



July 13, 2009

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
TO ALL INTERESTED GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS

As required by state and federal rules for determining whether an Environmental Impact Statement is necessary, an environmental review has been performed on the proposed action below:

Project:	2009 Wastewater Treatment Facility Composting Improvements
Location:	Livingston, Montana
Project Number	MT DEQ, WPCSRF No. C301232; MT DOC, TSEP No. MT-TSEP-CG-10-504
Total Cost	\$1,663,000

The City of Livingston has proposed upgrades to the sanitary sewer treatment facility within the community. The overall project involves conversion of the existing biosolids drying and handling process to a new containerized biosolids and yard waste composting facility. Also included are proposed repairs to the number 1 primary digester including the cover, mixing equipment and biogas handling system.

The State Revolving Fund loan program may provide partial funding for the proposed project. Environmentally sensitive characteristics such as wetlands, floodplains, threatened or endangered species and historical sites are not expected to be adversely impacted as a result of the proposed project. Public participation during the planning process generally demonstrated support for the selected alternative. No significant long-term environmental impacts were identified. An environmental assessment (EA), which describes the project and analyzes impacts in more detail, is available for public review at the following locations:

Department of Environmental Quality
1520 East Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

City of Livingston
Public Works Director
330 N Bennett Street
Livingston, MT 59047

Comments supporting or disagreeing with this decision may be submitted for consideration by the Department of Environmental Quality. After evaluating the comments received, the agency will make a final decision. However, no administrative action will be taken on the project for at least 30 calendar days after release of the Finding of No Significant Impact.

Sincerely,

Todd Teegarden, Bureau Chief
Technical and Financial Assistance Bureau
Planning, Prevention & Assistance Division



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**CITY OF LIVINGSTON
WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY UPGRADE**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

I. PROJECT SUMMARY INFORMATION

A. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Name of Project: 2009 Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) Improvements
Applicant: City of Livingston
Address: 330 N Bennett Street, Livingston, Montana 59047
DEQ Project Number: C301232
DOC, TSEP Project Number: MT-TSEP-CG-10-504

B. CONTACT PERSON

Name: Clint Tinsley, Public Works Director
Address: 330 N Bennett St, Livingston, Montana 59047
Telephone: (406) 222-1142

C. ABSTRACT

The City of Livingston (in a February 2008, Co-Composting Facilities Plan, prepared by CTA Architects & Engineers) identified the need to upgrade the solids handling and composting operations at the City WWTF. Improvements include repairs to the existing primary digester cover, installation of new mixing equipment within the digester and new ventilation equipment. Also, included in the proposed project is purchase and installation of a new rotary fan press dewatering unit and purchase and installation of in-vessel composting equipment. The proposed improvements will result in a containerized composting process, allowing the City to combine yard wastes, food scraps and municipal biosolids to produce a high quality compost product. Improvements will also address aging equipment and improve system reliability.

The improvements proposed are estimated to cost approximately \$1,663,000 and are supported within the current City sewer rate structure and available assets. Project components will be awarded commensurate with grants and loan provisions without further rate increase. It is anticipated that the project will be funded with a combination of a \$500,000 Treasure State Endowment grant, a \$100,000 Renewable Resource grant and a low interest loan obtained from the State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan program for the balance of approximately \$1,063,000.

Environmentally sensitive characteristics such as wetlands, floodplains, threatened or endangered species and historical sites are not expected to be adversely impacted as a result of the proposed project. Additional environmental impacts related to land use, water quality, air quality, public health, energy, noise, growth, and biosolids disposal were also assessed. No significant long-term environmental impacts were identified.

Under Montana law, (75-6-112, MCA), no person may construct, extend, or use a public sewage system until the DEQ has reviewed and approved the plans and specifications for the project. Under the Montana Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund Act, the DEQ may loan money to municipalities for construction of public sewage systems.

The MDEQ, Technical and Financial Assistance Bureau (Department), has prepared this Environmental

Assessment (EA) because the Department received a Preliminary Engineering Report for its review and written approval and an application for a State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan for the project. The Department is currently reviewing this information. If complete, a written approval will be prepared and provided to the City. The Montana Department of Commerce, Treasure State Endowment Program, has also reviewed this EA for purposes of MEPA compliance. This EA has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

D. COMMENT PERIOD

A thirty (30) calendar day public comment period is planned.

II. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

The Livingston WWTF is authorized to land apply biosolids under Montana Pollution Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) Permit Number MT0020435 and EPA 40 CFR Part 503 regulations. The City currently hauls approximately 343 wet tons of biosolids per year to land application or landfill sites. The City also currently collects approximately 150 tons of green waste per year, which is proposed to be composted with the WWTF biosolids. Food waste from the hospital food service, schools, grocery stores and restaurants will also be collected and combined with the green waste and biosolids.

The proposed project will improve the operability and reliability of the Livingston wastewater treatment facility. Currently biosolids are land applied to agricultural property as a means of disposal and beneficial reuse. Future land application of biosolids to agricultural land via the City's (EPA part 503) permit would be discontinued, resulting in less human handling and pathogen risk to plant staff and the public. In addition to biosolids the project would help to address the accumulation of yard wastes, kitchen wastes and food wastes currently collected by the City. These waste streams would be mixed with the biosolids to produce a compost product. Initially the City plans to utilize the compost product on parks and City landscaping projects. The project will produce a quality of compost which may eventually provide a source of revenue for the City.

Biosolids storage at the City WWTF requires up to 150 days accumulation during the winter prior to land application. Limitations on drying bed storage area can result in biosolids being held within the treatment facility basins and clarifiers longer than is optimal for wastewater treatment. Installation of composting equipment at the WWTF will reduce the drying bed storage area used, which in turn can enhance wastewater treatment performance.

The existing primary digesters were put in service in the early 1960's and are in dire need of repair. One of the two digesters in particular keeps maintenance staff very busy and concerned. A bandage approach has been utilized for many years to plug holes in the digester lid to prevent release of volatile methane and other digester gasses. Corrosion of the lid structure is significant and lid replacement is identified as a component of this project. Also, the internal digester mixer and biogas handling system have exceeded their useful life and are proposed to be replaced as part of this project.

III. ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

A. COMPOSTING TECHNOLOGIES

There were five alternative composting technologies including the "no action" alternative considered in the Facilities Plan. Each of these alternatives include a dewatering stage for biosolids, ranging from continued use of the existing drying beds to installation and use of more advanced dewatering equipment. The alternatives evaluated included the following:

1. NO ACTION – This alternative would result in the City continuing to haul and land apply WWTF biosolids to agricultural property. It would also result in continuing stockpiling of yard wastes at the City utility shop and eventual landfill of a large portion of those waste products. Agricultural property within a short distance of the City is getting more difficult to find and odor and vector complaints from neighbors near the WWTF have been problematic. The drying beds currently used to dewater anaerobically treated biosolids result in significant odor issues, especially when solids have to be stored for long periods during freezing/thawing cycles over the winter months. For these reasons, this alternative was not further considered within the planning document.
2. WINDROW COMPOSTING – This alternative would utilize long piles of biosolids and green waste. Tractor mounted equipment is utilized to periodically turn the piles for mixing and aeration. This method is used with success in many locations. Therefore, this technology was further considered within the planning document.
3. IN-VESSEL COMPOSTING – This alternative would utilize containerized equipment where the compost ingredients are placed within a rectangular container. Then the biosolids and yard waste are moved mechanically from one end to the opposite end, at a rate and with such mixing action as needed to result in a fully composted material, exiting the opposite end. This method is used with success in many locations and has the secondary benefit of allowing better operational control. Therefore, this technology was further considered within the planning document.
4. AERATED STATIC PILE COMPOSTING – This alternative can involve both passive piles or active methods where the pile or tunnel is mechanically moved. This method does not typically involve mixing, but the active method can involve ventilation equipment to provide air at the bottom of the pile. This method is used with success in many locations. Therefore, this technology was further considered within the planning document.
5. HYBRID COMPOSTING SYSTEMS – This alternative can involve combinations of Windrow, In-vessel and Static pile technologies. Generally, these hybrid systems are designed to be indoors, so would typically result in the need for additional infrastructure. These hybrid methods have been used with success in many locations. Therefore, this technology was further considered within the planning document.

