

Ashland Canal Piping Project



Artistic Representation of Completed Ashland Canal Piping Project (ACPP)

Project Overview

Objective. The City of Ashland plans to pipe two miles of the Ashland Canal between Starlight Place and Terrace Street. A map of the section to be piped can be found at www.ashland.or.us/ashlandcanal

Purpose. Water is one of Ashland's most precious resources, and the City of Ashland takes its responsibility as a steward of our region's water very seriously. As part of the City's 2012 Water Master Plan, the City identified piping the Ashland Canal as a priority to ensure a reliable water source for the future.

Outcome. This project will improve water quality in Ashland Creek, the outlet of the Ashland Canal, and minimize water losses in the canal itself due to seepage and evaporation. Raw water in an open canal is vulnerable to contaminants from a variety of sources, which reduces water quality in Ashland Creek. Additionally, because the canal is open and the condition of the current lining is deteriorating, this water is susceptible to evaporation and a significant portion is lost to underground seepage.

Value to the Community

- 1) **Improved Water Quality.** Piping the canal reduces the amount of contaminants from entering the canal from dogs, wildlife runoff, and yard debris. The shading from the piping cools the water and helps the riparian environment of Ashland Creek.
- 2) **Water Conservation.** Piping the canal effectively eliminates water loss from evaporation and seepage, resulting in up to 30% water savings for the piped section.
- 3) **Protects Drinking Water Resource.** The Ashland Canal is a regular source of seasonal irrigation water for the City. However, in years when water supplies are limited, the canal water is a critical secondary water source for the City. It is pumped up to the City's Water Treatment Plant and treated to drinking water standards.
- 4) **Safety & Health.** Piping the Canal will eliminate falling and drowning hazards and significantly reduce the potential of embankment blowouts and overtopping. It will also minimize water pollution and health risks such as *E.Coli* in Ashland Creek.
- 5) **Trail and Surface Improvements.** After construction there will be a wider smoother gravel path and reduced maintenance.
- 6) **Improved Irrigation Water Quality.** Irrigation water will have less debris and sediment buildup.

Improving Water Quality and Reducing Water Loss

Water Quality History

Ashland Creek routinely exceeds the State's maximums for *E. coli* bacteria in the summer months. The Ashland Creek Bacteria Study, conducted in 2010, found Ashland Creek harbors a fluctuating level of *E. coli*. The study, a collaboration between Rogue Riverkeeper (RRK), Southern Oregon University (SOU), the City of Ashland (the City), Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and concerned citizens, recommended piping the Ashland Canal inside City limits. Piping the Ashland Canal will significantly reduce contaminants and improve the water quality of Ashland Creek.



Water Conservation

In addition to improving water quality, conservation efforts will help Ashland to manage its water resources for the future. The City loses approximately 30 percent of the canal water due to evaporation and seepage. Piped canals mitigate these losses and conserve a significant portion of this water. This canal piping project is part of a larger, proactive plan to conserve and improve water quality throughout the City of Ashland.

Project Schedule:

Phase	Action	Date
1A	Preliminary engineering phase (survey and field work). This phase is currently underway.	February 2018 – December 2018
1B	Obtaining permits, easements and construction work agreements	December 2018 – June 2019
2	Finalize engineering plans	June 2019 – December 2019
3	Construction of piping project	2020

To learn more about the project, visit <http://www.ashland.or.us/ashlandcanal> or call 541-488-5347. If you wish to be included on our email notification list, please email us at ashlandcanal@ashland.or.us.