



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY
LANSING



PHILLIP D. ROOS
DIRECTOR

April 23, 2024

TO: All Interested Citizens, Organizations, and Government Agencies

SUBJECT: FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Standish Township, Arenac County
Sanitary Force Main to City of Pinconning WWTP
Clean Water State Revolving Fund Project Number 5955-01

The purpose of this notice is to seek public input and comment on a preliminary decision by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required to implement recommendations discussed in the attached Environmental Assessment of a wastewater project planning document submitted by the applicant mentioned above.

HOW WERE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES CONSIDERED?

Part 53, Clean Water Assistance, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, being Sections 324.5301 to 324.5316 of the Michigan Compiled Laws Annotated, requires EGLE to evaluate all environmental implications of a proposed wastewater project. EGLE has done this by incorporating a detailed analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed alternatives in its review and approval process. A project planning document containing information on environmental impacts was prepared by the municipality and reviewed by the State. EGLE has prepared the attached Environmental Assessment and found that the proposed project does not require the preparation of an EIS.

WHY IS AN EIS NOT REQUIRED?

Our environmental review concluded that no significant environmental impacts would result from the proposed action. Any adverse impacts have either been eliminated by changes in the project planning document or will be reduced by the implementation of the mitigative measures discussed in the attached Environmental Assessment.

HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

A map depicting the location of the proposed project is attached. This information is also available on our website at Michigan.gov/CWSRF under "Additional Links." The Environmental Assessment presents additional information on the project, alternatives that were considered, impacts of the proposed action, and the basis for our decision. Further information can be obtained by calling or writing one of the contact people listed below.

HOW DO I SUBMIT COMMENTS?

Any comments supporting or disagreeing with this preliminary decision should be submitted to me at EGLE, P.O. Box 30457, Lansing, Michigan 48909-4957. We will not

take any action on this project planning document for 30 calendar days from the date of this notice in order to receive and consider any comments.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

In the absence of substantive comments during this period, our preliminary decision will become final. The applicant will then be eligible to receive loan assistance from this Agency to construct the proposed project.

Any information you feel should be considered by EGLE should be brought to our attention. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. David J. Worthington, the project manager, at 517-554-1835; WorthingtonD@Michigan.gov; or you may contact me. Your interest in this process and the environment is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dan Beauchamp

Dan Beauchamp, Section Manager
Water Infrastructure Funding and Financing Section
Finance Division
517-388-3380

Attachment

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY
Clean Water State Revolving Fund
Environmental Assessment
Township of Standish, Arenac County
April 2024

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Applicant: Township of Standish

Address: P.O. Box 472
Standish, Michigan 48658

Authorized Representative: Mr. Robert North, Township Supervisor

Project No.: 5955-01

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Township of Standish (Standish) is located in Arenac County (Figure 1) in northeastern Michigan on the shore of Lake Huron/Saginaw Bay. Land use within the township is primarily zoned as agricultural, forest, and recreation. For purposes of this document, both the study and service area are known as Whites Beach where the system exists in the commercial area along Lake Huron's shore.

According to the United States Census Bureau's survey, Standish's population was approximately 1,690 persons in 2020. The township is predicted to experience a small decrease in population to a projected 1,616 by year 2045. Whites Beach does see seasonal increases in population during the summer months. The proposed project described below would serve approximately 600 people in Whites Beach (235 residential equivalent units).

Standish is seeking Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan assistance to finance the connection of its new wastewater collection system to the city of Pinconning (Pinconning) Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) with construction of a force main. The total project cost is estimated to be \$5,900,000. Standish has been determined by Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) criteria to be a financially overburdened community and will therefore be eligible for a reduced interest rate on the CWSRF loan. Standish is also eligible to receive a Substantial Public Health Risk Project (SPHRP) Grant to apply towards a pump station, building, holding tanks, and a portion of the force main and engineering costs of the project. As a result of the SPHRP grant, the anticipated CWSRF loan amount is estimated to be \$4,412,000. Construction is scheduled to begin in Fall 2024. System users can expect to see a monthly bill of approximately \$153 based on a 30-year CWSRF loan to pay for the project and its maintenance upkeep.

