



For Immediate Release

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Cascade, Regional Partners' Work Named "Bright Idea in Government" by Harvard University

Bellevue, WA – The work of Cascade Water Alliance and other water partners of the Central Puget Sound Water Supply Forum regarding water resiliency was today honored by the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University as one of the 2017 Bright Ideas in Government initiative for government policies, initiatives and best practices around the country.

"These programs demonstrate that there are no prerequisites for doing the good work of governing," said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Program at the Ash Center. "Small towns and massive cities, huge federal agencies and local school districts, large budgets or no budgets at all — what makes government work best is the drive to do better, and this group proves that drive can be found anywhere."

The Forum was selected for its regional work in identifying potential challenges to the region's water supply and determining impacts and potential mitigation strategies for earthquakes, water quality issues, drought and climate change. The Forum's goal is to ensure safe, reliable quality water for the region's 2.3 million residents and businesses.

"Cascade Water Alliance has been an integral partner in the Forum's outstanding regional collaboration," said Cascade Chair Fred Butler, Issaquah Mayor. Cascade includes the cities of Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond and Tukwila, the Sammamish Plateau Water and the Skyway Water and Sewer District. Cascade serves 350,000 residents and more than 20,000 businesses.

"The findings from the Forum's work that is being honored today will help shape a future in which much has been done to ensure residents and businesses throughout the area that they will continue to have safe and reliable water. Over the next few months, Cascade and its members will continue working together to develop strong plans to adapt to natural and other challenges."

The Forum is comprised of Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, Cascade Water Alliance, the East King County Regional Water Association, Regional Water Cooperative of Pierce County and King County. Its work over the last two years had brought staff together from throughout the region to review, identify and determine the impact of critical challenges to water such as earthquakes, water quality, drought and climate change.

Cascade's CEO Chuck Clarke added that Cascade and its members are at work now developing action steps to address those challenges identified in the initial work.

The award commends the Forum's work for its unprecedented voluntary regional approach to resiliency and preparedness and its plan for working together to keep the Puget Sound's thriving region functioning following potential crises.

Jim Miller, chair of the Puget Sound Water Supply Forum and Everett's engineering superintendent, said "The Central Puget Sound Region's water suppliers have been working together to plan for what might occur in our water supply systems during and after earthquakes, major water quality problems, drought and changes in climate. This is a strong, collaborative effort which will benefit all the residents and businesses throughout the King, Snohomish and Pierce County areas. The sign of a prepared community is how it handles its emergencies, and that is the goal of the work that was recognized by this prestigious award.

"While Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, Cascade Water Alliance and several other smaller water supply organizations worked diligently to identify the challenges, each utility -- separately and together -- will be better able to respond to needs as they arise as a result of our joint resiliency project. And that makes us a well prepared community," Miller added.

For more information about Cascade visit www.cascadewater.org and for information regarding the Central Puget Sound Water Supply Forum visit www.watersupplyforum.org.

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, education, international programs, and government innovations awards, the Center fosters creative and effective government problem solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world's citizens. Please visit the Government Innovators Network at <http://innovations.harvard.edu> for the full list of Bright Ideas programs, and for more information regarding the Innovations in American Government Awards.