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EPA invites Portland and Beaverton to apply for \$600 million in water loans

Bull Run, Beaverton projects focus on critical reliability upgrades to protect public health

SEATTLE – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is inviting a total of 39 projects in 19 states to apply for Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loans. Together, the selected borrowers will apply for WIFIA loans totaling approximately \$6 billion to help finance over \$12 billion in water infrastructure investments and create almost 200,000 jobs.

Major drinking water facilities in Beaverton and Portland are among the eligible projects.

“Through WIFIA, EPA is playing an integral role in President Trump’s efforts to improve and upgrade our nation’s water infrastructure and ensure all Americans have access to clean and safe water,” said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “This announcement highlights billions of dollars in needed water infrastructure investments to upgrade aging infrastructure, reduce exposure to lead and emerging contaminants and improve the lives of millions of Americans across the country – all while creating almost 200,000 jobs.”

“I know first-hand how important it is to find outside capital when a community needs critical infrastructure investments,” said EPA Region 10 Administrator Chris Hladick. “These drinking water projects in Oregon are important public health investments, so we’re pleased that Beaverton and Portland are included in this list of eligible communities.”

“This is exciting news and we are grateful for the invitation from EPA to apply for WIFIA program funding,” said Beaverton Mayor Denny Doyle. “We are committed to ensuring a safe and reliable water supply for our growing community. This is a positive next step in our efforts

toward critical water infrastructure improvements that will enhance resiliency for our customers and the greater region. I want to thank our federal representatives for their support and the many partners who have contributed to this opportunity.”

Portland Water Bureau Director Michael Stuhr says he is thankful for the opportunity. “The Bull Run Treatment Projects will ensure that our water system, which serves nearly one million people, will be safe and abundant for generations to come. The EPA’s invitation to apply for this funding is a testament to the merits of this project and their confidence in the Portland Water Bureau. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the application process, and want to extend a thank you to our congressional delegation for their support, in particular Senator Jeff Merkley for his leadership on WIFIA.”

EPA’s WIFIA loans will allow communities across the country to implement projects to address national water priorities – including providing for clean and safe drinking water by reducing exposure to lead and emerging contaminants, addressing aging water infrastructure and developing water recycling and reuse projects. EPA received 51 letters of interest from both public and private entities in response to the 2019 WIFIA Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

After a robust, statutorily required review process, the WIFIA Selection Committee included the drinking water projects in Portland and Beaverton in the pool of eligible applicants:

- **City of Portland Bull Run Treatment Program -- \$554 million**

The City of Portland will complete three projects to improve public health and water quality and increase drinking water system resiliency and reliability for nearly 1 million people: (1) the Corrosion Control Project will further adjust the chemistry of Portland’s water, reducing potential levels of lead at the tap; (2) the Filtration Project will construct a new filtration water treatment plant to remove the microorganism *Cryptosporidium* and other potential contaminants; and (3) the Pipeline Project will construct raw and finished water pipelines to connect the filtration water treatment plant to existing conduits. The purpose of the projects is to comply with two federal regulations, the Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule and the Lead and Copper Rule.

- **City of Beaverton Water Supply Improvement Program -- \$58 million**

The Water Supply Improvement Program will include a series of projects that will enhance the reliability and resiliency of the water system to meet the needs of a growing urban area. The program includes major new transmission mains, new or improved connections to neighboring purveyors, additional seismically resilient storage, expansion to a new service area, a system-wide Advance Metering Infrastructure system, and a new stormwater reuse system.

To learn more about the 39 projects invited to apply, visit <https://www.epa.gov/wifia/wifia-selected-projects>.

Background

Established by the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014, the WIFIA program is a federal loan and guarantee program administered by EPA. WIFIA's aim is to accelerate investment in the nation's water infrastructure by providing long-term and low-cost supplemental credit assistance for regionally and nationally significant projects. EPA's WIFIA program plays an important part in President Trump's infrastructure plan, which calls for expanding project eligibility. The WIFIA program has an active pipeline of pending applications for projects that will result in billions of dollars in water infrastructure investment and thousands of jobs.

For more information about the WIFIA program, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wifia>.

Contact: **Bill Dunbar/EPA/206-553-1019**
 Jaymee Cuti/PWB/503-823-3520
 Diana Ballash/Beaverton/503-526-3737

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