



To: All News Editors

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

NWC SIGNS WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENT FUNDING AGREEMENT WITH IDB

The National Water Commission (NWC) today (July 26, 2011) signed a contract agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) at the Ministry of Housing, Environment and Water for a US\$3M grant funding support for the implementation of a series of wastewater improvement initiatives islandwide under a Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (CReW) in partnership with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA).

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Minister of Housing, Environment and Water, Dr. Horace Chang, applauded the initiative as an important part of improving the NWC's wastewater management as well as protecting Jamaica's environment, public health and economic development. According to the Minister, while this specific grant may be seen as comparatively small as against the existing investment needs, the creative collaboration and funding arrangement will access millions of dollars of additional funding to be accessed with the grant as the collateral.

Minister Chang, the new environment minister, underscored that protecting the environment is very critical to the development of small island states like ours and there is always a need for quality, meaningful collaboration to protect it.

The primary objective of the Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (CReW) initiative is to establish innovative, feasible financial instruments for cost effective and sustainable financing of wastewater management in the Caribbean region. The initiative will support a financial arrangement to secure funding for the rehabilitation of 44 identified National Water Commission wastewater facilities, 11 of which will be rehabilitated in the first phase of the project.

Mr. Ancil Brewster, Country Representative of the IDB, in his brief remarks confirmed what has been evident for some time now that wastewater service is often treated as the “Cinderella” of the infrastructure sector. The IDB however believes that supporting wastewater management is a natural fit for the agency, and that the collaboration is a very signal event in turning the tide of the under-investment in the sector.

Also speaking at the signing was Mr. Christopher Corbin, Programme Officer of UNEP, indicated his extreme delight to be partnering with the Ministry of Housing, Environment and Water, the NWC, the IDB, the USTDA and NEPA.

The rehabilitation activities to be undertaken include upgrading and expansion of the facilities as well as de-commissioning of some old facilities and the re-direction of their flows to a central sewer system for better treatment. The project will result in the rehabilitated facilities being restored to perform at their design levels

and to better meet the new standards for sewage effluent discharge mandated by the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA).

The 11 wastewater facilities chosen for priority attention under the initiative include:

1. Mineral Heights Wastewater Treatment Plant
2. Longville Wastewater Treatment Plant
3. Elletson Flats Wastewater Treatment Plant
4. Ebony Vale Wastewater Treatment Plant
5. Acadia Wastewater Treatment Plant
6. Dela Vega Wastewater Stabilization Ponds
7. Greater Portmore Wastewater Stabilization Ponds
8. Ensom City Wastewater Treatment Plant
9. Blackwood Gardens Wastewater Stabilization Ponds
10. Yallahs Wastewater Stabilization Ponds
11. Boscobel Wastewater Treatment Plant

The grant funds secured under the programme from the IADB has already facilitated the ongoing implementation of technical assistance activities at three pilot facilities of Blackwood Gardens, Greater Portmore and Mineral Heights scheduled for completion in October 2011.

-END-

**Contact: Corporate Public Relations
929-1128**