**South Lake Cascade Community Meeting**

The following information is for a community meeting held on June 20, 2025 to discuss wastewater treatment options for South Lake Recreational Water and Sewer District property owners. If you are interested in receiving future updates or meeting notices for this project, please provide your email address to **Valley Soil and Water Conservation District (**[**Durena.Farr@id.nacdnet.net**](mailto:Durena.Farr@id.nacdnet.net)**)** or **Janet Cherry/ERG (**[**janet.cherry@erg.com**](mailto:janet.cherry@erg.com)**)**. You can also find project information and updates on the following websites:

[**https://valleyswcd.org/wastewater-program/**](https://valleyswcd.org/wastewater-program/)

[**https://www.cascadecleanwater.com/**](https://www.cascadecleanwater.com/)

**Community Meeting Date:** June 20, 2024, 5:00pm MT

**Location:** Valley County EOC Building, Cascade, Idaho

**Agenda (provided prior to the meeting):**

* Welcome
* Why we are here
  + Water quality issues in Lake Cascade
  + Lenard Long to describe monitoring and concerns
  + Efforts by Valley Soil and Water Conservation District (VSWCD) and application for technical assistance
    - Overview of EPA’s Closing America’s Wastewater Access Gap
    - TA providers
      * ERG/MDB
      * RCAC
* City of Cascade’s involvement, past efforts, and current efforts
  + Recognize City of Cascade city council voted unanimously at January 2025 meeting to participate in studying a regional wastewater option at no cost to the city
  + Present recent improvements at the wastewater treatment plant with aerators and continued efforts to reduce I/I
* Valley County’s involvement and concerns with past efforts
  + Desire for South Lake Recreational Water and Sewer District (SLRWSD) to address onsite systems
  + Willingness to participate in cost sharing water quality sampling in wells and Lake Cascade for pharmaceuticals and personal care products
* Central District Health
  + Study of pit privies
  + Current permitting process
  + Number of permits recently issued and types of systems permitted
* History of SLRWSD and past efforts
  + How the SLRWSD was formed
  + Managed by board of volunteers
  + Large geographic area
  + 2005 Keller Associates Study
  + Examined regional project with City of Cascade and lagoon project
* Efforts underway to evaluate options for SLRWSD
  + Phase 1 effort: Assess West Mountain Subdivision
    - Many options will be considered, some will be regional and involve City of Cascade
    - Understand rates are important and property owners want an affordable option
    - Assessment of existing onsite systems through site visits to properties with permission of homeowners
  + Funding to sample shallow wells in West Mountain Subdivision, City of Cascade well, and Lake Cascade for presence of pharmaceuticals and personal care products
    - Contaminant suite specific to pharmaceuticals and personal care products excreted by humans (caffeine, blood pressure medication, diabetes medication)
    - Goal is to demonstrate onsite systems not properly treating wastewater and eligibility for Clean Water State Revolving Fund Emerging Contaminants Funding (all grant funding)
  + Secure funding to continue studying remaining area of SLRWSD
* Comments/Questions from community
* Next Steps
  + Create community advisory committee
  + Provide frequent updates to the community
  + Complete Phase 1 study by December 31, 2026

**Community Meeting Notice:** Meeting information was published in the local newspaper, flyers were posted around Cascade, and VSWCD mailed the meeting flyer and project fact sheet to 780 property owners within SLRWSD’s boundary. Both SLRWSD and VSWCD placed meeting information on their websites.

**June 20th Community Meeting Notes**

Approximately 20 people attended in-person and 6 individuals participated online. KTVB-TV, Channel 7 news also attended the meeting and broadcasted a follow-up news segment.

A Power Point presentation was shared and attached to these meeting notes as a separate document.

Below is a summary of key discussion topics raised by community members and

* Lenard Long (VSWCD, Friends of Lake Cascade and North Fork Payette River Watershed Coalition) provided an overview of the Lake Cascade water quality challenges.
  + A community member expressed interest in quantifying the economic value of recreational activity generated by Lake Cascade.
  + 1989 Central District Health Privy Sanitation Survey:
    - John Harry (President, SLRWSD) emphasized that the survey only assessed outhouses near the lake, not septic systems.
    - Lenard Long clarified that the survey did note distances between septic systems and wells.
    - One of the participants reported that many of the old privies on properties are now used as storage sheds or for a purpose other than for human waste.
* Water Quality and Wildfire Ash:
  + Attendees agreed that recent wildfires impact lake water quality. VSWCD has sought funding or agencies to monitor post-fire water quality in streams but has been unsuccessful to date.
* Overview of EPA’s Closing America’s Wastewater Access Gap Initiative
  + Able to provide no-cost technical assistance to SLRWSD to identify options to reduce impacts to local ground water and surface water bodies
  + Funding for this effort is available through February 2027
* City of Cascade Wastewater Improvements:
  + Mayor Nissula presented recent upgrades to the city's wastewater system, including lagoon aerator installations and efforts to reduce stormwater inflow and infiltration (I&I).
  + The mayor estimates that these improvements will allow for approximately 200 more homes to be connected.
* Payette Lake Recreational Water and Sewer District (McCall) Lagoon Leak:
  + A lagoon that stores treated wastewater used for irrigation has a damaged liner and has been discharging treated wastewater into the North Fork of the Payette River, which eventually reaches Lake Cascade.
  + Many attendees expressed concern and questioned what Idaho DEQ is doing to address the issue.
* Water Sampling Efforts:
  + Plans to sample surface and groundwater for pharmaceuticals and personal care products (PPCPs) to demonstrate link to onsite wastewater systems if funding can be obtained for this effort.
  + Community members suggested sampling upstream of Lake Cascade to account for contamination from the Payette Lake Recreational Water and Sewer District leaking lagoon.
  + Some questioned whether septic systems significantly contribute to Lake Cascade pollution compared to cows and the leaking lagoon.
* Future Sewer Connection Fees (if a centralized sewer option is pursued) and Funding:
  + Residents asked if future connection fees for a centralized sewer system could be reimbursed.
  + A community member asked that “deferred cost” type of connection fee be aggressively explored.
  + MaryAnna Peavey (Idaho DEQ) explained that while DEQ grants cannot directly cover connection fees, innovative solutions exist, such as incorporating these costs into project loans.
    - Idaho DEQ Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program also offers planning grants that require 50% local match and maximum award of up to $65,000.
    - Currently funding a project with City of Cascade.
    - DEQ allocates $350,000 annually for high-priority wastewater studies.
    - Letters of Interest for the next planning grant funding round open in October 2025 and are due by January 2026.
* Community Advisory Committee Interest:
  + Two individuals expressed interest in serving on a community advisory committee for this project
* Next Steps
  + Create a Community Advisory Committee.
  + **If you are interested in serving on a Community Advisory Committee, please contact Valley Soil and Water Conservation District** ([Durena.Farr@id.nacdnet.net](mailto:Durena.Farr@id.nacdnet.net)) or Janet Cherry/ERG ([janet.cherry@erg.com](mailto:janet.cherry@erg.com))
  + For West Mountain Subdivision Area: Assess onsite wastewater systems, collect water quality samples when funding is available, identify alternatives and costs
  + Pursue Idaho DEQ Clean Water State Revolving Fund Planning Grant funding to support continued evaluation of entire SLRWSD service area
  + Provide frequent updates to the community
  + Complete Phase 1 Feasibility Study for the West Mountain subdivision by December 31, 2026.