



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALCOSAN AWARDS \$9 MILLION FOR 32 MUNICIPAL PROJECTS **The work will cut nearly 70 million gallons each year in sewer overflows**

February 8, 2017 – The Allegheny County Sanitary Authority Board of Directors has approved \$9 million in matching grants for 32 municipal projects that will significantly reduce the volume of sewer overflows within the ALCOSAN collection system. Together, these projects in 18 municipalities and 10 Pittsburgh neighborhoods will remove nearly 70 million gallons of storm water and ground water from the ALCOSAN system annually.

ALCOSAN created the Green Revitalization of Our Waterways (GROW) program in June and immediately began working with its 83 member municipalities and municipal sewer authorities that send wastewater to its treatment facility.

Any municipality or municipal sewer authority within the ALCOSAN service area was eligible to submit a letter of interest for grants in the first funding cycle, and a new round of inquiries will be accepted annually going forward.

The grants may be used to install green storm water reduction technology, remove streams from the sewer system, reduce the amount of water seeping in through groundwater or to separate out storm sewers. In addition to new projects, some completed projects that were constructed after 2013 also were eligible for consideration for reimbursement.

Initially, municipalities and authorities submitted letters of interest for 59 projects (with an additional letter of endorsement for a neighboring municipal project) and, of those, 48 were invited to submit formal applications. In all, 45 applications were submitted, and 32 projects will receive significant financial contributions from ALCOSAN. Grants range from 25 percent of eligible costs to as much as 85 percent, based on the amount of overflow removed by the project, and the cost-efficiency in doing so. Under terms of their agreements with ALCOSAN, the recipients will be required to make sure the effectiveness of the projects is monitored and that the improvements are maintained long-term.

In addition to financial support, ALCOSAN provides technical expertise and other assistance to municipalities for the projects, all with the aim of removing unnecessary storm water and ground water from the system because it triggers unsanitary overflows. The grant program is one of the largest of its kind in the nation.

The GROW program is an essential part of ALCOSAN's long-term green first plan to create cleaner waterways in compliance with regulations of the federal Clean Water Act and the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law and to help the municipalities in the ALCOSAN system fulfill their responsibilities under the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the Allegheny County Health Department.

Brenda Smith, chairperson of the Green Committee of the ALCOSAN board, provided essential leadership and guidance in creating this program. Smith, who is also executive director of Nine Mile Run Watershed Association said, "Members of the Alcosan Board of Directors are very excited to be able to partner with so many of our customer municipalities on such a significant group of projects, which all have the same goal – to remove excess water from our sewers and help reduce sewer overflows into our rivers and streams."

"Reducing excess water by starting at the source – in our partner municipalities -- is a key component to cleaning up our rivers and streams," said Executive Director Arletta Scott Williams. "We are pleased to give them the dollars and the assistance they need."

The grants are the first in a series of funding cycles. ALCOSAN will accept letters of interest for Cycle 2 through March 31. The project locations, brief descriptions and the amount of the GROW grants are listed in a separate document.

ALCOSAN is one of the region's premier environmental and public health organizations, treating wastewater for 83 Allegheny County communities, including the City of Pittsburgh. The authority, which is Green by Mission and Green by Choice, enhances the community's quality of life and safety by working to protect drinking water, rivers and streams, and making the Pittsburgh region a great place to live, work and play. ALCOSAN's 59-acre treatment plant processes up to 250 million gallons of wastewater daily and is one of the largest such facilities in the Ohio River Valley.