

 Virtual **H<sub>2</sub>O** Breakfast

**Wednesday March 31, 2021**  
**8:00 - 9:30 a.m.**

**Register now.** [Click here](#) for details and agenda with speakers and topics.

### **Diane Taniguchi-Dennis will Share Inspirational One Water Message**



Mixing the philosophical with the practical, Clean Water Services CEO Diane Taniguchi-Dennis passionately protects and supports the water needs of diverse communities. As this year's Virtual H2O Breakfast keynote, she'll share stories and innovations that will both inspire and stimulate thinking for what can be achieved in our region.

Raised in Hawaii, the values of ohana, aina and wai guide Diane. Ohana means family in the broadest sense of the word, encompassing relatives, neighbors, friends, and others committed to taking care of each other. Aina means the land and is regarded as the provider of everything. Wai means water, cycling through and interconnecting with everything that makes life possible. These values come from a place of respect and involve returning the gifts from the land back to the land, taking care of it for the benefit of all. From that lens, Diane sees water as the life blood of nature's family.

**Clean Water Services** has more than 600,000 customers residing within the 12 cities and other urbanized portions of the Tualatin River Watershed, an expanse with urban, suburban, agricultural, rural and forested areas west of Portland. In the late '60s, Diane

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reports “that the water pollution was so great, there was a building moratorium. And the flows in the Tualatin River were so impaired that you could straddle it with two legs.” Neither the quality of life, ecologic or economic needs of the community were being met.

Fast forward to today and Diane points to **Fernhill** as the type of innovation that both cleans water naturally and creates space and trails where people can experience the healing power of nature while exploring the water cycle and wildlife. It began in 2014 when 90 acres of old sewage lagoons were transformed into treatment wetlands by draining the ponds, then drying and excavating more than 200,000 cubic yards of soil into precise contours and depths.

When Diane and her team think about wastewater, stormwater and river flow management, they think One Water. What do the river and riparian areas need? How are downstream interests affected? What’s the foundation for recovering resources and allowing future generations to prosper? Is it resilient? When answering these questions “We innovate because it’s what the river needs,” Diane says.

A conversation with ratepayers begins with what the value of water is to them, then progresses to what it takes to receive and return water as clean or cleaner than it came into the system. That’s the foundation for conversations and investments to achieve a balance between gray infrastructure (e.g.-- pipes, pumps and treatment plants) and green infrastructure (e.g.— wetlands, permeable pavements, bioswales and infiltration planters).

At their water resource recovery facilities – once known as treatment plants – for instance, methane gas is recovered and used as fuel for engine-generators to create energy and hot water for plant operations. Ultimately, the plan is to diversify by producing renewable natural gas from plant operations that can be exported to the natural gas grid. Clean Water Services is also actively researching artificial intelligence and DIY sensors that will one day enable systems to adjust and optimize operations more efficiently.

**Please join us** to learn more about how Diane and her team are combining philosophy and vision to meet the clean water needs of their communities.

**The Spokane River Forum is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that creates materials, events and activities that promote sustaining a healthy river system while meeting the needs of a growing population.**