

**Pete Ricketts**  
Governor

# STATE OF NEBRASKA

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**  
**Jim Macy**

*Director*

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## CLEAN WATER STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM

### CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

**TO:** All Interested Citizens, Government Agencies and Public Groups

In accordance with the Nebraska Clean Water State Revolving Fund environmental review process, which is based on the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental review has been performed on the proposed agency action below:

This information reviews the environmental impact likely from a project. This project is planned to be federally funded wholly or in part through your tax dollars; therefore, you are entitled to take part in its review. If you have concerns about the environmental impact of this project, please provide them at this time. The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality encourages public input in this decision-making process.

<b>PROJECT NAME:</b>	Sanitary Sewer Lift Station Replacement
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	Oconto, Nebraska
<b>COUNTY:</b>	Custer
<b>POPULATION:</b>	151 (2010 census)
<b>NDEQID NO.:</b>	71895
<b>CWSRF PROJECT NUMBER:</b>	C317682
<b>TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT:</b>	\$268,750
<b>ESTIMATED CWSRF LOAN AMOUNT:</b>	\$168,750
<b>ESTIMATED CWSRF LOAN FORGIVENESS:</b>	\$100,000

The Village of Oconto, Nebraska, is planning to replace their sanitary sewer lift station. The Village has applied for financial assistance through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan program to fund the project. Oconto's existing lift station pumps, piping, and valves are in need of replacement and requires entry into the wet well for maintenance. The project will remove the existing single pump and piping and abandon the existing undersized wet well. A new larger wet well precast reinforced concrete barrel will be constructed adjacent to the old wet well. Two new submersible pumps on slide rails will be provided so maintenance can be conducted outside the new wet well. A separate valve vault will be provided outside the wet well for check valves and gate valves for each pump. The renovated wet well will not require entry by the operator as pumps and all control valves will be accessed and removable from outside of the hazardous confined space of the wet well. An emergency power generator will also be included in the project.

The project will have a positive impact on the environment. The project will result in continued wastewater treatment of Oconto's sewage flows with a lower risk of blockage or failure of the lift station pump or power outage, which could result in backup of untreated sewage into Village homes. Wastewater will continue to be pumped to Oconto's Lagoon Wastewater Treatment Facility.

The project is eligible for financing through the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) and is currently listed on the CWSRF SFY2015 Intended Use Plan. Oconto qualifies for a 20 year loan at a program interest rate of 1.5 percent. In addition to principal and interest payments, an administrative fee of 1 percent of the loan balance would be assessed each year. Oconto's median

household income is \$29,375, which qualifies Oconto for 50 percent CWSRF loan forgiveness. Forgiveness funds are dependent on availability at the time of loan closing.

Sewer use fees would be pledged to repay the loan. Current residential sewer use rates are a flat rate of \$5.00 per month. The Village of Oconto has approximately 82 sewer connections. Sewer rates would need to be raised by \$12.82 per month to cover the proposed CWSRF debt service and 10 percent coverage requirement. This would equate to residential sewer rate of \$17.82 per month.

The proposed project was reviewed for eligibility for a categorical exclusion from National Environmental Policy Act review specified in 40 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 6.204. The project meets all criteria described in the above reference and the Department has determined that this project is eligible for categorical exclusion. Consequently, a preliminary decision has been made that a Finding of No Significant Impact will not be prepared. The project as proposed is solely directed toward replacement of the existing lift station.

Justification for categorical exclusion includes:

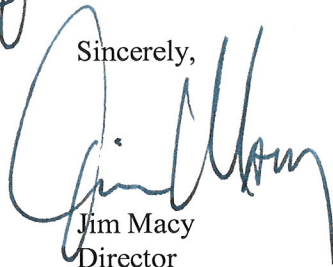
- The proposed action is not known or expected to have potentially significant environmental impacts on the quality of the human environment either individually or cumulatively over time;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect federally listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect national natural landmarks or any property with nationally significant historic, architectural, prehistoric archeological or cultural value, including but not limited to, property listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect environmentally important natural resource areas as wetlands, floodplains (the lift station is adjacent to the 100 year floodplain and will be flood proofed to 1 foot above the base flood elevation), prime farmland, wild and scenic rivers, and significant fish or wildlife habitat;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to have a significant effect on the pattern and type of land use (industrial, commercial, agricultural, recreational, residential) or growth and distribution of population including altering the character of existing residential areas, or may not be consistent with state or local government, or federally-recognized Indian tribe approved land use plans or federal land management plans.
- The proposed action is not known or expected to cause significant public controversy about a potential environmental impact of the proposed action.

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality shall revoke the categorical exclusion and shall require a full environmental review if, subsequent to the granting of exclusion, the state determines that the proposed project no longer meets the requirements for a categorical exclusion due to changes in the proposed project; or new evidence reveals that serious local or environmental issues exist; or federal, state, local or tribal laws are being violated.

This action is taken on the basis of careful review of the application and other supporting data, which are on file in the office of the NDEQ. These are available for public review upon request. Persons having a comment on this categorical exclusion determination are encouraged to submit such comments directly to Tom Fuenning, Review Engineer, of the Technical Assistance Section of NDEQ, who can be reached at (402) 471-4989 or email: [tom.fuenning@nebraska.gov](mailto:tom.fuenning@nebraska.gov).

Signed this 10<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2015.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Macy", is written over the typed name and title.

Jim Macy  
Director

JM/tsf

Attachments: Distribution List  
Map

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DISTRIBUTION LIST

OCONTO, NEBRASKA

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Midwest Regional Office  
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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
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Lenexa, KS

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
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APPLICANT:  
Village of Oconto  
Chairperson Jim Rempe  
PO Box 128  
Oconto, NE 68860-0128

CONSULTING ENGINEER:  
Chris Miller, P.E.  
Miller & Associates  
1111 Central Avenue  
Kearney, NE 68847

LOCAL NEWSPAPER  
Custer County Chief  
305 So. 10th  
Broken Bow, NE 68822  
(Public Information Only not for Public Notice)

CENTRAL PLATTE NRD  
215 No. Kaufman Ave.  
Grand Island, NE 68803

# PROJECT SUMMARY



6/2/2015

Oconto Lift Station Replacement

Miller & Associates Project No. 322-D1-002