This project is being constructed in conjunction with a water system project that will be connecting a newly built water distribution system with a water line to Pinconning water distribution system that will eliminate private wells under threat from nitrates. This project is being financed in part by a loan from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund referred to as project number 7837-01. The details of that project are covered in a separate environmental assessment that is available upon request.

Existing Facilities/Project Need

Whites Beach area's sewer is a low-pressure collection system consisting of 3.5 miles of 2-inch to 6-inch diameter polyvinyl chloride pipe. Its collection system was constructed in 2022-2023 with funds made available by the United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development. One pump station is proposed, pending final design (outside of the CWSRF financing). Remaining customer residences would have a Simplex Grinder Pump. Everything built to date is brand new and in excellent condition. The system currently lacks a connection to a treatment facility. Possible connection points are discussed further in the alternatives section. Average wastewater flow is expected to range from 15,000 gallons per day (gpd) in the winter to 50,000 gpd in the summer. Township residents currently remain on septic tanks until a connection project for Whites Beach is built to begin usage of the public wastewater collection system. Township residents outside of Whites Beach would remain on onsite septic systems.

EGLE has performed soil sampling and determined that roughly 70 percent of existing wells and septic systems are failing in the area due to the presence of E-coli and high nitrates. Standish has been notified by EGLE and the health department that permits will no longer be issued for these facilities and a solution must be found. Most lots are too small to allow for a septic system and well to be constructed to meet health and sanitary codes. Private wells have violations ranging from lack of proper isolation distance from a contamination source to failed bacteriological samples. Most residents do not drink the water or use it for cooking or bathing.

PROPOSED PROJECT

A. Project Alternatives

The following alternatives were evaluated for the project.

No-action Alternative

Selecting a no-action alternative has the advantage of requiring no immediate capital investment. However, the problem with no action is that public health and the environment will suffer from the contaminated water, failing septic systems, small lot sizes and shallow wells, and unlawful untreated wastewater discharges to the Great Lakes will continue unabated. For these reasons, this alternative is rejected.

Construct a Pump Station and Mechanical Treatment Plant

For this alternative, a pump station would be built to pump the wastewater to a newly constructed WWTP. Standish does not own any property suitable for the land acreage needed for a treatment plant. A land purchase would likely be required outside the service area to avoid the 100-year floodplain. Because the groundwater is high in the area, dewatering is likely to be required for construction.

Construct a Pump Station and Wastewater Stabilization Lagoon

This alternative is like the previous one discussed except treatment would be at a lagoon consisting of a minimum of two cells with inlet and outlet piping. Siting of land suitable for this purpose and a land purchase necessary to build would add to the complexity.

Regional Alternatives: Connect to City of Standish, Pinconning or to the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe in Saganing

Whites Beach low pressure sanitary collection system could be connected to the city of Standish's WWTP approximately 5.2 miles away with a directionally drilled force main.

Whites Beach could likewise be connected to the Pinconning WWTP, approximately 6 miles away, with a directionally drilled force main.

Whites Beach could also connect to the Saganing Eagle Landing Casino treatment facility, owned by the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, located approximately 1 mile away. However, the tribe would not agree to a long-term contract with the township thus causing this alternative to be rejected as socially infeasible.

Table 1 displays the present worth cost comparison (CWSRF portion only) of the following alternatives: building a PS/Mechanical Plant, building a PS/Lagoon, connecting to City of Standish WWTP, and connecting to Pinconning’s WWTP.

Table 1: Present Worth Cost Analysis Comparison of Principal Alternatives

Component	Alternative 1- Connect to Pinconning	Alternative 2- Connect to Standish	Alternative 3- New PS/WWTP	Alternative 4-New PS/Lagoon
Initial Capital Cost	\$4,412,000	\$6,078,000	\$11,371,800	\$9,593,700
Annual O&M Cost	\$254,659	\$301,867	\$272,867	\$202,867
Present Worth of O&M	\$4,160,000	\$4,940,000	\$4,460,000	\$3,320,000
Present Worth of Salvage Value	\$1,399,780	\$1,399,780	\$1,547,834	\$1,345,943
Total Present Worth	\$7,172,220	\$9,618,220	\$14,283,966	\$11,567,757

It appears the connection to the Pinconning would be the most cost-effective alternative in terms of present worth over the length of the planning period compared to other feasible alternatives.