B. OTHER MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS CONSIDERED

There were several other project components identified within the Facility Plan which needed to be addressed. These included replacement of the steel lid over the number one primary digester as identified in Figure 3, replacement of the mixing equipment within the digester and also, installation of a new biogas handling system for the digester. No other alternatives were considered with respect to this work with the exception of the “no action” alternative. The no action alternative was not considered a viable option due to the serious safety concerns and equipment failure.

IV. COST COMPARISON AND RANKING OF CONSIDERED ALTERNATIVES

Within the Facility Plan capital and present worth costs were compared for the various composting alternatives and are further presented here.

TABLE 1 – COST ESTIMATE FOR COMPOSTING ALTERNATIVES

Alternative Number (From Above)	Alternative	Capital Cost For Alternative	Differential O&M Costs per Year	Present Worth Cost *
A.1	No Action Alternative	\$0	**	**
A.2	Windrow Composting	\$452,700	\$19,800	\$721,782
A.3	In-Vessel Composting	\$614,700	\$10,800	\$761,472
A.4	Aerated Static Pile Composting	\$1,040,500	\$25,300	\$1,384,327
A.5	Hybrid Composting Systems	\$575,000	\$20,800	\$857,672

* Present worth costs are based on a 20-year design life and an interest rate of 4%.

** The annual O&M cost for current biosolids hauling, spreading, landfilling and associated work was not presented in the Facility Plan.

In addition to the alternatives presented in Table 1, costs for miscellaneous work identified in III.B above are estimated to be approximately \$235,000. The total of all proposed improvements are estimated to be \$1,663,000. This total includes all engineering, administrative, reserve and bond costs associated with the project. The City has obtained a grant for \$500,000 from the Montana Department of Commerce Treasure State Endowment (TSEP) program and a grant in the amount of \$100,000 from the Department of Natural Resources, Renewable Resources Grant & Loan (RRGL) program. The City proposes to obtain a 20-year low interest loan from the Montana State Revolving Fund program for the remainder of approximately \$1,063,000.

Wastewater rates were increased in 2008 within the City of Livingston through adoption of a three-year rate increase structure which incrementally increases sewer rates by \$4.72/year in each of the fiscal years beginning July 1, 2008, 2009 & 2010. The financial impact of this project is supported by the existing City wastewater rate structure and no rate increases are anticipated.

A. BASIS OF SELECTION OF PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Selection of the preferred alternative was based upon multiple criteria, both monetary and non-monetary. Ranking criteria are shown in Table 2. Alternatives for composting were compared relative to one another based on the following: cost effectiveness, reliability, flexibility, operational ease, energy/resource use and local economic risk.

TABLE 2 – RANKING OF COMPOSTING ALTERNATIVES

Comparison Criteria	Parameter Weight	A.2	A.3	A.4	A.5
		Windrow Composting	In-Vessel Composting	Aerated Static Pile Composting	Hybrid Composting Systems
Cost Effectiveness					
Alternative Rank	6	5	3	1	3
Weighted Rank		30	18	6	18
Reliability					
Alternative Rank	5	3	5	5	4
Weighted Rank		15	25	25	20
Flexibility					
Alternative Rank	4	2	4	3	3
Weighted Rank		8	16	12	12
Operational Ease					
Alternative Rank	3	3	4	3	3
Weighted Rank		9	12	9	9
Energy/Resource Use					
Alternative Rank	3	3	4	4	4
Weighted Rank		9	12	12	12
Local Economic Risk					
Alternative Rank	2	3	3	3	3
Weighted Rank		6	6	6	6
Weighted Rank		77	89 *	70	77

* Alternative A.3 provides a more advanced approach to composting which ranks significantly higher than other alternatives considered with respect to reliability, flexibility and operational ease of use.

B. SELECTED ALTERNATIVES

As shown in the ranking Table 2, Alternative A.2 scored the highest primarily due to reliability, flexibility and operational criteria. The windrow method ranks higher from a cost perspective, but due to local climatic conditions (i.e. wind, cold and locale) was determined to not meet the goals of the project. This retrofit will allow the City to meet biosolids treatment requirements and provide the opportunity to generate a class A compost product, which could eventually lead to a revenue stream for the City.

In addition to the items listed above, upgrading of the primary solids digester with new lid, mixing equipment and biogas handling system is identified as needed to enhance operational safety at the facility.

V. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

A. PLANNING AREA

The City of Livingston is located in south-central Montana near the junction of US Highway 89 and Interstate 90 (see Figure 1). The planning area includes the incorporated boundary and identified areas adjacent to the boundary where future growth may occur in the 20-year planning period (see Figure 2). The planning area includes residential homes, vacant lots, commercial businesses, and public entities. As shown in Figure 2, the WWTF is located along the eastern edge of the city and is included in the planning area. The proposed WWTF improvements are shown in Figure 3 and will occur within the boundaries of the existing WWTF. The duration of construction for the proposed new composting facility should be approximately 3 months.

B. BIOSOLIDS PROJECTIONS

Population data for Livingston for the past several years indicates a slow growth rate of 1% annually.

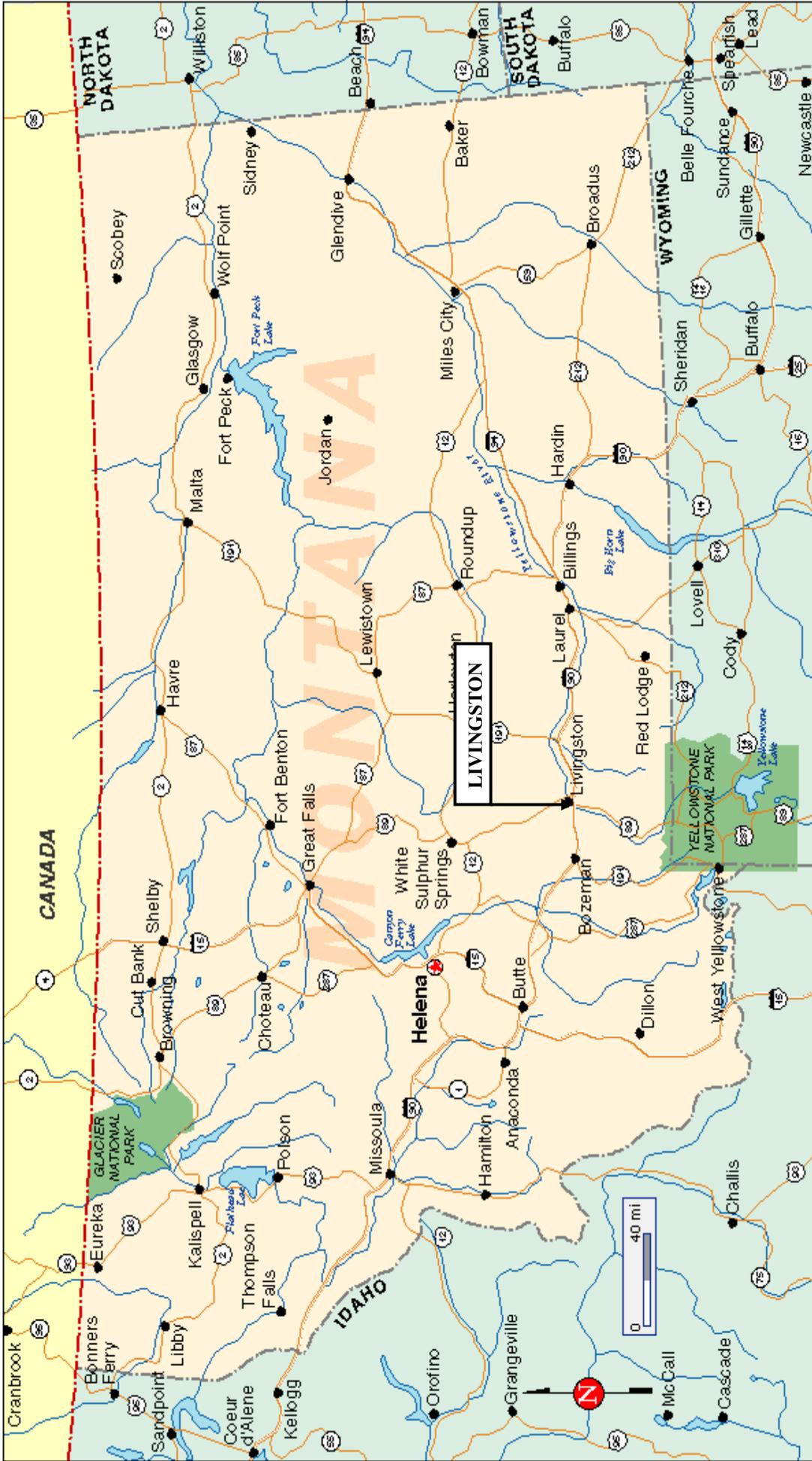
Based on this growth rate the design population is expected to be 9,022 persons by the year 2025. Existing biosolids production data indicates a per capita contribution of 94 pounds per person per year. At the current population of approximately 7,300 persons, approximately 343 tons of biosolids per year are produced. By the year 2025, it is estimated that 424 tons of biosolids per year will be generated.

