



# State Revolving Fund Loan Programs

## Drinking Water, Wastewater, Nonpoint Source

### PRELIMINARY DECISION OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

TO ALL INTERESTED CITIZENS, ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES:

#### CITY OF BLUFFTON SEWER SYSTEM EVALUATION STUDY

#### PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING REPORT AMENDMENT #1 SRF # WW 14 18 90 01

**Date: October 13, 2014**

Pursuant to IC 4-4-11, the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan Program has determined that the project described here and in the city's preliminary engineering report will have no substantial negative environmental impact. Therefore, the SRF is issuing a preliminary decision of Categorical Exclusion from the requirements of substantive environmental review.

*How were environmental issues considered?*

The National Environmental Policy Act requires agencies disbursing Federal funds to include environmental factors in the decision making process. A summary of the project is attached for your review. The SRF's preliminary review has found that the proposed project does not require the preparation of either an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement.

*Why is additional environmental review not required?*

Our environmental review has concluded that significant environmental impacts will not result from the proposed action.

*How do I submit comments?*

Comments can be submitted to:

April Douglas,  
Senior Environmental Manager  
SRF Programs  
317-234-7294; adouglas@ifa.in.gov

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## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

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### I. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Name and Address:                   **Sewer System Evaluation Study  
Preliminary Engineering Report  
Amendment #1**  
City of Bluffton  
128 East Market Street  
Bluffton, IN 46714

SRF Project Number:                         WW 14 18 90 01

Authorized Representative:                 The Honorable Ted Ellis, Mayor

### II. PROJECT LOCATION

Bluffton is located in Wells County. The proposed study area will occur in Lancaster and Harrison Township in the Bluffton USGS 7.5' quadrangle map, T26N, R12E, sections 3, 4 and 5; and Bluffton USGS 7.5' quadrangle map, T27N, R12E, sections 32, 33, and 34 (see Figure 1).

### III. PROJECT NEED AND PURPOSE

Bluffton's collection system covers an area of approximately 2,600 acres with most of the area comprised of commercial, industrial and residential land use. Their collection system is mostly a separate sanitary sewer system with approximately five percent combined sewers. The combined sewer system only has one combined sewer overflow.

Bluffton received an Inspection Summary/Violation letter on October 16, 2013 from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management for unsatisfactory operations for sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs). A records review indicates that six SSOs occurred during the period of the last twelve months due to capacity issues or blockages.

The city is in the process of developing a hydraulic model of their sewer system to identify areas of hydraulic bottlenecks and areas of infiltration and inflow (I/I).

The "Sewer System Evaluation Study" addresses the following tasks: conducting workshops to confirm scope, work plan, coordination with other projects in the area, lines of communication and schedule; characterizing the sanitary sewer collection system in order to collect data for the XPSWMM hydraulic model development; collecting metering data that is necessary to calibrate the XPXWMM hydraulic model; creating

physical model of the existing collection system; processing metering data; converting metering data to XPSWMM format; calibrating the model for dry weather and wet weather conditions; performing additional field checks to verify elevations of key sanitary structures; assessing the hydraulic performance of the existing collection system using up to three design storms; updating the physical model to account for areas of potential growth; assessing the hydraulic performance of model for future conditions; drafting a preliminary engineering report along with supporting graphics; finalizing the report based on comments from workshops; and conducting peer review of the modeling, results and report.

The No Action alternative was rejected since the collection system will continue to deteriorate along with causing SSOs to occur.

#### **IV. ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS, AFFORDABILITY AND FUNDING**

The estimated cost for the sewer system evaluation study is \$197,000. Bluffton will borrow this amount from the State Revolving Fund Loan Program (SRF) through a 20-year loan at a fixed interest rate to be determined at the time of loan closing. Monthly user rates and charges may need to be analyzed to determine if adjustments are required for loan repayment.

#### **V. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES**

Consistent with 36 CFR 800.3(a) (1) in the implementing regulations of the National Historic Preservation Act, the SRF has determined that the proposed undertaking is not a type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties.

