



## **Parksville Tests Unique Water Conservation Technology**

*Storage and recovery project receives \$1.3 million from Canada's Gas Tax Fund*

December 19, 2011

**Parksville, British Columbia** – The Englishman River Water Service (ERWS), a joint venture between the City of Parksville and the Regional District of Nanaimo, has been awarded more than \$1.3 million from Canada's Gas Tax Fund for an innovative project to store and recover water in an aquifer.

“Our Government has delivered on our commitment to make the Gas Tax Fund a permanent annual investment of \$2 billion,” said James Lunney, MP for Nanaimo-Alberni, on behalf of the Honourable Denis Lebel, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. “This innovative project will benefit our watershed and ecosystem, and contribute to a sustainable water supply for the Oceanside area.”

Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) is a relatively new technology that is intended to manage peak demands and reduce overall demand on water treatment plants. The project will help excess water from the Englishman River flow through the treatment plant, and into wells. In the summer months, water will be withdrawn from the wells and pumped into the distribution system.

“If the analysis of this project proves successful, we will be able to reduce the future water treatment plant capacity by about one-third,” said Joe Stanhope, Chair of the Englishman River Water Service Management Board. “This technology will also allow the quantity of water taken from the Englishman River during the summer months to be reduced, on average, by 50 per cent. This will assist in maintaining the minimum fisheries flow in the lower reaches of the river, and will provide an important supplemental source of water to meet future need.”

“The federal Gas Tax Fund will allow the Englishman River Water Service to research this innovative ASR technology not only for the residents of our region but also as a first for British Columbia,” said Chris Burger, Mayor of the City of Parksville. “We are excited to be given this opportunity which will allow us to efficiently store drinking water at a lower cost.”

“It's good to see the Gas Tax Fund supporting such innovative approaches for plans to capture and store drinking water,” said Ida Chong, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development. “The regional district should be commended for future thinking in considering the long-term water needs of area families.”

Canada's Gas Tax Fund provides stable, long-term infrastructure funding to local governments and other organizations through a tripartite agreement between the federal government, British Columbia and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). The fund primarily supports capital projects that lead to cleaner air, cleaner water or reduced greenhouse gas emissions. UBCM administers the Gas Tax Fund in BC in collaboration with Canada and British Columbia. On December 15, 2011, legislation was passed that has made the Gas Tax Fund a permanent annual investment of \$ 2 billion.

“BC communities are developing new ways of managing local water supplies,” said Heath Slee, President of UBCM. “UBCM appreciates the support of the Gas Tax Fund for new design concepts that promise to safeguard our rivers and streams.”

For further information on the Government of Canada’s infrastructure investments in British Columbia, visit [www.infrastructure.gc.ca](http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca). To learn more about Canada’s Economic Action Plan, visit [www.actionplan.gc.ca](http://www.actionplan.gc.ca).

-30-

**For more information:**

Pierre Floréa  
Office of the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities  
613-991-0700

Jeff Rud  
Communications Director  
Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development  
250-208-4028

Paul Taylor  
Relationships and Communications Advisor  
UBCM  
250-356-2938

Mike Squire  
Program Manager  
Arrowsmith Water Service  
250-951-2480

Infrastructure Canada  
613-960-9251  
Toll free: 1-877-250-7154