



# **Mason County's On-Site Sewage System Management Plan**

January 15, 2009

## **Progress Report**

Project Title: **Implementation Grant**

Department Address: Onsite Program  
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## *Activities from October 1, 2008 to December 30, 2008*

During this quarter we completed sending out O&M information and septic records to those who requested this information in response to our mass mailing in May. We continued to update our O&M database for system type and installation date as septic records were identified and prepared for mailing to homeowners. Work continued on other deliverables.

### ***Task 1:***

*Enhance Operation & Maintenance database management software (Carmody) to improve the functionality of searching and reporting features in the system, develop documentation and improve Operation and Maintenance Program activities and procedures.*

### **Carmody Data Maintenance and Development**

#### *System Enhancement:*

At our request, Carmody staff added two fields in the property information file: “*Records Available*”(As-Built available) and “*> 100 ft to surface water*” (Drainfield less than 100 feet to surface water). At some future point we plan to add the ability to search the database with “*> 100 ft*”. as a filter. These additions will further support targeted study for water quality projects and educational mailings.

#### *Updating Data:*

Records research for the mass mailing educational project and other research for water quality projects resulted in edits for over 850 systems for install date and in some cases, system type.

Adding or editing fields in the database is time consuming in part because to requires that each edited record in Carmody is opened individually. We will be exploring the feasibility of creating an Excel file in which data updates are recorded and then sent to Carmody for mass editing of the database.

The Carmody database has been updated for 119 repairs installed during 2008. Soon, 390 systems will be added to Carmody for new installations during 2008.

Service records for 3,720 systems have been entered into the database for 2008. Not all service reports for 2008 have been submitted to our office at this time so this number will increase.

Duplicate parcels in the Carmody Database continue to be monitored and corrected

#### *Community Drainfields:*

Our file search for requested septic records for the mass-mailing project and water quality studies continues to help us identify community drainfields. To date we have identified 52 community systems. Our goal is to identify contact persons for all community systems prior to mailing Operation & Maintenance reminders this year. Copies of the Septic System User’s Manual have been sent to a few contact persons for distribution among community system members.

#### *Operation & Maintenance Program Standard Operating Procedures*

Evaluation of the format of the O&M Procedures Manual continues. During the past few months with the reduction in staff due to budget cuts, it has become imperative that efficiency in processes be maximized. We are still evaluating how we may restructure the procedures manual to minimize the need for updating but insure that future staff will understand decisions made for the O&M database development, procedures for database maintenance, procedures for using the database for educational mailings, and how to access reports and their use.

## **GIS Delivery of O&M Information**

A meeting has been scheduled in February to proceed with developing the layer for septic systems in the Mason County GIS system. We plan to have the layer available by the end of this quarter.

### ***Task 2:***

*Raise public awareness and understanding about onsite septic operation and maintenance and the positive effect ongoing maintenance has on the environment including health, water quality, local economy, and septic system longevity and viability.*

#### **Educational Media Campaign**

We completed mailing records and educational materials to all homeowners requesting information from our mass mailing. Over 1,000 packets of O&M information and septic records were sent out.

#### **Maintenance Reminder Mailings**

Preparation for mailing O&M reminders to homeowners will begin February. Approximately 10,000 reminders for septic maintenance will be sent prior to July.

#### **O&M Workshop**

In cooperation with WSU Extension, Mason County Public Health presented at a public O&M workshop on November 15, 2008. Septic System User Manuals were distributed. Participation is planned for Septic Workshops scheduled by WSU Extension for 2009.

#### **O&M Activity with Local Realtors and Title Companies**

The proposed revisions to the Mason County On-Site Regulations include the following statement:

“Transfer of resident ownership shall require a maintenance report. System consisting solely of a septic tank and gravity drainfield shall be performed by a Mason County Certified Pumper or an Operation and Maintenance Specialist. All other septic system will require a report from a Mason County Certified Operation and Maintenance Specialist.”

The Mason County Board of Commissioners will adopt these regulations in a February meeting.

#### **Educational Curriculum**

The development of curriculum for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level will be addressed in the next two quarters. We have a strategy for identifying school contacts and coordinating our development and delivery of a classroom activity related to septic operation and maintenance.

#### **Web Page Development**

No further work has been done to enhance our web page this quarter. Documents related to On-site septic are kept up-to-date. As mentioned in the last report, Mason County Public Health is in the process of developing a strategic plan. This project may lead to a redesign of the presentation of all department information on the Mason County Web page.

### ***Task 3:***

*Audit of Onsite Professionals certified in Mason County and administration on of grant activities.*

A strategy for auditing Mason County Certified Onsite Professionals is in the planning stage at this time.

**Oakland Bay Mason County/ DOH Bridge Grant  
Quarterly Update- Task 4 “Water Quality Education”  
October-December 2008**

During the fourth quarter of 2008 WSU Extension Mason County participated in a variety of tasks related to task 4 “Water Quality Education.”

Staff participated in the monthly Oakland Bay Clean Water District Advisory committee meetings between October and December and provided updates on activities.

WSU Extension Mason Co met with Mason Co Commissioners as a board representative to form the official Oakland Bay Clean Water District Advisory committee. A book profiling events that took place in Oakland Bay was created to present to the Commissioners highlighting workshops, education and outreach.

On October 8<sup>th</sup>, WSU Extension Mason Co helped to organize and participated in hosting the Oakland Bay Community Meeting held at Pioneer School. All residents within the Oakland Bay Clean Water District were sent a mailing to invite them to take part and learn about WA Dept. of Ecology’s Oakland Bay TMDL clean-up plan for bacteria, the status of shellfish harvesting in Oakland Bay, what has been done to improve water quality, and the Sa-Heh-Wa-Mish Stewardship initiative. Community member participation estimated near 100. WSU Extension Mason Co. organized educational booths with 20 organizations at the event and Taylor Shellfish generously provided dinner for the meeting. The evening featured several presentations, questions and answers and an informal open house. Prior to the meeting, environmental education related to salmon and water quality took place with approximately 150 children.

A Low Impact Development Realtor Ed course was held at the Shelton Civic Center on October 27<sup>th</sup> with 28 people attending including three staff from the Mason Co. Planning Dept. One Septic System Operation and Maintenance Workshops was held on November 5<sup>th</sup> with a total of around 15 participants- a large portion of who live within the watershed boundaries. This workshop was made possible through a partnership with Mason County Public Health.

There was a great deal of media coverage for the community meeting as well as for all the educational workshops.

Staff attended two Education and Outreach Sub-committee meetings with the chosen social marketing consultant, Keller Consulting, to finalize the research proposal, which will be completed with Oakland Bay residents during the month of December for the Sa-Heh-Wa-Mish Stewardship Initiative.

Another Septic System Operation and Maintenance class will be held on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and planning has begun for a future Raingarden workshop and a Shoreline Living workshop for local residents. Also, planning for water quality-focused environmental education days with 4-H members is occurring for the winter and spring of 2009.