

How The Tunnel and Reservoir Plan Works

Water Reclamation Plants clean and recover resources from wastewater. Cleaned water is released to the river.

Clean water from WRP

Combined Sewer Outfall

waterway

Intercepting Sewers carry water to water reclamation plants to be cleaned in dry weather and during moderate rainfall.

TARP Dropshafts

redirect sewer overflow water into tunnels hundreds of feet below. Dropshafts and tunnels generally follow the paths of waterways. Dropshafts are divided in two parts to allow air to exit as water enters the system at high velocity.

air

water

Local Combined Sewers run beneath neighborhood streets and carry both stormwater and sanitary sewage. Originally designed to flow directly into rivers, they are now "intercepted" by MWRD intercepting sewers. In heavy rains, these sewers can overflow combined stormwater and sewage to the river.

Floating Solar Powered Aerators add oxygen to the top layer of water to control odors.

reservoir

TARP Reservoirs

store billions of gallons of water until water reclamation plants have capacity to clean it.

Grout Curtains seal reservoir walls to protect groundwater.

TARP Pumping Stations

pump water back up from tunnels and reservoirs to water reclamation plants.

TARP Tunnels

store 2.3 billion gallons of water and flow to reservoirs.