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Union Sanitary District Selected by U.S. EPA for Low-Cost Financing

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently announced that Union Sanitary District (USD) is eligible for \$198 million in low-cost financing from the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program for the District's Enhanced Treatment and Site Upgrade (ETSU) Phase 1 Projects. USD's ETSU Phase 1 program is one of 55 projects in 20 states invited to apply for funding that will facilitate \$12 billion in water infrastructure according to U.S. EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler.

"This is great news for the District as we move forward with ETSU's critical projects," said USD Board President Tom Handley. "Federal financing is essential to supplement ratepayer investments in USD's extensive infrastructure program that will help protect the San Francisco Bay, preserve capacity for a growing Tri-City area, and manage the effects of a changing environment."

“The WIFIA process is highly competitive, and it is an honor and testament to the outstanding work of the District’s employees and program partners to be chosen for the program’s next step of applying for low-cost loans,” said USD General Manager Paul Eldredge. “The District greatly appreciates the support of Senator Dianne Feinstein and Representatives Ro Khanna and Eric Swalwell during the preliminary application process. Their assistance was a vital accompaniment to the District’s initial Letter of Interest to the U.S. EPA. USD also thanks the U.S. EPA for its backing of the nation’s essential wastewater treatment projects.”

USD’s ETSU Phase 1 Projects are part of a comprehensive program to support the next 20 to 40 years of operation at its wastewater treatment plant in Union City. The Phase 1 projects include addressing aging infrastructure, improving water quality in the San Francisco Bay through nutrient removal upgrades, and hardening of infrastructure to further resiliency efforts to manage extreme wet weather. “These critical improvements will reinforce USD’s proud tradition of excellent service and stewardship of public funds for many decades to come,” said Eldredge.

Established by the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014, the WIFIA program is a federal loan and guarantee program administered by the U.S. EPA. WIFIA’s aim is to accelerate investment in the nation’s water infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost supplemental credit assistance for regionally and nationally significant projects. The WIFIA program has an active pipeline of pending applications for projects that will result in billions of dollars in water infrastructure investment and thousands of jobs.

Union Sanitary District operates a 33-acre wastewater treatment facility in Union City and provides collection, treatment, and disposal services to a population of over 356,800 in Fremont, Newark, and Union City, CA. The District maintains over 839 miles of underground pipeline in its service area. For more information, please visit USD’s website at unionsanitary.ca.gov