

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Environmental Assessment

Water Protection Bureau

Name of Project: Laurel Travel Center Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) – Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) permit MT0031879

Type of Project: New discharge permit for existing facility. Permit MT0031879

Location of Project: 11360 Interstate 90 Frontage Road

City/Town: Laurel

County: Yellowstone

Description of Project: The Laurel Travel Center is an existing, privately owned travel center, restaurant, and hotel. The proposed treatment facility will replace an outdated existing facility at the same location with an advanced wastewater treatment system. The proposed treatment system will treat domestic sewage from the facilities listed above. Discharge is to the Nutting Drain. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) proposes to issue the discharge permit.

Agency Action and Applicable Regulations: The proposed action is to issue the MPDES permit for a five-year cycle according to the following regulations:

ARM Title 17, Chapter 30, Subchapter 2 - Water Quality Permit Application and Annual Fees.
ARM Title 17, Chapter 30, Subchapter 5 - Mixing Zones in Surface and Ground Water.
ARM Title 17, Chapter 30, Subchapter 6 - Surface Water Quality Standards.
ARM Title 17, Chapter 30, Subchapter 7 - Nondegradation of Water Quality.
ARM Title 17, Chapter 30, Subchapters 12 and 13 – MPDES Standards.
Montana Water Quality Act, MCA 75-5-101, *et seq.*

Summary of Issues: The receiving water is classified B-2. The discharge is classified as an existing source. Final effluent limits are calculated to assure compliance with the applicable water quality standards in the receiving water.

Benefits and Purpose of Action: The permit will ensure compliance with the Montana Water Quality Act and protect beneficial uses of the Nutting Drain.

Affected Environment & Impacts of the Proposed Project:

Y = Impacts may occur.

N = Not present or No Impact will likely occur.

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
1. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are soils present which are fragile, erosive, susceptible to compaction, or unstable? Are there unusual or unstable geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?	[N]
2. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?	[N] Effluent limits will enforce discharge quality and protect receiving water beneficial uses.
3. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	[N]
4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be significantly impacted? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	[N] The proposed facility will replace an existing treatment system that has existed at the location since approximately 1975. No new impacts are expected.
5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	[N] The proposed facility will replace an existing treatment system that has existed at the location since approximately 1975. No new impacts are expected.
6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?	[N] The proposed facility will replace an existing treatment system that has existed at the location since approximately 1975. No new impacts are expected.
7. SAGE GROUSE EXECUTIVE ORDER: Is the project proposed in core, general or connectivity sage grouse habitat, as designated by the Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program (Program) at https://sagegrouse.mt.gov ? If yes, did the applicant attach documentation from the Program showing compliance with Executive Order 12-2015 and the Program's recommendations? If so, attach the documentation to the EA and address the Program's recommendations in the permit. If project is in core, general or connectivity habitat and the applicant did not document consultation with the Program, refer the applicant to the Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program.	[N] The Department verified the facility is not located in core, general, or connectivity sage grouse habitat.
8. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	[N] The proposed facility will replace an existing treatment system that has existed at the location since approximately 1975. No new impacts are expected.
9. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?	[N] The proposed facility will replace an existing treatment system that has existed at the location since approximately 1975. No new impacts are expected.

IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
10. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project? Will new or upgraded powerline or other energy source be needed)	[N] The proposed facility will replace an existing treatment system that has existed at the location since approximately 1975. No new impacts are expected.
11. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	[N] No significant impacts on other environmental resources have been identified.
12. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	[N] Effluent limits will protect public health.
13. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[N]
14. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	[N]
15. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	[N]
16. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc.) be needed?	[N]
17. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	[N] The Department is not aware of zoning or management plans that may impact this project or will be impacted by this project.
18. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?	[N]
19. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	[N]
20. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N]
21. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N]
22. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	[N]

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
23(a). PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPACTS: Are we regulating the use of private property under a regulatory statute adopted pursuant to the police power of the state? (Property management, grants of financial assistance, and the exercise of the power of eminent domain are not within this category.) If not, no further analysis is required.	[N]
23(b). PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPACTS: Is the agency proposing to deny the application or condition the approval in a way that restricts the use of the regulated person's private property? If not, no further analysis is required.	[N]
23(c). PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPACTS: If the answer to 21(b) is affirmative, does the agency have legal discretion to impose or not impose the proposed restriction or discretion as to how the restriction will be imposed? If not, no further analysis is required. If so, the agency must determine if there are alternatives that would reduce, minimize or eliminate the restriction on the use of private property, and analyze such alternatives. The agency must disclose the potential costs of identified restrictions.	[N/A]

- 24. **Description of and Impacts of other Alternatives Considered:** No other alternatives have been considered.
- 25. **Summary of Magnitude and Significance of Potential Impacts:** None
- 26. **Cumulative Effects:** None
- 27. **Preferred Action Alternative and Rationale:** Approve. The preferred action is to issue the MPDES permit. This action is preferred because the permit program provides the regulatory mechanism for protecting water quality by enforcing the terms of the MPDES permit.
- 28. **Recommendation for Further Environmental Analysis:**
 EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis
- 29. **Rationale for Recommendation:** An EIS is not required under the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) because issuance of the TA Operating LLC MPDES permit lacks significant adverse effects to the human and physical environment.
- 30. **Public Involvement:** A 30-day public notification/comment period will be held.
- 31. **Persons and agencies consulted in the preparation of this analysis:** None

EA Checklist Prepared By:

Jeff May
(Name)

March 16, 2016
(Date)

Approved By:

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Jon Kenning, Chief
Water Protection Bureau

Date