B. Selected Alternative

Standish has selected the connection to the Pinconning’s WWTP due to its cost-effectiveness over time and the city’s agreement and capacity to accept the flow. Figures 2A and 2B show the locations of the proposed improvements. A service agreement between the township and Pinconning has been executed.

The total cost of the eligible CWSRF portion of the project is estimated to be \$4,412,000, after deducting the SPHRP grant. Standish has been determined by EGLE criteria to be a financially overburdened community and will therefore be eligible for a reduced interest rate of 2.00 percent on the CWSRF loan which is a deduction of 0.75 percent from the standard CWSRF rate of 2.75 percent. Construction is scheduled to begin in Fall 2024. System users can expect to see a monthly bill of approximately \$153 based on a 30-year CWSRF loan to pay for the project and its maintenance upkeep.

Table 2. Selected Alternative Cost Breakdown- Connect to Pinconning

Component	Cost
Force Main	\$3,300,000
Railroad Crossing	\$33,000
Air Release Chambers	\$82,500
Cleanout Chambers	\$66,000
Fittings/Connections	\$28,875
Restoration	\$99,000
Legal/Administrative	\$85,000
Basic Engineering	\$158,976
Project Inspection	\$198,495
Contingency	\$360,900
Project Cost Estimate	\$4,412,000

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

A. Water Quality Impacts

Standish/Whites Beach area is experiencing E-coli and nitrates contamination making well water unsuitable for human consumption and resulting in unlawful discharges of wastewater to the environment including local water bodies and the Great Lakes.

All the proposed project locations are located within the vicinity of Lake Huron, Saganing River and Pinconning River. No construction related to this project is expected to negatively impact any waterbodies.

There are no anticipated harmful impacts to wetlands, floodplains, or Great Lakes shoreland. A minor permit could be required by EGLE for one or more culvert crossings along the route to keep impacts to a minimum and rendered insignificant.

B. Construction Impacts

The construction of the projects will result in the typical short-term construction impacts such as noise, dust, and increased vehicle traffic to the proposed project sites, as well as temporary road and driveway closures. Guidelines will be established for cover vegetation removal, dust reduction, traffic control, and accident prevention. Once construction is completed, the area will be returned to the pre-construction condition as much as possible.

Most of the ground disturbing activities proposed will be in existing roadways, utility easements, or the road right-of-way and will have no additional impact on the land. The new force main is designed to be High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) for drilling the pipe installations, causing minimal surface impact.

C. Endangered Species

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website was consulted for any federally threatened and/or endangered species located within the project area. The IPaC and USFWS response letter identified eight species, the Northern long-eared bat, Indiana bat, Tricolored bat, Monarch butterfly, Rufa red knot, Eastern massasauga, Eastern prairie fringed orchid, and the Pitcher's thistle to be located within Arenac County. The USFWS has determined there are not critical habitats within the project area for the identified species at the anticipated project locations.

The Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) was consulted to determine if any state recognized or endangered species could be affected by the proposed project. The MNFI response letter indicated several legally protected and/or rare natural features have been documented within 0.5 miles of the proposed project area, and that it is possible negative impacts could occur. The threatened and/or endangered and special concern species include the Black sandshell, last observed in 1932, Butler's garter snake, Bald eagle, and Blanding's turtle and the Great Lakes marsh habitat community. This project is expected to impact previously disturbed areas, existing roadways, and residential lawns. Therefore, no adverse impacts are expected to state threatened, endangered or species of special concern because of the project.

Should any federally or state threatened, endangered or species of special concern be found during the construction of the project the appropriate agencies will be contacted for guidance on how to mitigate any potential adverse impacts to the identified species.

