

**TOWN OF WAITSFIELD
MUNICIPAL WATER SYSTEM
ACT 250 PROJECT NARRATIVE
APRIL 2009**

Background

The Town of Waitsfield is currently planning several municipal infrastructure projects within the Town's two village districts, Irasville and historic Waitsfield Village. Proposed improvements include a community water system, a transportation improvement project including sidewalk and streetscape improvements, and a VTrans sponsored repaving project. The Town had been planning for a community wastewater system as well for these village areas; however, due to a failed bond vote and lack of funding, the project has been suspended at this time.

This narrative will address the community water system, which includes the following components:

- Source water will be obtained from a drilled well located on Reed Road off of Long Road with a permitted yield of 186 gallons per minute. This well is sufficient to provide the projected future demands of the proposed service area.
- Approximately 6,100 linear feet of new 6-inch water transmission main from the well to the proposed storage tank site.
- A proposed storage tank located off of Bushnell Road with approximately 400,000 gallons of storage capacity to provide fire protection.
- Approximately 12,300 linear feet of new 12-inch water transmission main from the storage tank to the distribution system.
- A new distribution system including approximately 9,000 linear feet of water main, hydrants, valves, and appurtenances.

A general plan showing the service area limits and major project components of the proposed water system is attached. Water service would also be available outside of the service area along the water main transmission route, and there is potential for water system service to be expanded in the future to supply additional properties outside of the service area based on need and the cost effectiveness of providing service. All utilities will be constructed within Town-owned land, Town or State rights-of-way, or through acquisition of permanent utility and access easements.

Public Need Served by the Project

All water systems in the service area are currently privately owned, and historically, many of the drinking water supplies are spring-fed from the adjacent hillsides of the valley. As development in the Valley occurred and sanitation demand increased, many of the properties in the Village areas drilled wells. This was generally an improvement over the gravity-fed springs;

however, the proximity to septic fields, highways, fuel storage tanks, and other potential sources of contamination increased the chances of compromising the quality of water supplies. Many of the drilled wells do not meet current regulatory isolation distances, and there have been several unverified reports of poor water quality and/or quantity in Irasville and Waitsfield Village which have required correction.

As a part of planning for this project, an inventory of all properties within the designated growth center was developed and a summary of existing conditions for both water supply and wastewater was prepared. The survey included mapping of the individual's property, and the respondents were asked to sketch the size, type, and location of both their water and sewer systems, existing permit information, and noted problems with their water and/or wastewater systems

Attached is a graphical representation of the water and wastewater system inventory. The map indicates if a property has compromised isolation distances between their water supply and their own or a neighboring wastewater system. There are several reasons why the existing individual supplies and small public water systems are not suitable for continued use, as follows:

- Existing development using on-site sewage disposal systems within currently established source protection areas threatens groundwater source quality for these properties. It is clear from the inventory there are several properties that have inadequate isolation between their water supply and either their own or a neighboring septic disposal system. On September 12, 2005, the Selectboard adopted a resolution affirming that the proximity of subsurface sewage disposal systems to drinking water sources within densely populated sections of the town constituted an "emergent condition" which creates a potential public health risk.
- Over the past several years, many new federal rules and regulations have been implemented that are affecting a greater number of systems, including Non-Transient Non-Community and Transient Non-Community systems. The new regulations require an increasing amount of periodic monitoring and reporting for these small systems, and the Water Supply Division is still dealing with a high number of systems that are not performing the required monitoring requirements. A "failure to report" is still considered a violation.
- The Water Supply Division is encouraging the consolidation of existing public systems as the compliance monitoring requirements are becoming more comprehensive and costly each year. Further, many of the small water systems would not meet the current definition of having the technical, financial, or managerial "capacity" requirements for operating a viable water system.

In summary, a public community water system for the designated growth center is needed to prevent the health risks of compromised isolation distances and provide the basic infrastructure needed for the Town to encourage reasonable growth within the designated growth center.

