



Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

Agency of Natural Resources

WATER INVESTMENT DIVISION
National Life Building, DAVIS 3
1 National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-3510
FAX: (802)828-1552

Julie Hance, Town Manger
Authorized Representative
Town of Chester
PO Box 370
Chester, Vermont 05143

August 25, 2025
Expiration Date: August 25, 2030

**Re: Chester First Ave Pump Station, Force Main and Gravity Sewer Replacement aka
Wastewater Capital Improvement & Asset Management Plan Project
Vermont/ USEPA Clean Water Revolving Loan Number RF1-326**

Notice of Intent to Issue a Finding of No Significant Impact

Dear Julie:

The Department of Environmental Conservation intends to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the First Ave Pump Station, Force Main and Gravity Sewer Replacement aka Chester Wastewater Capital Improvement & Asset Management Plan Project. This project involves refurbishment and replacement of the First Avenue Pump Station and Force Main and the Depot Street Gravity Sewer and appurtenant work as: Contract 1 First Avenue Force Main; Contract 2 First Avenue Pump Station; and Contract 3 Depot Street Sewer.

The project has positive environmental impacts consisting of maintaining the existing wastewater infrastructure to protect public health and the environment.

This project additionally involves floodplains, wetland buffers, contaminated materials, and temporary impacts to air quality, and potential impacts to archeologically sensitive areas through project excavation, potential impacts to migratory birds and endangered species through tree and bush cutting. Otherwise, this project may have been eligible for Categorical Exclusion (CATEX) from detailed environmental review; additionally, the direct and indirect environmental effects of the project are still not significant enough to necessitate an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Please note the specific required mitigation measures in the referenced Environmental Information Document and discussed in the attached NOI.

Julie Hance, Authorized Representative, Town of Chester
First Ave PS, Force Main and Gravity Sewer Replacement aka
Chester Wastewater Capital Improvement & Asset Management Plan
Finding of No Significant Impact
25-Aug-25

The Department's environmental review procedures require a 30-day public comment period following the issuance of a Notice of Intent to Issue a Finding of No Significant Impact. If no public comments received during that period demonstrate that this Notice of Intent is in error, then the Finding of No Significant Impact will become effective.

The attached Notice of Intent to Issue a Finding of No Significant Impact must be posted in manners that allow the public to be aware of the project and the proposed FNSI.

Copies of documents supporting a Finding of No Significant Impact are enclosed. Please keep copies of the enclosed documents, along with any pertinent reports by your consulting engineers, available for public inspection during a public comment period of 30 days. A full listing of the documents that must be available for public inspection is attached. Please call, 802-490-6226, if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Lynnette Claudon, PE
Senior Water Infrastructure Program Engineer
Water Investment Division

Enclosures

Documents Posted for Finding of No Significant Impact Public Comment Period (30 days)

1. Notice of Intent to Issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (Signed by Jeff Fehrs, P.E., Supervisor Design and Construction Engineering Section, Water Investment Division, enclosed.)
2. Evaluation of Eligibility for Finding of No Significant Impact (Approved by Jeff Fehrs, P.E., Supervisor Design and Construction Engineering Section, Water Investment Division, enclosed.)
3. State Environmental Review Procedures for Projects Funded Through the Vermont/ EPA Revolving Loan Program, <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/water-financing/srf/environmental-review>

Additional Documents Needed for Finding of No Significant Impact Public Comment Period (30 days)

4. Environmental Information Document titled "*Environmental Report and Environmental Information Document*", and dated August 20, 2025, by Dufresne Group.
<https://anrweb.vt.gov/DEC/IronPIG/DownloadFile.aspx?DID=214700&DVID=0> and Appendices:
<https://anrweb.vt.gov/DEC/IronPIG/DownloadFile.aspx?DID=214701&DVID=0>

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5. Preliminary Engineering Report entitled "*Capital Improvement Plan for Wastewater System Town of Chester, Vermont*", and dated April 5, 2024, by Dufresne Group.
<https://anrweb.vt.gov/DEC/IronPIG/DownloadFile.aspx?DID=208383&DVID=0>

