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Contact: Robin Clewley
Communications Director, The Miller Hull Partnership
rclewley@millerhull.com
+1 206-254-2045

Miller Hull Partnership-Designed New LOTT Building Opens

Wastewater treatment plant provides Class A reclaimed water to the community and communicates importance of water preservation through its new interpretive center

Olympia, Washington: August, 2010 — While most wastewater treatment plants around the country are separated from their communities by a chain link fence, the [LOTT Clean Water Alliance](#)'s new Regional Services Center in Olympia, Washington, will actively engage the public. Designed by the award-winning architectural firm, [The Miller Hull Partnership](#), the project is on target for LEED Platinum certification, and also includes the "WET Center" (Water Educational and Technology Center), with an exhibit gallery and classroom.

"This new building portrays all the good things about community stewardship," said Robert Hull, one of the founding partners of Miller Hull. "It's no longer just a sewage treatment plant. It becomes the new public face of LOTT in the community."

Class A reclaimed water, produced at the treatment plant, is water that has been used and then cleaned to high quality standards so it can be returned to the community for irrigation, toilet flushing, industrial and manufacturing, and many other uses. Benefits include wastewater and water supply management, and environmental enhancement such as using reclaimed water for wetlands restoration or streamflow augmentation. The reclaimed water for LOTT's new facility is used for a pond surrounding the center, for irrigating the grounds and the building's green roof, and for toilet flushing inside the building.



“Common themes that run throughout this project include education, environmental sustainability, and the value of reclaimed water as a beneficial, safe resource for our communities,” said Scott Wolf, partner at Miller Hull. “By showcasing Class A reclaimed water in these water features, LOTT provides the public with an opportunity to see and experience the water up close, reinforcing the themes of reclaimed water as a valuable resource and its contribution to the environmental sustainability of our communities.”

The design challenge for the project included renovating the existing administrative and laboratory building, and the creation of a new four-story Regional Services Center to house administrative offices, an emergency operations center, boardroom, and an education center with interpretive exhibits and a classroom. Designed with a contemporary, industrial aesthetic, the building is meant to complement its surroundings, while the structure’s height acts like an iconic symbol for the neighborhood. The facility is coordinated with other projects planned in the area, including a new Hands on Children’s Museum—also designed by Miller Hull—to begin construction in the Fall of 2010, and the East Bay Public Plaza.

The water in the pond is Class A reclaimed water and moves slowly around the front of the building to the east. The edges of the pond are lined with plants, and a smaller pond within the larger water feature supports water lilies. The pond’s water is recycled, requiring minimal make-up water to sustain the pond. Two walkways were constructed over the pond leading people to the building entrances. Furthermore, a water fountain sculpture resembling a large cup pours reclaimed water into the pond and creates a visual and audible signal to the public, symbolically returning the treated water to the community for reuse. The landscape designer was Murase Associates.

Other sustainable elements of the project include reused timbers from a port warehouse that was demolished near the site. The energy use for the project is 50 percent less than of a typical building resulting in significant cost savings over its lifetime. Natural light in the office spaces reduces or eliminates the need for artificial lighting during most of the day. Lastly, external louvers control sunlight and minimize solar gain which further reduces the need for air conditioning.

The Miller Hull Partnership specializes in award-winning design for public works buildings that actively engage their communities. The firm’s projects, such as schools, higher education facilities, nature centers, community centers, mixed use buildings, laboratories and corporate offices have created a new architectural vocabulary for civic works. The Miller Hull Partnership won the National Firm Award from the American Institute of Architects in 2003.

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