

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT FOR THE NORTH RIVER VALLEY WELL FIELD AND PIPELINE PROJECT

BACKGROUND:

The Ames Water Treatment Plant relies on a network of 22 potable supply wells as the source of drinking water for the community. As old wells fail and need to be replaced and as demand for treated water increases, additional wells must be drilled.

The location for a new well field has been chosen using a detailed ground water hydraulic model. The new wells are proposed to be constructed on land owned by the City and located north of East 13th Street and east of the Skunk River. Development of the proposed well field will consist of an interconnecting pipeline and three new wells, each with a capacity of 1,000 gallons per minute. Standby electrical power will also be included in the scope of the project. The planned new well field will add an estimated 2.6 million gallons per day (MGD) of raw water that can be delivered to the City's Water Treatment Plant.

On April 23, 2019, Council issued a Notice to Bidders for the North River Valley Well Field and Pipeline Project. The combined total project cost was over the engineer's estimate by 34%. On June 11, 2019, Council rejected all bids.

Since the rejection of bids, staff has moved the funding for the project construction from an upfront payment out of the Water Fund to a twenty loan from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) program. Moving to the SRF loan program will ensure adequate funding for construction and help mitigate future water rate increases. A public hearing on the environmental impact of the project construction is one of the first steps to meeting requirements of the SRF loan program.

An Environmental Information Document (EID) has been prepared by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), which evaluated the impact of constructing a new well field and pipeline. **The conclusion of the EID is the project will have no significant environmental impact. Staff has reviewed the EID and found no errors or omissions and agrees with the conclusions offered. The IDNR requires that the City hold a hearing where the public can offer comments on the EID, after which the Mayor would sign the EID, indicating that it is accurate to the best of his knowledge.** A separate hearing will be held before the City enters into any financial agreements with the SRF loan program.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize the Mayor of Ames to sign the IDNR Environmental Information Document on behalf of the City of Ames after completing the public hearing on October 27, 2020.
2. Do not approve the Environmental Information Document.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

In order to increase source water capacity as existing wells continue to age and become less effective, new wells need to be constructed. To finance the construction of the new well field, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan program will be utilized. A public hearing on the environmental impact of the project construction is one of the first steps to meeting requirements of the SRF loan program. The conclusion of the Environmental Information Document (EID) is the project will have no significant environmental impact. Staff has reviewed the EID and found no errors or omissions and agrees with the conclusions offered. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as described above.

Why You Should Read This: The document below reviews the environmental impact likely from a project. This project is planned to be federally funded 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, raise them now. We encourage public input in this decision making process.



IOWA STATE REVOLVING FUND
ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Applicant: City of Ames
County: Story
State: Iowa

SRF Number: FS-85-21-DWSRF-009
Iowa DNR Project Number: W2020-0437

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Location: The City of Ames is located in Story County, Iowa approximately 42 miles west of Marshalltown, Iowa and 37 miles north of Des Moines, Iowa.

Population: The population of Ames according to the 2010 US Census was 58,965. The design population equivalent for the year 2030 is approximately 60,500.

Current Source of Water: Currently, the city's water supply is owned and operated by the City of Ames. The water treatment plant relies on a network of 22 portable supply wells as the source of drinking water for the community.

Current Well System: The City of Ames currently utilizes four well fields. These well fields pull water from the Ames Aquifer. The 22 wells range in depth from 76' to 146', and have a capacity of 15 million gallons per day (MGD). A capacity of 15 MGD is not practical for long-term use and as old wells fail and need to be replaced and as demand for treated water increases, additional wells must be drilled.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to make improvements to the current drinking water system infrastructure to enhance the overall reliability, increase capacity and to

replace again wells in the downtown well field to safely and reliably operate the City of Ames drinking water system for at least the next 20 years.

Proposed Improvements: The proposed project consists of the construction of a new well field consisting of three new water supply wells. The proposed project also includes the construction of new water pipelines to bring water from the wells to the water treatment plant south of 13th St. The water pipelines will consist of a 7,600 feet long, 24-inch diameter, raw water main that will tie the wells with the water treatment plant and a 2,000 feet long buried power transmission line, which will run from a utility electrical service and new generator at the southeast corner of Inis Grove Park to the well field. In addition, new fiber optic lines will be installed south of 13th Street.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Alternatives Considered: After review of the current drinking water infrastructure, the City identified the water supply wells of greatest concern. A no action alternative is not viable due to future system capacity requirements for Ames as population and growth continues.

Reasons for Selection of Proposed Alternative: The City has prioritized eliminating underperforming and aging water supply wells. The construction of the 3 new water supply wells and installation of the 7,600 feet long pipeline will increase the integrity of the water distribution system during future growth and during times of drought.

The project site was selected for the availability of land, proximity to existing infrastructure, engineering criteria, capital cost, operational costs and considerations, as well as minimization of the impacts to the environment.