COPY LIST

Heather Collins and Michelle Kovarie, Wastewater Program, VT-DEC
Terry Shearer, Regional Engineer, VT-DEC, Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division
Scott Dillon and Elizabeth Peebles, Division for Historic Preservation, ACCD
Mike Davis and Jeffery Holden, Chief Operator, Town of Chester
Naomi Johnson, Dufresne Group



Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

Agency of Natural Resources

Department of Environmental Conservation
Water Investment Division
1 National Life Drive, Davis 3
Montpelier, VT 05620

802-490-6226

Notice of Intent to Issue a Finding of No Significant Impact

Town of Chester

**Chester First Ave Pump Station, Force Main and Gravity Sewer Replacement aka
Chester Wastewater Capital Improvement & Asset Management Plan Project**

Vermont/ USEPA Clean Water Revolving Loan Number: RF1-326

In accordance with section VII of the Department's *"Environmental Review Procedures for Projects Funded Through the Vermont/EPA Revolving Loan Program"*, the Department of Environmental Conservation intends to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed Chester First Ave Pump Station, Force Main and Gravity Sewer Replacement aka Chester Wastewater Capital Improvement & Asset Management Plan Project. This project involves refurbishment of the First Avenue Pump Station and Force Main and the Depot Street Gravity Sewer and appurtenant work as: Contract 1 First Avenue Force Main; Contract 2 First Avenue Pump Station; and Contract 3 Depot Street Sewer.

Under the Procedure, the project is ineligible for Categorical Exclusion (CATEX) from detailed environmental review. The project involves impacts to floodplains, wetland buffers, and temporary impacts to air quality, and potential impacts to archeologically sensitive areas through project excavation, potential impacts to migratory birds and endangered species through tree and bush cutting, and movement of contaminated soils and therefore exceeds the threshold for CATEX.

Also, the direct and indirect environmental effects of the project are not significant enough to necessitate an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), under the Department's environmental review procedures. The project will not increase the current permitted flow capacity of the treatment plant, and the project will not include sewer extensions.

Consideration of the FONSI included a review of the following documents:

1. Notice of Intent to Issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (Signed by Jeff Fehrs, P.E., Supervisor Design and Construction Engineering Section, Water Investment Division, enclosed.)

Town of Chester

First Ave PS, Force Main and Gravity Sewer Replacement aka

Chester Wastewater Capital Improvement & Asset Management Plan

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2. Evaluation of Eligibility for Finding of No Significant Impact (Approved by Jeff Fehrs, P.E., Supervisor Design and Construction Engineering Section, Water Investment Division, enclosed.)
3. State Environmental Review Procedures for Projects Funded Through the Vermont/ EPA Revolving Loan Program,
4. Environmental Information Document titled "Environmental Report and Environmental Information Document" and "Appendices", and dated August 20, 2025, by Dufresne Group.
5. Preliminary Engineering Report entitled "Capital Improvement Plan for Wastewater System Town of Chester, Vermont", and dated April 5, 2024, by Dufresne Group.
6. Draft 60% plans for Contracts 1-3 by Dufresne Group.
7. Assorted publicly available websites and documents too numerous to list.

Mitigation measures:

1. **Floodplains.** Project will be reviewed and approved by the local DRB prior to construction.
2. **Wetland Buffers.** Any subjurisdictional earthwork in or adjacent to wetland buffers flag the buffer area to prevent unnecessary disturbance to the buffer. Any jurisdictional earthwork will require a wetlands permit and any work will follow the permit requirements.
3. **Dust and Noise.** The temporary impacts to air quality are anticipated as a normal part of a construction project. Dust control measures will be used to keep dust down. Noise will be controlled through restrictions on the contractor to work between 7am and 5pm on weekdays excluding federal and state holidays.
4. **Archaeological and Cultural Resources.** potential impacts to archeologically sensitive areas through project excavation, Some areas of the project site require additional studies that will be made public to any identified interested parties. The town will coordinate with VHPD and interested parties relative to any proposed mitigation measures if required.
5. **Endangered Bats and Migratory Bird Habitat.** Care shall be taken to avoid any impacts to bat habitat and migratory bird habitat by performing any clearing and grubbing during times that will not impact seasonal bat habitat or bird nesting seasons. Alternatively, the specific areas can be determined to be safe for clearance and documentation by a qualified biologist. Any accidental takings of birds related to this project must be reported.
6. **Movement of contaminated soils.** Contractor shall be required to submit a soils management plan to the DEC sites management section for approval for the wasting of any Urban Background soils. Known petroleum contaminated sites are located along parts of the project path, if any petroleum contaminated soils are found, they will be handled in accordance with the hazard waste section of the EJCDC contract documents.

