



King County

Wastewater Treatment Division

Department of
Natural Resources and Parks
King Street Center
201 South Jackson Street
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The King County Wastewater Treatment Division is pleased to present the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for the Brightwater Regional Wastewater Treatment System.

King County has provided safe, environmentally sound wastewater treatment in the central Puget Sound region for 40 years. To continue safeguarding the waterways in our growing region, King County needs to plan for the region's future. In 1999, after several years of technical, public, and environmental analysis, the King County Council adopted the Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP). This regional plan identified the need to build a new wastewater treatment system, now called Brightwater, by 2010 to serve north King County and south Snohomish County. A programmatic EIS was prepared by King County prior to adoption of the RWSP.

King County subsequently commenced a four-year process to define the Brightwater proposal and evaluate appropriate sites for the Brightwater facilities. The issuance of this Final EIS follows this four-year process to develop the proposal. The treatment plant site alternatives were narrowed to two sites for evaluation in the Draft EIS—the Route 9 site in unincorporated Snohomish County and the Unocal site in the City of Edmonds. Three alternative conveyance systems for carrying wastewater to and from the plant and two marine outfall zones for discharging treated wastewater to Puget Sound were also included in the alternatives.

The Draft EIS on the Brightwater proposal developed by King County was issued on November 6, 2002, and included a 75-day public comment period. During this period, approximately 550 letters, emails, and public hearing testimonies were received, which contained over 5,000 comments on the proposal. The Draft EIS analyzed in detail the characteristics, probable significant impacts, and mitigation measures for the Brightwater alternatives.

King County took twelve months to receive and respond to Draft EIS comments and to conduct additional studies related to significant impacts and mitigation measures. In addition to the formal environmental review process, King County also held three technical seminars this summer. Over twenty technical reports were prepared in conjunction with these seminars, and the public was invited to provide comments on the new information and technical analyses. The comments received were considered in the preparation of the Final EIS and are included in a separate volume of this document.

The Final EIS evaluates three action alternatives (one for the Unocal site and two for Route 9 site) and a No Action alternative. The Final EIS includes a number of refinements to the proposal since the Draft EIS that further reduce impacts and increase system efficiency. The major refinements include:

- For the treatment plant processes, an advanced membrane bioreactor technology has been selected that provides higher quality treatment. Refinements have also been made to plant layouts and the odor control system.
- For the conveyance system, the routes have been modified to more closely follow public rights-of-way, and the number of portals has been reduced. A number of specific alternative sites have been identified for each portal, thereby narrowing the focus from the larger 72-acre portal siting areas first shown in the Draft EIS to these potential portal locations.
- For the marine outfall, preferred alignments have been identified for each outfall zone and open-cut construction has been selected as the preferred onshore and nearshore construction method.

The Final EIS describes the Brightwater proposal; identifies probable significant adverse environmental impacts of the various alternatives; and identifies reasonable mitigation measures to reduce and, in some cases, eliminate the identified impacts. To assist readers, a summary of EIS impact evaluation and proposed mitigation is provided in Volume 1. Additional volumes provide far more detail in each area for those interested or who requested this information in the Draft EIS comments. Technical appendices and responses to comments on the Draft EIS are also included.

The King County Executive will make a final decision in December 2003 on which Brightwater alternative to construct. His decision will be based on the findings of the Draft EIS and Final EIS; comments from the public, government agencies, tribal governments, and elected officials; and many other factors, including cost and regional policies.

As with the construction and operation of all of our facilities, we are committed to being a good neighbor and an asset to our region. We invite you to be involved in the design and construction aspects of this regional project. Your continued involvement will help us to build and operate a world-class facility that will protect public health and the environment in our region.

Sincerely,



Don Theiler,
SEPA Responsible Official and Division Director,
Wastewater Treatment Division.