

Historic Project Brings Together Several Communities, Including Wake and Durham Counties, Town of Cary

Fourth District, NC - David Price Makes an Important Announcement at a Triangle Wastewater Plant

Today, US Rep. David Price (NC-04) joined elected officials from the Town of Cary and from Wake and Durham Counties in announcing major funding for the historic Wake-Durham-Cary Water Reclamation Project. The project will both improve water quality in Jordan Lake and help sustain the Triangle's future growth in an economic, environmentally-friendly way.

Price, a member of the House Appropriations Committee, secured a \$1.5M Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant as part of last year's funding process. In addition, the Town of Cary and both Wake and Durham Counties are contributing another \$1.2M to complete the first phase of the project.

"One of the biggest challenges to continued growth in the Triangle will be meeting the demand for clean water," said Price. "I'm proud that the communities of the Fourth District are meeting this challenge head on: they're forming an effective partnership to create innovative, forward-thinking, environmentally friendly ways of sustaining growth."

The joint project, announced at a news conference today at the Durham County Triangle Wastewater Treatment Plant, benefits several communities by making highly treated wastewater available for irrigation and commercial uses in Research Triangle Park (RTP). This will help reduce the demand for potable water, which will no longer be needed for irrigation during dry summer months. It will also foster growth in currently undeveloped areas of RTP.

"As the first community in North Carolina to provide reclaimed water services, Cary is proud to be a partner in this important and historical regional reuse effort," said Cary Mayor Ernie McAlister.

Wake County Board of Commissioners Chair Joe Bryan added, "This partnership will foster sustainable growth and responsible economic development in our region while protecting our water supply and water quality."

"This is a win-win project that could serve as a model for the rest of the state," Durham County Board of Commissioners Chair Ellen Reckhow said. "Through this regional partnership, we will reduce nutrient loading to Jordan Lake while reducing the demand for treated water."

How it Works

Through the partnership, Durham County will upgrade its wastewater treatment facility, enabling it to produce treated water that is clean enough to be used for non-drinking water purposes. Instead of being discharged into the New Hope arm of Jordan Lake, as is the current practice, some of the reclaimed water will instead be transported to Cary and Wake County for irrigation and commercial uses. Cary will construct water lines from the Wake/Durham County line to the intersection of Kit Creek Road and N.C. 55, and Wake County will link to those lines to serve the developed Wake County portion of RTP.

History

A Water Reclamation Plan developed in 2003 examined the feasibility of implementing a reclaimed water distribution system in the southern portion of RTP, which includes Wake County. The study recommended the upgrades to the Durham wastewater treatment plant and new water lines to Cary and Wake County as a first phase, with a total estimated design, permitting and construction cost of \$8.35 million. Future phases would be contingent on further development in and around RTP.

Looking Ahead

When completed in 2008, the system will reduce phosphorus and nitrogen loading in Jordan Lake, consistent with the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources' desire to implement a voluntary nutrient management strategy. Nutrients degrade water quality by

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contributing to the growth of algae. This project could keep up to one-third of the Durham plant's treated wastewater from being discharged into streams during summer, when Jordan Lake is most vulnerable to algal blooms.