Town of Chester

First Ave PS, Force Main and Gravity Sewer Replacement aka
Chester Wastewater Capital Improvement & Asset Management Plan
Notice of Intent to Issue a Finding of No Significant Impact
25-Aug-25

Further information on the project and this Notice of Intent is available for inspection at the following locations:

Julie Hance, Town Manger
Town of Chester
PO Box 370
Chester, Vermont 05143

tel. 802-875-2173
julie.hance@chestervt.gov

Lynnette Claudon, PE
Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
Water Investment Division
1 National Life Drive, Davis 3
Montpelier, VT 05620-3510

tel. 802-490-6227
Lynnette.Claudon@Vermont.gov

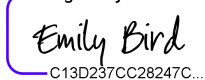
(Note: National Life requires photo identification to obtain an access badge for entry.)

Naomi Johnson
Dufresne Group
56 Main Street, Suite 200
Springfield, VT 05156

tel. 802-674-2904
njohnson@dufresnegroup.com

No significant administrative action will be taken on this project for thirty (30) days from issuance of this Notice of Determination, to allow for public response.

Signed by:


C13D237CC28247C...

Emily Bird, Director
Water Investment Division
Department of Environmental Conservation
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

8/28/2025

Date



Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

Agency of Natural Resources

TO: Emily Bird, Director
Water Investment Division

Initial
EB

FROM: Lynnette Claudon, PE,
Senior Water Infrastructure Program Engineer, Water Investment Division

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SUBJECT: Town of Chester
First Ave PS, Force Main and Gravity Sewer Replacement aka Chester
Wastewater Capital Improvement & Asset Management Plan Project
Environmental Assessment
Evaluation of Eligibility for Finding of No Significant Impact

DATE: 25-Aug-25

A. Project Identification

Project Name: Town of Chester
First Ave PS, Force Main and Gravity Sewer Replacement aka
Chester Wastewater Capital Improvement & Asset Management Plan

Address: Julie Hance, Authorized Representative
Town of Chester
PO Box 370
Chester, Vermont 05143

Project Location: Town of Chester, Vermont

This project involves refurbishment of the First Avenue Pump Station and Force Main and the Depot Street Gravity Sewer and appurtenant work as: Contract 1 First Avenue Force Main; Contract 2 First Avenue Pump Station; and Contract 3 Depot Street Sewer.

Vermont/ USEPA Clean Water Revolving Loan Number: **RF1-326**

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B. Summary of Environmental Review

The Department of Environmental Conservation, Water Investment Division, has reviewed this proposed project in accordance with the Department's State Environmental Review Procedures for Projects Funded Through the Vermont/ EPA Revolving Loan Program.

Relative to the environmental impacts, the Department has reviewed the following planning documents:

- Environmental Information Document titled “Environmental Report and Environmental Information Document”, and Appendices dated 8/20/2025, by Dufresne Group.
- Preliminary Engineering Report entitled “Capital Improvement Plan for Wastewater System Town of Chester, Vermont”, and dated April 5, 2024 by Dufresne Group.
- Draft 60% Design Plans for Contracts 1-3 by Dufresne Group
- Other appurtenant documents and correspondence too numerous to list.

A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is the appropriate environmental review response for this project if the issues presented can be resolved with mitigation or permits. This project is not eligible for Categorical Exclusion from detailed environmental review because it involves impacts to floodplains, wetland buffers, and temporary impacts to air quality, and potential impacts to archeologically sensitive areas through project excavation, potential impacts to migratory birds and endangered species through tree and bush cutting, and movement of contaminated soils. Also, the project’s direct and indirect environmental effects do not necessitate issuance of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), consistent with the criteria as described in section XI of the Department’s environmental review procedures.

1. Project Description

The Town of Chester is located in Windsor County, Vermont in the Middle Branch Williams River basin of the Connecticut River watershed.

The proposed project will refurbish the First Avenue Pump Station, and associated force main and pipe repairs in First Avenue Pump Station sewershed in Town of Chester, Vermont. The project is needed to maintain the existing wastewater infrastructure. The project will result in continued pollution control of wastewater.

Town of Chester

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Work involves construction in a floodplain, adjacent to a wetland buffer, clearing of trees and shrubs that may provide bird and bat habitat, potential movement of contaminated soils.

This work is expected to be constructed with Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan.

Eligibility for clean water revolving loan (CWSRF) construction funding will be limited to the eligible clean water work as detailed in the Preliminary Engineering Report and to physical areas cleared through this environmental review process.

The contract documents will contain standard requirements to limit hours of construction and to control noise, dust and discharges of stormwater runoff or pollutants during construction.

2. Justification for Finding of No Significant Impact

We have determined that the proposed project meets the criteria for issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact.

Work involves construction in a floodplain, adjacent to a wetland buffer, clearing of trees and shrubs that may provide bird and bat habitat, potential movement of contaminated soils.

Otherwise, this project may have been eligible for Categorical Exclusion from detailed environmental review; additionally, the direct and indirect environmental effects of the project are still not significant enough to necessitate an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Specifically, the project will not increase the design hydraulic capacity of the wastewater treatment plant by more than 20 percent, and it will not increase the design organic treatment capacity (equivalent population served) by more than 30 percent. The project does not include sewer extensions.

The project will not create a new permanent discharge of stormwater or treated wastewater to surface waters or groundwater, and there will be no increase of effluent pollutant loadings (pounds per day) permitted to be discharged from associated wastewater treatment plant.

A public hearing on Contract 1 was held August 20, 2025 as part of a water board meeting at 6:30pm at the Chester Town Office and remotely via zoom as part of this FONSI process. A public hearing for Contracts 2 & 3 is scheduled for September 3, 2025 6:30 at the Chester Town Office and remotely via zoom.

Town of Chester

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3. Mitigation measures

- **Floodplains.** Project will be reviewed and approved by the local DRB prior to construction.
- **Wetland Buffers.** Any subjurisdictional earthwork in or adjacent to wetland buffers flag the buffer area to prevent unnecessary disturbance to the buffer. Any jurisdictional earthwork will require a wetlands permit and any work will follow the permit requirements.
- **Dust and Noise.** The temporary impacts to air quality are anticipated as a normal part of a construction project. Dust control measures will be used to keep dust down. Noise will be controlled through restrictions on the contractor to work between 7am and 5pm on weekdays excluding federal and state holidays.
- **Archaeological and Cultural Resources.** Potential impacts to archeologically sensitive areas through project excavation. Some areas of the project site require additional studies that will be made public to any identified interested parties. The town will coordinate with VHPD and interested parties relative to any proposed mitigation measures if required.
- **Endangered Bats and Migratory Bird Habitat.** Care shall be taken to avoid any impacts to bat habitat and migratory bird habitat by performing any clearing and grubbing during times that will not impact seasonal bat habitat or bird nesting seasons. Alternatively, the specific areas can be determined to be safe for clearance and documentation by a qualified biologist. Any accidental takings of birds related to this project must be reported.
- **Movement of contaminated soils.** Contractor shall be required to submit a soils management plan to the DEC sites management section for approval for the wasting of any Urban Background soils. Known petroleum contaminated sites are located along parts of the project path, if any petroleum contaminated soils are found, they will be handled in accordance with the hazard waste section of the EJCDC contract documents.