D. Historical Preservation

The Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and eight federally recognized tribal nations have been contacted regarding any historical or cultural impact that might be related to this project. The SHPO has responded that no historical properties are affected within the area of potential effects for this undertaking. The only known historical site is the city of Omer's Masonic Hall which is over 8 miles away from Whites Beach.

No tribal responses were received by the time this document was published. Should either historical or cultural artifacts be encountered during the project construction, work will cease immediately and the SHPO and tribes will be contacted.

MITIGATION

The proposed project is not anticipated to cause harmful changes to the quality of nearby surface or groundwater, and, in fact, will be beneficial to those resources. A minor impact on local traffic may occur for residents and businesses during the construction of the proposed improvements. During construction, equipment will increase local noise and dust levels during operations. There will be a short-term adverse impact on air quality during the construction phase due to dust and construction equipment emissions generated during the minimal excavation operations. Work will be contained within small areas and contractors will perform the bulk of the work on one site at a time, minimizing disturbance to residents. Technical specifications will be followed concerning noise, dust control, cleaning, and debris removal, along with local township ordinances being followed.

During construction, any areas of known contamination will be mitigated using a combination of preventive measures, monitoring, and remediation techniques. The specific approach will depend on the type of contamination present.

1. Preventive Measures: To minimize the risk of contamination during construction, several preventive measures can be taken. These will include:
 - Implementing construction barriers, such as containment walls or barriers, to prevent the spread of contaminants.
 - Using clean materials and equipment that have not been exposed to contaminants.
 - Employing proper waste disposal practices to prevent contaminants from entering the environment.
 - Ensuring that workers are trained in proper safety procedures and wear appropriate personal protective equipment.

2. Monitoring: Continuous monitoring of air, soil, and water quality during construction to ensure that contaminants do not spread or cause harm. Procedures would include:
 - Regular testing of soil, groundwater, and surface water samples to detect the presence of contaminants.
 - Monitoring air quality to identify any potential health risks for workers and the public.
 - Conducting regular inspections of construction sites to ensure that preventive measures are being followed and that any potential sources of contamination are identified and addressed.

3. Remediation: If contamination is detected during construction, appropriate remediation measures should be taken to mitigate the risk. This may include:
 - Excavating and removing contaminated soil and replacing it with clean material.
 - Installing treatment systems, such as air strippers or carbon filters, to remove contaminants from air or water.

The presence of contaminants may affect the appropriateness of the pipe material and design specifications. Standish intends to specify HDPE for directional drilling of the force main, which is more resistant to the corrosive effects of contaminants than others. Precautions will be taken to protect public health, such as installing warning signs, providing educational materials to residents, and implementing regular monitoring and maintenance programs.

The main social impact, aside from the improvement in public health, will be financial to pay for the loan debt service and operation and maintenance of the facilities. There will be no dislocation of people during the construction. Minimal impact to residents is anticipated as the work will take place on existing township owned property or within the road right-of-way. Employment of some residents by the contractor(s) is a possibility for certain construction operations.

No indirect impact on development, land use, cultural, human, or ecological resources is anticipated.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A formal public meeting on project need, project alternatives, environmental impacts and user costs was held on April 18, 2023, at the Standish Township Hall. The public meeting was advertised on Standish's website 15 days prior. A copy of the draft project planning document

was made available to the public at the town hall and on the Standish web site. No written comments from the public were received before, during, or after the public meeting. Questions and comments received during the meeting were addressed. After the close of the public comment period, the recommended alternative was selected for implementation by the Standish Township Board.