MEASURES TAKEN TO ASSESS IMPACT

Coordination and Documentation with Other Agencies and Special Interest Groups:

The following Federal, state and local agencies were asked to comment on the proposed project to better assess the potential impact to the environment:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- State Historical Society of Iowa (State Historical Preservation Office)
- Iowa DNR Conservation and Recreation Division
- Iowa DNR Water Resources Section
- Citizen Band Potawatomi Indian Tribe
- Flandreau Santee Sioux
- Ho-Chunk Nation
- Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska
- Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma

Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas
Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma
Lower Sioux Indian Community Council
Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Omaha Tribal Council
Osage Tribal Council
Otoe-Missouria Tribe
Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma
Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Ponca Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Ponca Tribe of Nebraska
Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
Prairie Island Indian Community
Sac & Fox Nation of Mississippi in Iowa
Sac & Fox Nation of Missouri
Sac & Fox Nation of Oklahoma
Santee Sioux Nation
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate
Spirit Lake Tribal Council
Three Affiliated Tribes Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nations
Upper Sioux Tribe
Winnebago Tribal Council
Yankton Sioux Tribal Business and Claims Committee
Ames Historical Society

No adverse comments were received from any agencies to date. Conditions placed on the applicant by the above agencies in order to assure no significant impact are included in the Summary of Reasons for Concluding No Significant Impact section.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SUMMARY

Construction: Traffic patterns within the community may be disrupted and above normal noise levels in the vicinity of the construction equipment can be anticipated during construction and should be a temporary problem. Adverse environmental impacts on noise quality will be handled by limited hours of contractor work time during the day. Other adverse environmental effects from construction activities will be minimized by proper construction practices, inspection, prompt cleanup, and other appropriate measures. Areas temporarily disturbed by the construction will be restored. Solid wastes resulting from the construction project will be regularly cleared away with substantial efforts made to minimize inconvenience to area residents.

Care will be taken to maintain dirt to avoid erosion and runoff. Temporary air quality degradation may occur due to dust and fumes from construction equipment. The

applicant shall take reasonable precautions to prevent the discharge of visible emissions of fugitive dusts beyond the lot line of the property during the proposed project (567 Iowa Administrative Code IAC 23.3(2)“c”).

Historical/Archaeological: Various Native American tribes with an interest in the area and the Certified Local Government were provided information regarding the project. A Phase I Archeological investigation of the proposed project area is currently underway. Results from this investigation will be submitted to the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) for review. The project will only proceed as planned if a determination of either “no historic properties affected” or “no adverse affect on historic properties” can be appropriately reached with or without mitigation.

Environmental: According to the Iowa DNR Conservation and Recreation Division, the proposed project will not interfere with any State-owned parks, recreational areas or open spaces. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers concurs that the project will not impact wetlands. The project will not impact any wild and scenic rivers as none exist within the State of Iowa.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Section 7 Technical Assistance website consultation determined, and Iowa DNR Conservation and Recreation Division agree, that the project will not impact threatened or endangered species or their habitats provided that any tree cutting is conducted between October 1 and March 31 to avoid impacting endangered bats. However, if any State- or Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or communities are found during the planning or construction phases, additional studies and/or mitigation may be required. According to the Iowa DNR Water Resources Section, this project will not impact the 100-year floodplain provided all necessary floodplain development permits, state and local, are obtained and the terms of which are abided by. No adverse impacts are expected to result from this project, such as those to surface water quantity, or groundwater quality or quantity.

Land Use and Trends: The project will not displace population nor will it alter the character of existing residential areas. The proposed project is within the present corporate limits of Ames in areas zoned residential, commercial, or industrial. No significant farmlands will be impacted. This project should not impact population trends as the presence or absence of existing water/sewer infrastructure is unlikely to induce significant alterations in the population growth or distribution given the myriad of factors that influence development in this region. Similarly, this project is unlikely to induce significant alterations in the pattern and type of land use.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: Fuels, materials, and various forms of energy will be utilized during construction.

POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS TO BE REALIZED FROM THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Positive environmental effects will be maintained water quality and quantity for the citizens of Ames. A catastrophic loss of water supply could result in City-wide health impacts due to a lack of sanitation and the use of other water sources that may not meet Federal drinking water standards.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR CONCLUDING NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- The project will not significantly affect the pattern and type of land use (industrial, commercial, agricultural, recreational, and residential) or growth and distribution of population.
- The project will not conflict with local, regional or State land use plans or policies.
- The project will not impact wetlands
- The project will not affect threatened and endangered species or their habitats provided that any tree cutting is conducted between October 1 and March 31 to avoid impacting endangered bats. If any State- or Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or communities are found during the planning or construction phases, additional studies and/or mitigation may be required.
- The project will not displace population, alter the character of existing residential areas, or convert significant farmlands to non-agricultural purposes.
- The project will not affect the 100-year flood plain provided all necessary floodplain development permits, state and local, are obtained and the terms of which are abided by.
- The project will not have effect on parklands, preserves, other public lands, or areas of recognized scenic or recreational value.
- A Phase I Archeological investigation of the proposed project area is currently underway. Results from this investigation will be submitted to the State Historical Preservation Office for review. The project will only proceed as planned if a determination of either “no historic properties affected” or “no adverse affect on historic properties” can be appropriately reached with or without mitigation.
- The project will not have a significant adverse effect upon local ambient air quality provided the applicant takes reasonable precautions to prevent the discharge of visible emissions of fugitive dusts beyond the lot line of the property during the proposed project (567 IAC 23.3(2)“c”).
- The project will not have a significant adverse effect upon local ambient noise levels, surface water quantity, groundwater quality or quantity, or water supply.
- No significant impact to surface water quality, shellfish, wildlife, or their natural habitats.

