



NOTICE OF PUBLICATION OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
CASCADE COUNTY VAUGHN WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT, MONTANA
SRF #: C304227
NEW WWTP INFLUENT SCREEN

March 24, 2021

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality has reviewed the above-named project for the Cascade County Vaughn Water and Sewer District (District), consisting of replacement of the influent manhole at the Vaughn wastewater lagoon, installation of a removable trash basket in the influent manhole, and purchase of a pre-manufactured building for drying of the screenings. In October of 2018, the District completed improvements at its wastewater treatment facility (WWTF), including replacement of its surface aerators with fine bubble diffusers. Following aeration system startup, the staff began having issues with rags and other debris clogging the diffusers and getting wrapped around the cables supporting them. Removal of the incoming debris is necessary to keep the diffusers operating properly so adequate treatment of the District's wastewater can be provided to meet discharge permit limits. The proposed influent screen would collect most of the debris before it can enter the lagoon cells, thereby keeping the diffusers free of obstruction to properly aerate the wastewater.

Construction costs for the proposed project will be funded with Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund loan dollars, remaining from the District's recent WWTF improvements project, and therefore user rates will not increase because of this project. The estimated construction cost is around \$80,000 and construction is anticipated to occur this spring or early summer.

Pursuant to ARM 17.40.318, the Department has concluded that the proposed project meets the Categorical Exclusion criteria of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). The Categorical Exclusion may be revoked if the project is not initiated within the time period specified in the Preliminary Engineering Report, a new or modified application is submitted, new evidence demonstrates serious local or environmental issues exist, or state, local, tribal, or federal laws are violated.

The documentation for the Categorical Exclusion is available for public review at the following locations:

Department of Environmental Quality
State Revolving Fund Loan Program
1520 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

Cascade County Vaughn Water and Sewer District
1161 6th Avenue
Vaughn, MT 59487

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Smith", is written over a horizontal line.

Mark Smith, P.E.
SRF Program Manager
Water Quality Division
Montana Department of Environmental Quality