Public Awareness of the Project

Over the past several years, public participation efforts have included:

- Although there have been studies dating back to the early 1980s, the current planning effort was initiated in the mid-1990s.
- In 1998, the Town passed a bond vote to purchase the proposed disposal site for the wastewater project, the Munn site.
- A Municipal Water and Wastewater Systems Task Force was formed in 2001, and the Task Force began holding regular meetings.
- Water and Wastewater Planning Forums were held in the Town of Waitsfield on March 18, 2004 and April 1, 2004. The forums were attended by members of Waitsfield's Selectboard, Planning Commission, and the Municipal Water and Wastewater Systems Task Force. The purpose of the forums was to review the basic data and assumptions regarding both the wastewater and water supply study concepts and work toward a consensus of approach.
- A comprehensive survey of water and wastewater needs throughout the proposed service area was mailed to 1,150 people before the 2004 Facilities Plan was issued.
- In the fall of 2006, the Town hired a Municipal Project Manager (MPM) for the proposed projects. The MPM assisted with a variety of technical and administrative functions on the project. At Town meeting in March 2007, voters approved a line item in the Town budget to fund the position.
- In June 2007, there was a public informational meeting regarding the water and wastewater projects.
- Between June 2007 and March 2008, landowners in the service area were contacted to review the connection system policies, and requests for service connection agreements were solicited.
- In March 2008, a bond vote was held; both the water bond article and two wastewater bond articles were voted down by the public.
- After consideration by the Task Force and Selectboard, a revised project scope was presented, and a bond vote for the water project only was held in June 2008. This vote was defeated. A citizen petition was filed to re-vote the water project, and the Town held a bond vote on Election Day in November 2008. With greater than 80% of the voting public casting a vote, the water bond article passed by a count of 595 to 558.

Construction Phasing/Schedule

There are several construction projects within the project area that are proposed in the coming years:

1. The Proposed Water Project.
2. A VTrans-funded sidewalk improvement project is planned within Irasville and Waitsfield Village. The planning is near completion; however, construction is on hold until construction of the water project is completed as there are areas where the water line will be installed adjacent to the proposed improvements to the sidewalk.
3. A re-paving project of Route 100 is planned within the proposed service area. The Vermont Agency of Transportation has informed the Town of Waitsfield that the project has been re-scheduled for 2011 to allow the previous two projects to be implemented.

Attached is a proposed implementation schedule of the Town's planned infrastructure projects.

