

**PRESS RELEASE**

**February 25, 2003**

**MASON COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
411 NORTH 5<sup>TH</sup> ST  
SHELTON, WA 98584  
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**TO: KMAS, KRXY, MASON COUNTY JOURNAL, SHELTON CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE, NORTH MASON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CITY OF  
SHELTON, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

**RE: North Bay/Case Inlet Water Reclamation Facility & Sewer Collection S  
System**

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The North Bay/Case Inlet Water Reclamation Facility & Sewer Collection System project was initiated when water quality studies were conducted in North Bay in 1988 and 1989. These studies documented high fecal coliform counts. Subsequent inspections of both residential and commercial establishments on-site septic systems led to the State Department of Health declaration that the North Bay/Case Inlet area of Mason County is "A Severe Public Health Hazard."

In 1991 Mason County assumed the role of lead agency for future planning for wastewater needs around North Bay/Case Inlet. The objective was to reduce the level of fecal coliform, increase protection of public health and re-open the recreational and commercial shellfish growing area. The recommended approach to achieve these goals was to eliminate on-site sewage disposal systems within the drainage basin around North Bay.

The Facility Plan was approved by Ecology in 1994 and after funding for the project was secured and the design completed, construction began in March 2000.

Approximately 950 septic tanks and drain fields have been discontinued. Over 50 miles of gravity and pressure sewers have been installed along with construction of seven regional lift stations. A 365,000-gallon per day Water Reclamation Facility was constructed for land disposal of reclaimed water. This is one of eight in the State of Washington. The final construction costs amounted to \$19,548,000 which is less than 1% difference from the final engineer's estimate.

After many years of hard work and dedication by many, the planning, design work and construction of the project has been successfully concluded. The work required extensive teaming and cooperation between the consultant, Gray & Osborne, Inc., Department of Ecology, the United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development, Washington State Department of Health, Mason County Department of Utilities & Waste Management, Department of Public Works, Department of Health, numerous other public and private stakeholders and 900 individual property owners. The partnerships proved successful when our objective was met, fecal coliform levels were reduced, and over 1,100 acres of marine shoreline were re-opened to recreational and commercial shellfish harvest.

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Ron Henrickson, Mason County Administrator