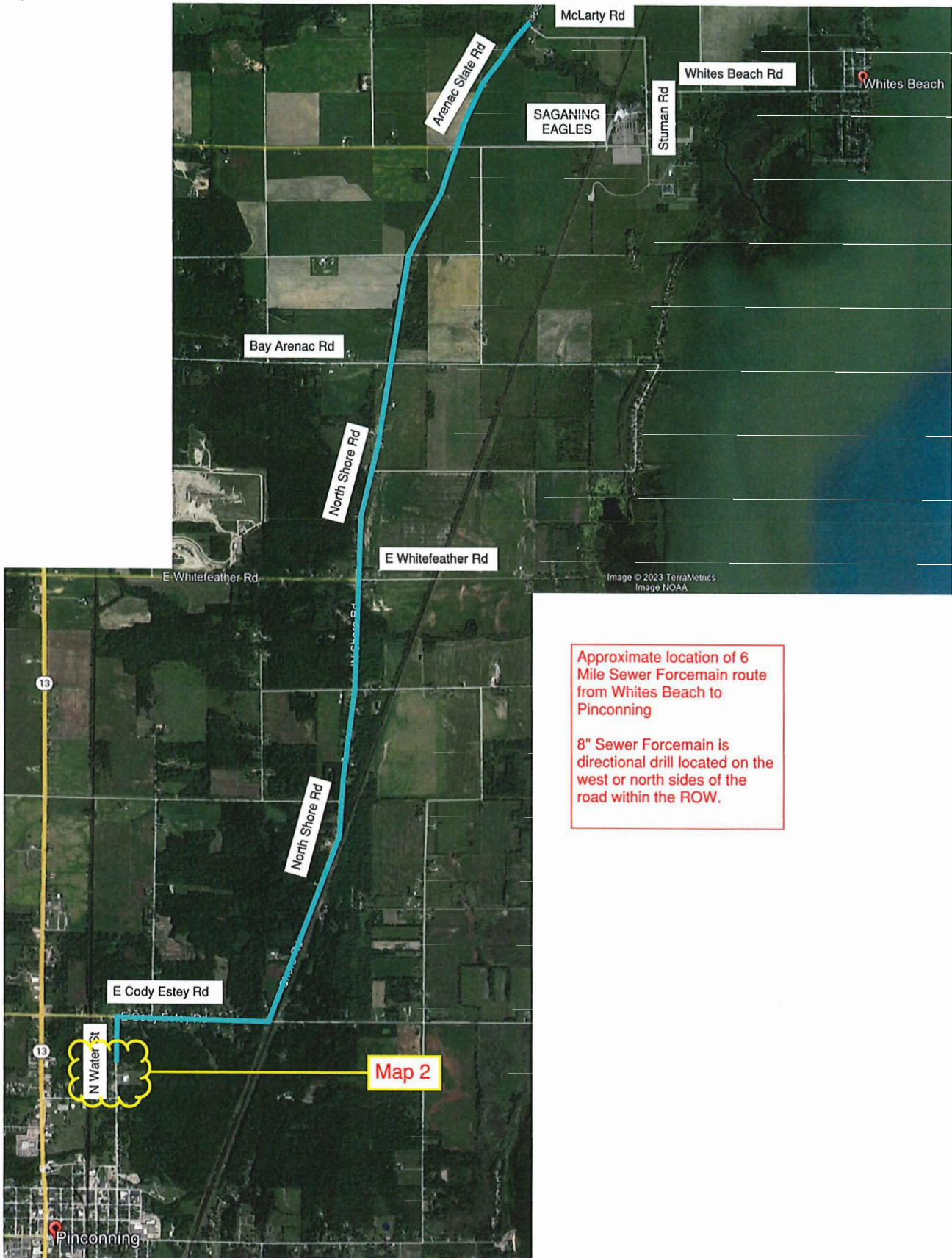
REASONS FOR CONCLUDING NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

The proposed project has minimal temporary negative environmental impacts but offers substantial benefits of providing a safe, reliable connection to the Pinconning for the beach residents on failing onsite septic systems causing E-coli contamination and protects the water quality of the area. These improvements will protect public health.

Questions regarding this Environmental Assessment should be directed to:

Mr. David J. Worthington, Project Manager
Water Infrastructure Funding and Financing Section
Finance Division
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
P.O. Box 30457
Lansing, Michigan 48909-4957
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Figure 2A



Standish Township - Whites Beach Sewer Forcemain Project

Figure 2B

Map 2 - Enlarged View Stop Work Area Area Whispering Pines Blvd

