | Not sure | 3% |

11. And before this survey, were you aware or not aware your household paid fees to manage surface water in your area?

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-----|
| 1. | Aware | 96% |
| 2. | Not Aware | 4% |
| 3. | Not sure | -- |



Some people are not aware the Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County, or SWMACC for short, was formed to address Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's regulatory requirements to manage the human impact on surface water.

The following are some of the services SWMACC provides to the area. How would you rate the priorities for each? (OR Rate how important each one is to you?)

	Not a priority	Low priority	Moderate priority	High priority	Not sure
12. Environmental monitoring	17%	13%	35%	34%	1%
13. Development plan review and permitting	19%	17%	29%	31%	5%
14. Erosion prevention and sediment control	11%	17%	36%	34%	2%
15. Maintenance of existing stormwater infrastructure	12%	8%	42%	33%	5%
16. Public education and outreach	23%	26%	33%	15%	2%
17. Protecting wetlands and stream side vegetation for healthy fish and wildlife	11%	13%	35%	40%	1%
18. Flood control management	13%	18%	35%	32%	2%

19. Area homeowners pay a fee every six months for these services. To the best of you knowledge how much do homeowners pay for SWMACC services?

1.	\$20 every six months	<1%
2.	\$24 every six months	65%
3.	\$28 every six months	7%
4.	\$32 every six months	2%
5.	Not sure	19%
6.	Wasn't aware of the fee	7%



Some people have requested SWMACC expand the services it offers to the area. The following is a list of potential services. What priority would you give to each? (ROTATE)

	Not a priority	Low priority	Moderate priority	High priority	Not sure
20. Enhance under-performing stormwater infrastructure to protect water quality.	26%	13%	39%	21%	1%
21. Install additional water quality treatment facilities.	37%	22%	24%	10%	7%
22. Inspect dams and culverts to identify barriers to fish passage.	29%	25%	28%	17%	<1%
23. Partnerships with agencies, nonprofits and volunteer groups to make strategic, targeted improvements in aquatic habitat and biological communities.	27%	15%	34%	22%	2%
24. Partnerships with private landowners and watershed councils on project implementation.	28%	19%	31%	18%	5%
25. Public education and outreach geared toward the proper disposal of pollutants (paints, petroleum products, fertilizers etc.)	30%	12%	37%	21%	<1%
26. Wetland, riparian area, and in-stream restoration projects.	33%	19%	30%	17%	<1%
27. Sweeping curbed public streets.	47%	25%	20%	6%	2%



Currently, homeowners in the SWMACC District pay a surface water fee of \$4.00 per month.

28. Would you be willing to pay an additional \$5 per month to pay for one or more of the services listed above?

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|------------|-----|
| 1. | Yes, would pay \$5 per month | GO TO Q XX | 32% |
| 2. | No would not pay \$5 per month | GO TO Q XX | 57% |
| 3. | Not sure | GO TO Q XX | 12% |

29. Would you be willing to pay an additional \$3 per month to pay for one or more of the services listed?

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|------------|-----|
| 1. | Yes, would pay \$3 per month | GO TO Q XX | 12% |
| 2. | No would not pay \$3 per month | GO TO Q XX | 73% |
| 3. | Not sure | GO TO Q XX | 15% |

30. Would you be willing to pay an additional \$1 per month to pay for one or more of the services listed?

- | | | | |
|----|--|------------|-----|
| 1. | Yes, would pay \$1 per month | GO TO Q XX | 29% |
| 2. | No would not pay \$1 per month | GO TO Q XX | 50% |
| 3. | No, not willing to pay an additional fee | GO TO Q XX | 21% |

31. During the past three years, have you or an immediate member of your family ever volunteered to participate in an environmental program, such as a neighborhood clean up, streamside restoration or tree planting?

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. | Yes, have participated | 36% |
| 2. | No, have not participated | 62% |
| 3. | Not sure | 2% |

32. Would you be willing to volunteer in a property owners' environmental stewardship program? Involvement would include such actions as planting trees and other native plants and removing invasive plants on your property?

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1. | Yes, willing to participate | 56% |
| 2. | No, can't participate | 45% |



33. What is your age?

1.	18-34	2%
2.	35-44	12%
3.	45-54	19%
4.	55-64	40%
5.	65+	27%
6.	(DON'T READ) Refused	30%

34. How long have you lived in the community or area where you currently reside?

1.	Less than five years	8%
2.	6 to 10 years	14%
3.	11 to 15 years	16%
4.	16 to 20 years	16%
5.	More than 20 years	47%
6.	(DON'T READ) Not sure/refused	28%

35. Gender (By observation)

1. Male
2. Female

36. Would you be willing to participate in future online on a stakeholder panels to help guide decisions regarding the future of the Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County?

1.	Yes	GO TO FORM	51%
2.	No	GO TO WEBSITE	49%

FORM:

Please provide the following information so we may contact you for future online stakeholder panels.

First Name

Last Name

Home address

Email Address

Phone number