

January 13, 2023

Mr. Mike Hopkins, Chairman  
Long Range Planning Subcommittee  
P.O. Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Representative Hopkins and Long Range Planning Subcommittee:

The Corvallis County Sewer District is a sewer only district that provides service to 537 residential homes and a population of around 1,370 people. Formed in the late 1970's to protect groundwater resources the sewer system includes a gravity collection system with two lift stations and a lagoon treatment system. Groundwater is the sole source of drinking water for the community which still relies on individual wells and several disconnected transient public water supplies serving businesses and the school.

The lagoon treatment system is located such that all sewer from the community must be pumped via a single lift station to the facility. The force main that connects the community to the treatment system crosses the Eastside Highway and an irrigation ditch prior to reaching the treatment facility. With no isolation valves and unknown pipe conditions this single force main provides a long term threat to the community's ability to treat sewer and protect the shallow groundwater aquifer.

To meet the needs of protecting the shallow groundwater and the community's sole source of drinking water, the District is facing a \$1.123 M project to construct a new sewer force main between the central lift station and sewer treatment facility. This project would be constructed in areas that are less congested and encumbered by other private utilities and roadways. Additionally the new force main would be constructed with isolation valves at the highway crossing and irrigation ditch crossing allowing for isolation, maintenance, testing and future repair of the force main.

Like other bedroom communities near larger towns and cities in Montana, Corvallis has recently seen significant demand for expanding services and infill of remaining interior District parcels. A reliable, safe, efficient and affordable sewer collection system is essential to Corvallis. Residential services and the school all rely on this singular sewer force main and the threatened shallow groundwater aquifer.

Community members, the District's Board of Directors, operator and manager understand the importance of a fully functional and safe sewer collection and treatment system. This project is understood to be essential in completing a comprehensive approach to modernizing the District's sewer system to protect groundwater resources.

Based on Corvallis's population of low to moderate income residents, the District cannot afford this project without financial assistance. Without a grant, sewer rates would increase by over 58%. This is not an affordable path for the community.

Thank you for your consideration of this important sewer project for the community of Corvallis.

Sincerely,



Erik Hoover, Board President  
Corvallis County Sewer District