



NOTICE OF PUBLICATION OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
TOWN OF WHITEHALL, MONTANA
WPCSRF #: C302299
Whitehall Lift Station Upgrade and Headworks Screen Installation
June 20, 2025

The Town of Whitehall operates a three-cell wastewater treatment lagoon with a single lift station that collects and pumps all the community's wastewater to the treatment system. Inorganic material and gravel have collected in the lift station and are pulled through the pumps, resulting in damage that has increased maintenance time and shortened pump life. Failure of the lift station may cause wastewater to back up into private residences and impact public health. The proposed project consists of constructing a headworks building with separate rooms for controls and future screen installation. Existing lift station controls would be housed in the new, secure structure and protected from the elements. A second phase of the project will install the screen and connect the headworks building to the collection system ahead of the existing lift station at a future date. After the second project phase, the Town will be able to remove large materials from reaching and damaging the lift station pumps and impacting lagoon operation.

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 facility plan, 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 and online at <http://deq.mt.gov/public/water-public>:

Department of Environmental Quality
State Revolving Fund Loan Program
1520 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
Travis.dunkle@mt.gov

Town of Whitehall
207 E. Legion St.
Whitehall, MT 59759

Sincerely,

Mike Abrahamson

Mike Abrahamson, PE
Section Supervisor
Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund Program
Engineering Bureau, Water Quality Division
Montana Department of Environmental Quality



FIGURE 1
Town of Whitehall
Lift Station Upgrade and Screen
Installation Site

CHAPTER III – ATTACHMENT D

DOCUMENTATION OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION CHECKLIST

Project Name / Brief Description: _____

Project Number: _____

Date: _____

Preparer: _____

The Department action under Title 75, chapter 5, part 11 and or chapter 6, part 1 or 2, MCA, is excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) if the application for department review is for any of the following projects:

(a) Projects relating to existing infrastructure systems such as sewer systems, drinking water supply systems, and stormwater systems, including combined sewer overflow systems that involve:

[Answer yes or no. If all answers "no", an EA or EIS must be completed. If any answer is yes, skip to (b).]

- Y 1. minor upgrading;
- N 2. minor expansion of system capacity;
- N 3. rehabilitation (including functional replacement) of the existing system and system components;
- Y 4. construction of new minor ancillary facilities adjacent to or on the same property as existing facilities; or
- N 5. projects in unsewered communities involving the replacement of existing on-site systems, provided that the new on-site systems do not result in substantial increases in the volume of discharges or in loadings of pollutants from existing sources, and do not relocate existing discharges.

(b) A categorical exclusion may NOT be granted for a department action if:

[Answer yes or no. If all answers "no", skip to (c). If any answer is yes, an EA or EIS must be completed.]

- N 6. the action would authorize facilities that will provide a new discharge or relocate an existing discharge to ground or surface waters;
- N 7. the action would result in an increase above permit levels established for the facility under the Montana pollutant discharge elimination system or Montana ground water pollution control system for either volume of discharge or loading rate of pollutants to receiving waters;
- N 8. the action would authorize facilities that will provide capacity to serve a population at least 30% greater than the existing population;
- N 9. the action is not supported by the state, or other regional growth plan or strategy;
- N 10. the action directly or indirectly involves or relates to upgrading or extending infrastructure systems primarily for the purposes of future development;

- N 11. the department has received information indicating that public controversy exists over the project's potential effects on the quality of the human environment;
- N 12. the department determines that the proposed project that is the subject of the state action shows some potential for causing a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, based on ARM 17.4.608, or might possibly affect:
- (i) sensitive environmental or cultural resource areas; or
 - (ii) endangered or threatened species and their critical habitats.

(c) If the proposed project meets the conditions above in determining use of a CATEX, the reviewer will then complete items 13 - 17 as follows:

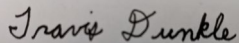
[Once all steps 1- 17 are complete, reviewer shall sign and date at bottom. If revocation becomes necessary, reviewer shall initiate an EA or EIS as appropriate.]

13. Project meets the above Categorical Exclusion criteria.
14. DEQ determination of Categorical Exclusion.
15. DEQ distributes the Notice of Determination.
16. Notice of Publication and cover letter (containing revocation language below) is delivered to recipient.
17. Notice of Publication published in local newspaper by recipient and evidence of publication provided to reviewer.

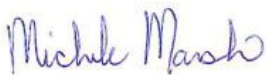
(d) The department may revoke a categorical exclusion if:

[Only complete the steps below 18 – 21 if revocation of a previously implemented CATEX becomes necessary.]

18. the project is not initiated within the time period specified in the facility plan, or a new or modified application is submitted;
19. the proposed action no longer meets the requirements for a categorical exclusion because of changes in the proposed action;
20. new evidence demonstrates that serious local or environmental issues exist; or
21. state, local, tribal, or federal laws may be violated.



STATE PREPARER



STATE REVIEWER

COMPLETION DATE