Water Source Availability

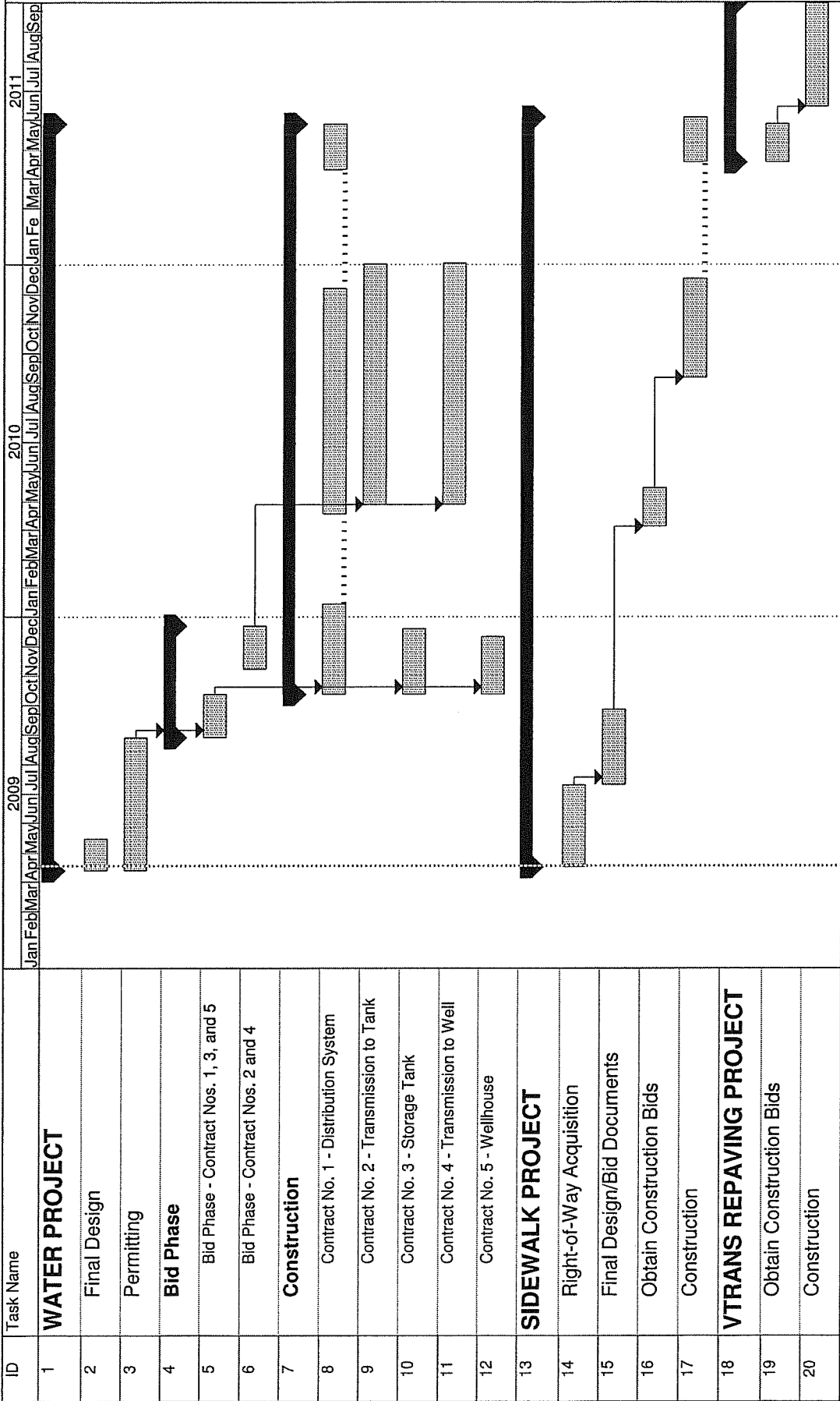
Construction of the water source required the Town obtain two permanent easements by eminent domain to obtain a Source Permit from the Water Supply Division. The Town has constructed the proposed water supply well in an existing right-of-way off a Class 4 road and is required to own or control a 125-foot radius around the well. This includes land that is suitable for the public water source, but is currently privately owned.

The Source Permit has been appealed in Environmental Court (Docket No. 134-7-08 Vtec) on the basis that the Town lacks ownership and control of the source isolation easement area. The Environmental Court has issued a stay of the Source Permit until the companion cases challenging the condemnation process in Washington County Superior Court have been fully resolved or the Town can demonstrate that the public water supply regulations do not require that the Town hold an ownership interest in the source protection easement area. A motion to lift the stay filed by the Town is currently pending before the Environmental Court.

