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**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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### **Community Celebrates Multi-Million Dollar Wastewater Recovery Project**

Cheers from the crowd of over 100 people rang out after Mayor Christine Fraser from the Township of Spallumcheen exclaimed “we were awarded \$24.3 million dollars!”

The Wastewater Recovery Project has been four years in the making and has faced multiple hurdles due to the complex undertaking of creating an infrastructure asset that will benefit three jurisdictions in different ways for generations to come. On September 12, the community came together to celebrate one of the most significant milestones achieved to date for the project – the awarding of \$24.3 million dollars from the federal and provincial governments.

The event brought together the partner jurisdictions that have worked to get the project to where it is today alongside the staff and consultants that have assisted along the way, and the community that has enthusiastically supported the concept of the Wastewater Recovery Project.

The project partners (RDNO, Township of Spallumcheen and the Okanagan Indian Band) had been clear with the public and stakeholders from the beginning – without this grant money, the project not be able to move forward. In fact, there were many ways for the project to have come to a permanent halt before a shovel ever hit the ground. Had the petition not been successful, the project could not move forward. Had the Township of Spallumcheen not been able to obtain the necessary land, the project could not move forward. And, had the \$24.3 million grant application not been successful, the project could not move forward. Still, the team plugged along to purchase the needed land, run a necessary petition process in the electoral areas, and applied for the grant and lobbied the provincial and federal government for years.

These realities have been at the forefront of the partners’ tireless efforts, each having to navigate their jurisdiction’s unique requirements. These realities and challenges are also why the positive energy was so high at the community celebration event.

“Money like this doesn’t normally come here. It goes to the Lower Mainland, it goes to the Central and South Okanagan but it often doesn’t come to the North Okanagan,” said Amanda Shatzko, Electoral Area C Director, RDNO.

In speaking to the importance of reclaiming water for agricultural use, Mayor Fraser told the crowd about one year in Spallumcheen that saw “over 1000 acres lose all of their forage crops due to a shortage of water. With the new Wastewater Recovery Project, over 600 acres of irrigation water for farming will be provided which is an enormous benefit to our farmers.”

“It's believed that about 50 businesses have been turned away over the last 15 years because of a lack of sewer,” said Bob Fleming, Electoral Area B Director, RDNO. “The benefits will drive our economy for years to come.”

“I always ask people, what’s the actual value of your property without water? It isn’t much. When you start looking at water through that lens, it’s worth every effort to protect our water through holding ourselves to the highest standards,” said Byron Louis, Chief of the Okanagan Indian Band. “Investing in water is investing in this community.”

With the grant secured, the project team will begin the planning and engineering work to make the wastewater recovery project a reality. More information can be found at [www.rdno.ca/wastewater](http://www.rdno.ca/wastewater)



*(L to R: Bob Fleming, Electoral Area B Director, RDNO; Amanda Shatzko, Electoral Area C Director, RDNO; Christine Fraser, Mayor, Township of Spallumcheen; Byron Louis, Chief, Okanagan Indian Band)*

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