#### **VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The city placed a public notice in the News-Banner on October 9, 2014 describing the amendment to the preliminary engineering report that addresses the sewer system evaluation study.

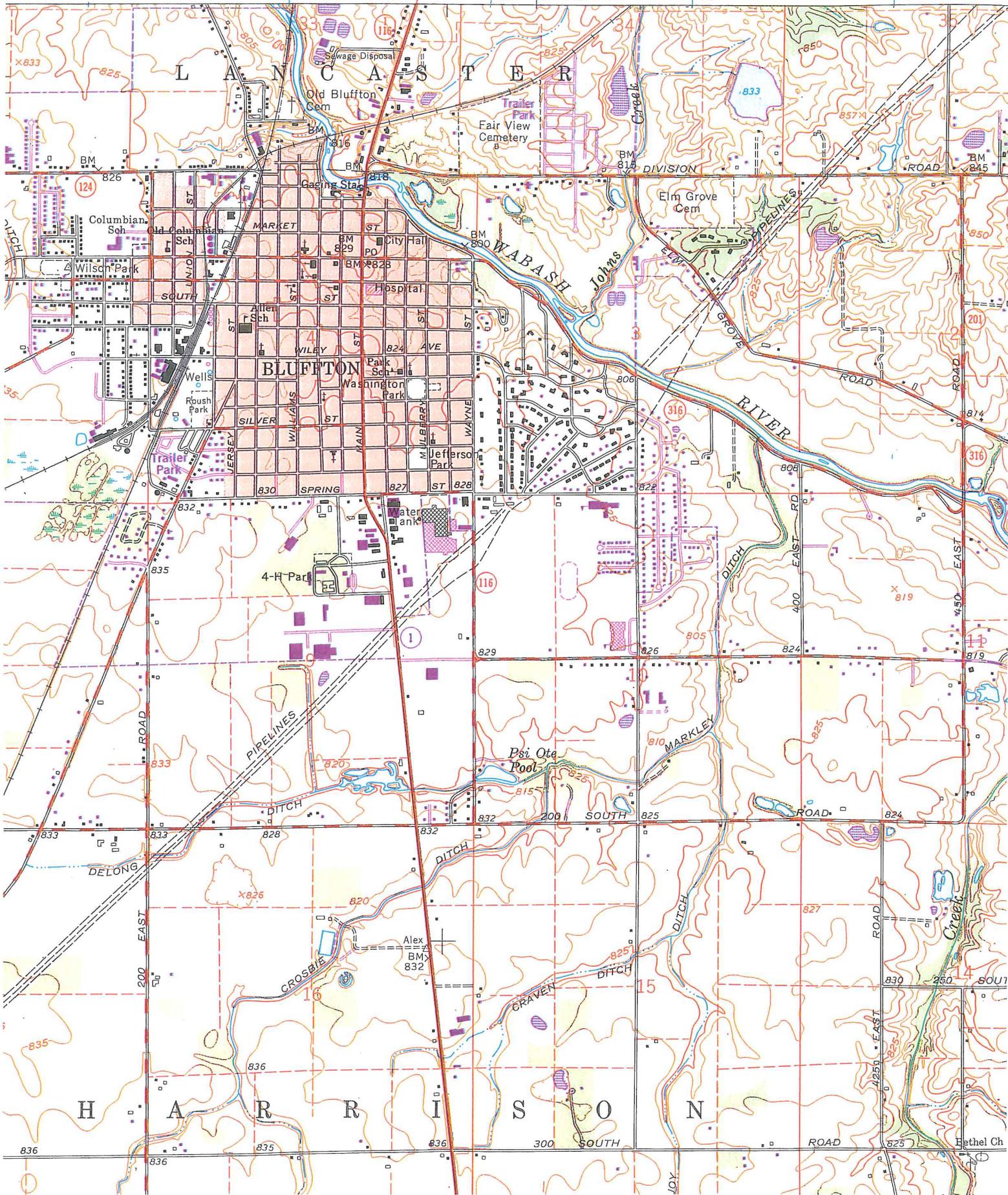


FIGURE 1