Environmental Assessments

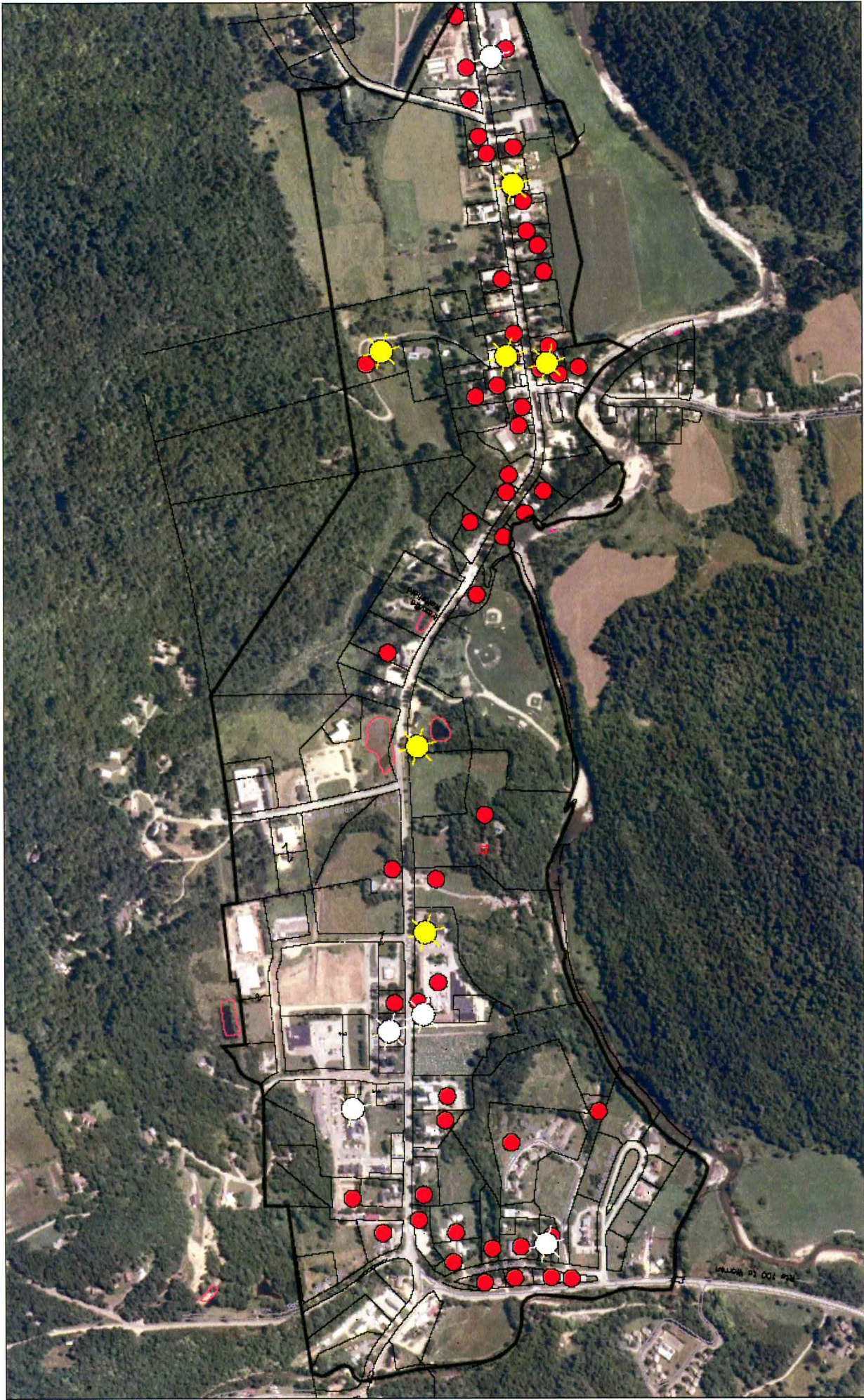
This project will be receiving federal funding from USDA Rural Development (RD) and from EPA through a State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) program. Each federal funding agency is conducting an independent Environmental Assessment of the project. RD has completed its review phase, and the project is currently under public notice. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is expected by mid-April 2009. EPA's Environmental Assessment will not be completed within the same timeframe as their review, and issuance of a FONSI is conditioned on receiving an Act 250 Permit.

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS
LONG RANGE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE



Task
Split
Progress

Project: 99003 Project Schedule 04-11
Date: Fri 4/17/09



- COMPROMISED WELL/SEPTIC ISOLATION
- ACTIVE VERMONT HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES
- INACTIVE VERMONT HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES