

## **H2O Breakfast to spotlight multimillion dollar Spokane River clean water investments**

Over 100 representatives from local government, business, non-profit, universities and the community will be gathering in Spokane on Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup> for a Spokane River Forum sponsored H2O Breakfast.

For registration and further information contact the Spokane River Forum at:

[www.spokaneriver.net/h2obreakfast](http://www.spokaneriver.net/h2obreakfast)

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Stormwater, the runoff from rain or melting snow flowing across parking lots, driveways and other hard services, is the multimillion dollar regional topic being addressed. The challenge: how to meet the national clean water standards for the Spokane River in a way, that as Spokane Mayor David Condon puts it, is “environmentally and financially responsible.”

In March, the City of Spokane provided the Washington Department of Ecology an Integrated Clean Water Plan that would be the largest infrastructure investment in the city’s history. Large as it is, the city believes that innovative engineering and adoption of green infrastructure standards will result in the price tag being \$150 million dollars less than originally anticipated. Mayor Condon and Utilities Director Rick Romero will provide an overview of the plan.

Said Andy Dunau, Executive Director of the Spokane River Forum, “We know from public polling that about 80% of the people in the region want to see the Spokane River protected. In practical terms, that means swimming, boating, fishing and enjoying the spectacular views.”

The challenges being faced by the City of Spokane are by no means unique regionally or nationally. For the H2O breakfast, Aurora Illinois Mayor Tom Weisner will provide a keynote. Like the Spokane – Coeur d’Alene corridor, Aurora has a river (the Fox) running through it. Mayor Weisner will discuss how riverfront revitalization, stormwater management and green infrastructure transformed his “blue collar town” into a 21st century economy. Said Dunau, “Aurora’s success story provides us texture and context for not only how to meet clean water standards, but making the investments in a way that serve as a driver for economic development.”

Mayor Ron Jacobson from Post Falls Idaho and Tanyalee Erwin from the Washington Stormwater Center will join Mayors Condon and Weisner to consider the regional needs, stakes and dynamics at play.

The Washington Stormwater Center is working with counties, municipalities and businesses throughout eastern Washington to navigate the complexities and challenges of controlling and managing stormwater and meeting permit requirements for clean water. In northern Idaho, the Panhandle SEEP (Stormwater Erosion and Education Program) is providing similar services.

Sponsors of the breakfast include the Washington Department of Ecology, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe of Indians, the Kootenai County Aquifer Protection District, CH2MHill, Panhandle Seep, and the Spokane River Forum.