C. NATURAL FEATURES

The existing WWTF consists of an activated sludge treatment facility with rotating biological contactor technology for enhanced biological treatment. The Yellowstone River at the point of discharge is classified as a B-1 stream under Montana's stream classification standards. Final approval of the classification by the EPA is still pending. B-1 classified waters are suitable for drinking, culinary, and food processing purposes after conventional treatment; bathing, swimming, and recreation; growth and propagation of salmonid fishes and associated aquatic life, waterfowl, and furbearers; agricultural and industrial water supply.

Site topography is relatively flat within the footprint of the proposed project area. Approximately 300 feet east of the proposed improvements the topography drops off gently to the Yellowstone River. The elevation of Livingston is approximately 4,500 feet above sea level. Soils within the project planning area are poorly drained, stony flood plain materials consisting of gravel, cobbles and stony loams. Groundwater within the planning area is heavily influenced by the Yellowstone River and its seasonal fluctuations. Most recharge within the basin occurs between April and July. The eastern edge of the WWTF grounds have flooded twice in recent history during extreme high water events (1996 & 1997), but that flooding has been limited to the disinfection facility and plant overflow pond. The composting facility is located above the 100 year floodplain.

Environmental impacts anticipated from the construction of the new composting facility and improvements to the solids handling process are expected to be minimal and of short duration. The new composting facility is not expected to affect natural features in the area.



**FIGURE 1
LOCATION MAP**

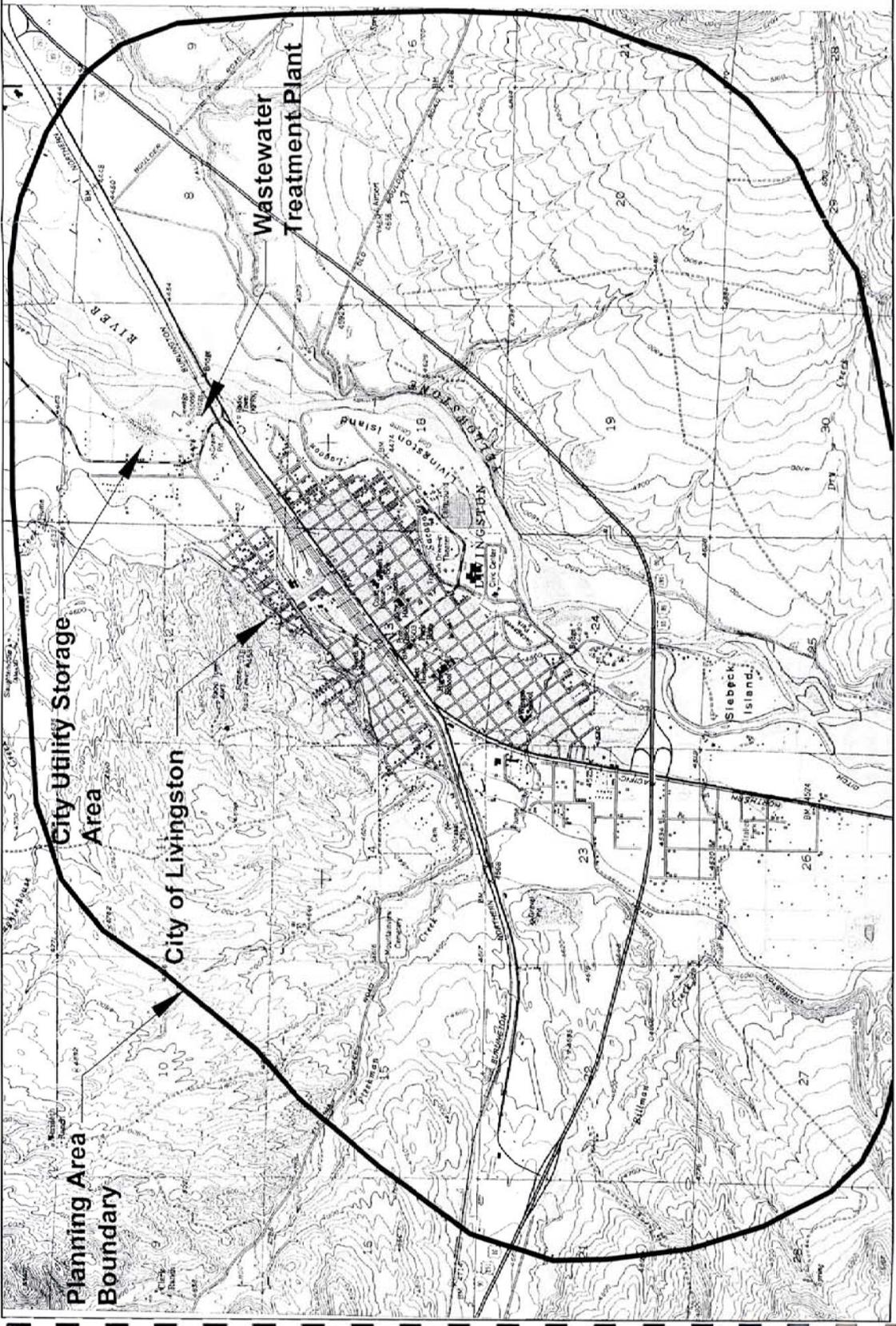


FIGURE 2
PLANNING AREA & LOCATION OF WWTP

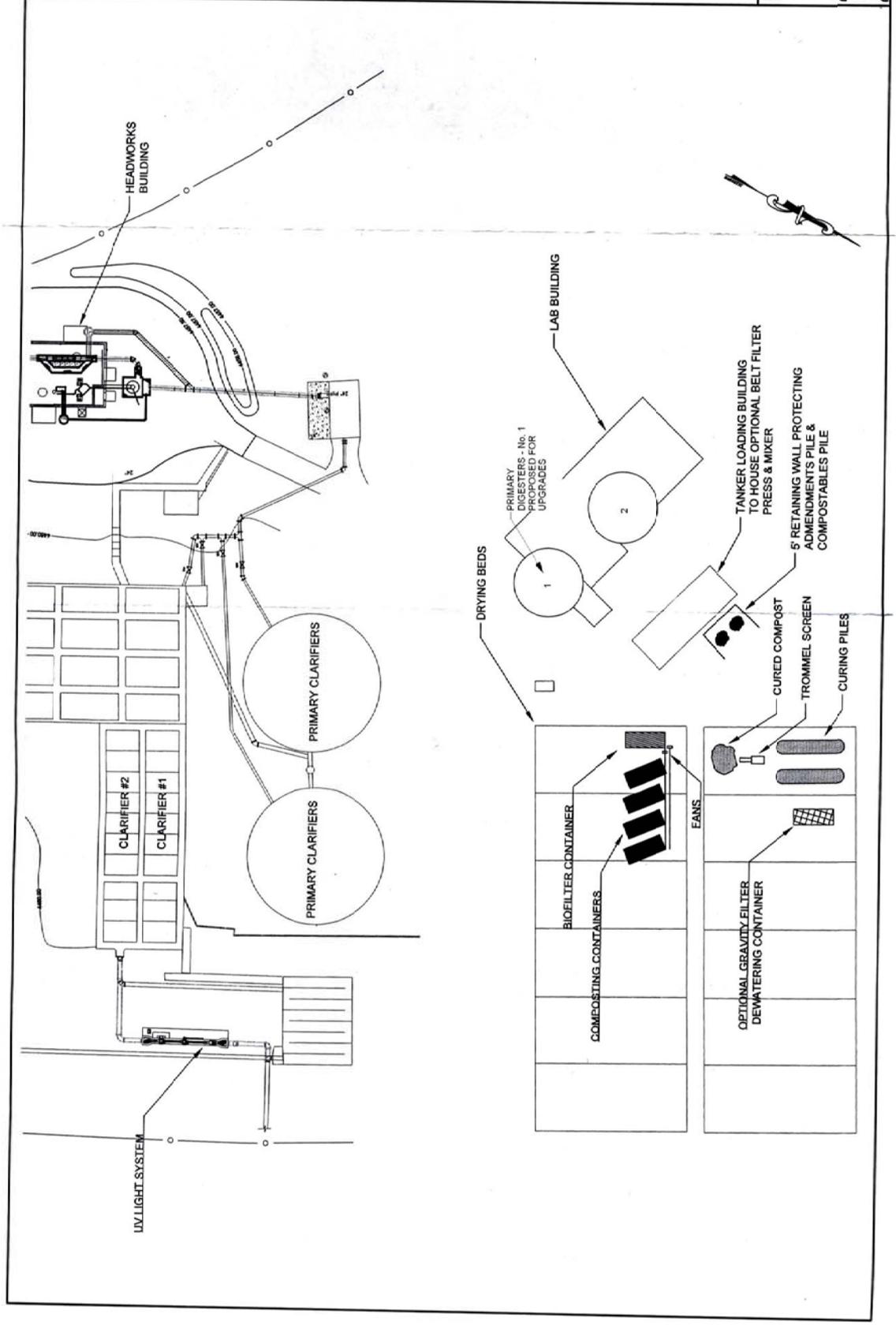


FIGURE 3
PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF PROPOSED PROJECT

A. DIRECT AND INDIRECT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. Land Use – The proposed improvements will be constructed within the footprint of the existing WWTF grounds and will re-use much of the existing infrastructure. The construction of this improved facility will provide for expected normal growth within the community and immediate surrounding area. The proposed facility will not impact prime farmland. The City owns the site where the existing WWTF is located and the site where the proposed facility will be located; therefore no additional land will be required for the proposed project.
2. Floodplain – The proposed project is located just outside of a delineated 100-year floodplain according to the FEMA Floodway Maps and State of Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation floodplain management section. Therefore, this project would not require a floodplain development permit.
3. Wetlands – No wetlands exist within the immediate area or adjacent areas. Therefore wetlands will not be affected by the proposed project.
4. Vegetation – Vegetation will not be significantly affected by the proposed project. The Montana Natural Heritage Program listed no plants of concern.
5. Cultural Resources – According to the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), there appears to be no properties on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places within the project area. Also, SHPO stated in a May 9, 2005 record that “We feel there is a low likelihood cultural properties will be impacted in the area..., We, therefore, feel that a recommendation for a cultural resource inventory in these areas is unwarranted at this time.”
6. Fish and Wildlife – The Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) listed the Yellowstone cutthroat trout, Canada lynx and peregrine falcon as species of concern within the project planning area. There is not a known falcon nesting site within the radius of concern from the project site. Aquatic and animal life will not be significantly affected by the proposed project. The project will not significantly affect any wildlife habitats. Containerizing composted materials will have the added benefit of preventing common raccoon, skunk and other mammals from habituating the project site.
7. Water Quality – Water quality will not be impacted due to the proposed project. The frequent removal of solids from the WWTF will allow better performance of the existing facility.
8. Air Quality – Short term negative impacts on air quality will occur during construction from heavy equipment in the form of dust and exhaust fumes. Proper construction practices will minimize this problem. Project specifications will require dust control.
9. Public Health – Public health impacts will be minimized with the proposed project. The advanced level of biosolids treatment will reduce the risk of pathogen exposure to workers and the public.
10. Energy – A direct short-term impact of energy resources will be consumed during the construction phase. In the long-term, an increase in energy consumption will occur primarily due to the mechanical components of the composting system. This increased energy consumption will be somewhat offset by a reduction in transportation energy as a result of no longer hauling biosolids from the facility. Energy consumption will be minimized as much as possible through the use of energy efficient equipment (augers, heating, lighting, etc...).
11. Sludge (Biosolids) Disposal – The sludge will continue to be disposed of in accordance with EPA’s 503 regulations. Disposal of the dried sludge from the facility via development of a reusable compost

product will enhance beneficial reuse and reduce landfill and soil disposal methods currently in use.

12. Noise – Short-term increases in noise levels may occur during the construction activities. Construction will be limited to normal day-time hours to avoid early morning or late evening construction disturbances. In the long-term, noise levels will be unchanged.
13. Growth – Growth within the City of Livingston study area averaged 1% between 2000 and 2005. Based on these past growth rates, the City service population as it relates to the WWTF is expected to increase approximately 1 percent per year during the life of the improvements.

The anticipated increase in population and development in the service area would result in increased flows and concurrently solids loading to the WWTF. Secondary impacts may include impacts to: housing, commercial development, agriculture lands, solid waste, transportation, and utilities.

14. Cumulative Effects – Expansion of the solids handling process may result in secondary and cumulative impacts associated with the growth of the community. Growth impacts include: increased air emissions from additional traffic, increased water consumption, increased discharge of treated effluent into the Yellowstone River and possible loss of agricultural and rural land uses. These impacts will need to be managed and minimized as much as possible through City policies and proper community planning.

B. UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

Short-term construction related impacts (i.e., noise, dust, traffic disruption, etc.) will occur but should be minimized through proper construction management. Energy consumption during construction cannot be avoided.

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A presentation on the draft Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) was made to the City of Livingston at a specially conducted March 3, 2008 public hearing. At the hearing the City's consulting engineers provided an overview of the project alternatives and discussed the recommendations in the PER. The meeting was fairly well attended and there was no documented opposition to the project.

VIII. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The following documents were utilized in the environmental review of this project and are considered to be part of the project file:

1. City of Livingston Co-composting Facilities Plan, prepared for the City of Livingston, by CTA Architects & Engineers, Livingston, Montana, February 2008.
2. City of Livingston 2009 WWTP Improvements Procurement Manual, prepared for the City of Livingston, by CTA Architects & Engineers, Livingston, Montana, June 2009.
3. Draft Environmental Assessment, Wastewater Collection and Treatment Plant Improvements, City of Livingston, prepared by Hyalite Environmental, LLP, August 5, 2005.

IX. AGENCIES CONSULTED

The following agencies have been contacted in regard to the PER, which determined the basis for the proposed wastewater treatment and collection system project:

1. The Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP) was consulted, but indicated they do not foresee any impacts to listed species of wildlife, or to nongame species of special interest or

concern.

2. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) was consulted, but concluded the proposed project would not negatively impact listed species, wetlands, or migratory birds and their habitats.
3. The Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) considered the impacts of the proposed project on historical sites and cultural resources and indicated there appears to be no properties on or are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places within the project area. The Montana State Historic Preservation Office asks to be contacted and the site investigated should cultural materials be inadvertently discovered during construction.
4. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) reviewed the proposed project and responded that if construction activities includes the discharge of fill material, either permanently or temporarily into waters of the United State and lakes or ponds connected to the tributary system, and wetlands adjacent to these waters, then a Department of Army Section 404 permit may be required. This project is not anticipated to result in fill being placed into waters of the U.S.
5. Montana Natural Heritage Program website was consulted by the city engineers and the database did not locate any riparian wetlands that the project would impact.
6. Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) reviewed the proposed project and determined that the project is not located in a designated 100-year floodplain and that the project will not have an impact on the 100-year floodplain for this area.

X. RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

Rationale for Recommendation: Through the Co-composting Facility Plan, prepared by CTA, Architects & Engineers, and the public process involved, the City of Livingston determined the preferred composting alternative will improve the operation and maintenance capabilities of their system. Through this EA, the MDEQ has verified none of the adverse impacts of the proposed WWTF Upgrade are significant; therefore an environmental impact statement is not required. Richard Knatterud, P.E., representing the Department of Commerce, Treasure State Endowment Program, reviewed the EA on July 8, 2009, and is in concurrence with the findings of the MDEQ. The environmental review was conducted in accordance with the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 17.4.607, 17.4.608, 17.4.609 and 17.4.610. This EA is the appropriate level of analysis because none of the adverse effects of the impacts are significant. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued and legally advertised in the local newspaper and distributed to a list of interested agencies. Comments regarding the project will be received for 30 days before final approval of the EA is granted.

EA Prepared By:

Terry Campbell, P.E.

Date

Approved By:

Mike Abrahamson, P.E.

Date