The project description, scope, and anticipated environmental impacts detailed above are accurate and complete to the best to my knowledge.

Signature of the Mayor, City of Ames

Date

Printed Name of the Mayor, City of Ames

USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle: Ames East
Section: 35, Township: 84 N, Range: 24 W
Date: 1975
Scale: 1 Inch = 2,000 Feet



North

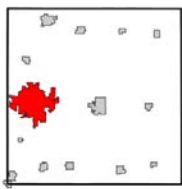
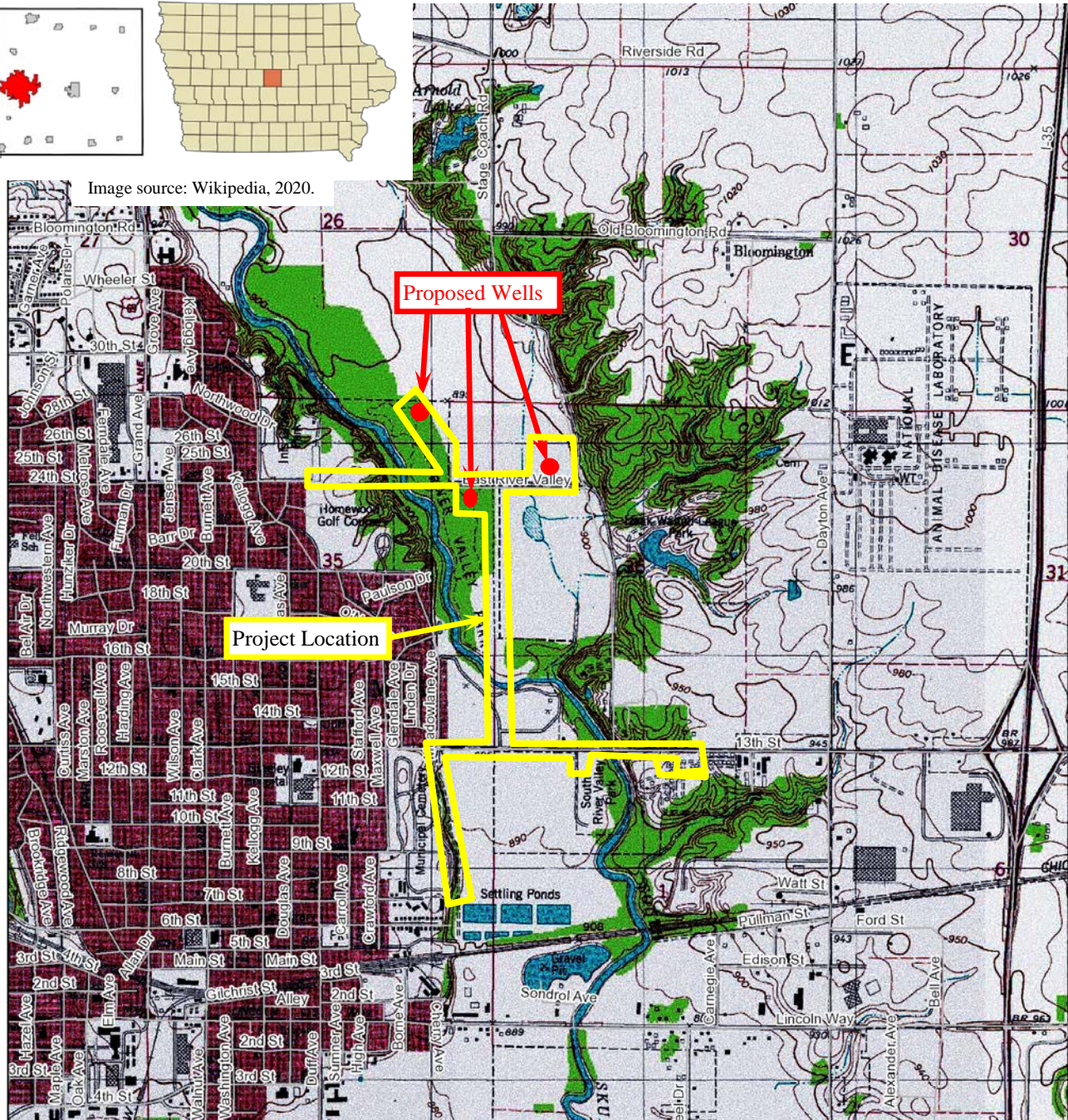


Image source: Wikipedia, 2020.



USGS Topographic Map

Ames Drinking Water Infrastructure Upgrade
Ames, IA

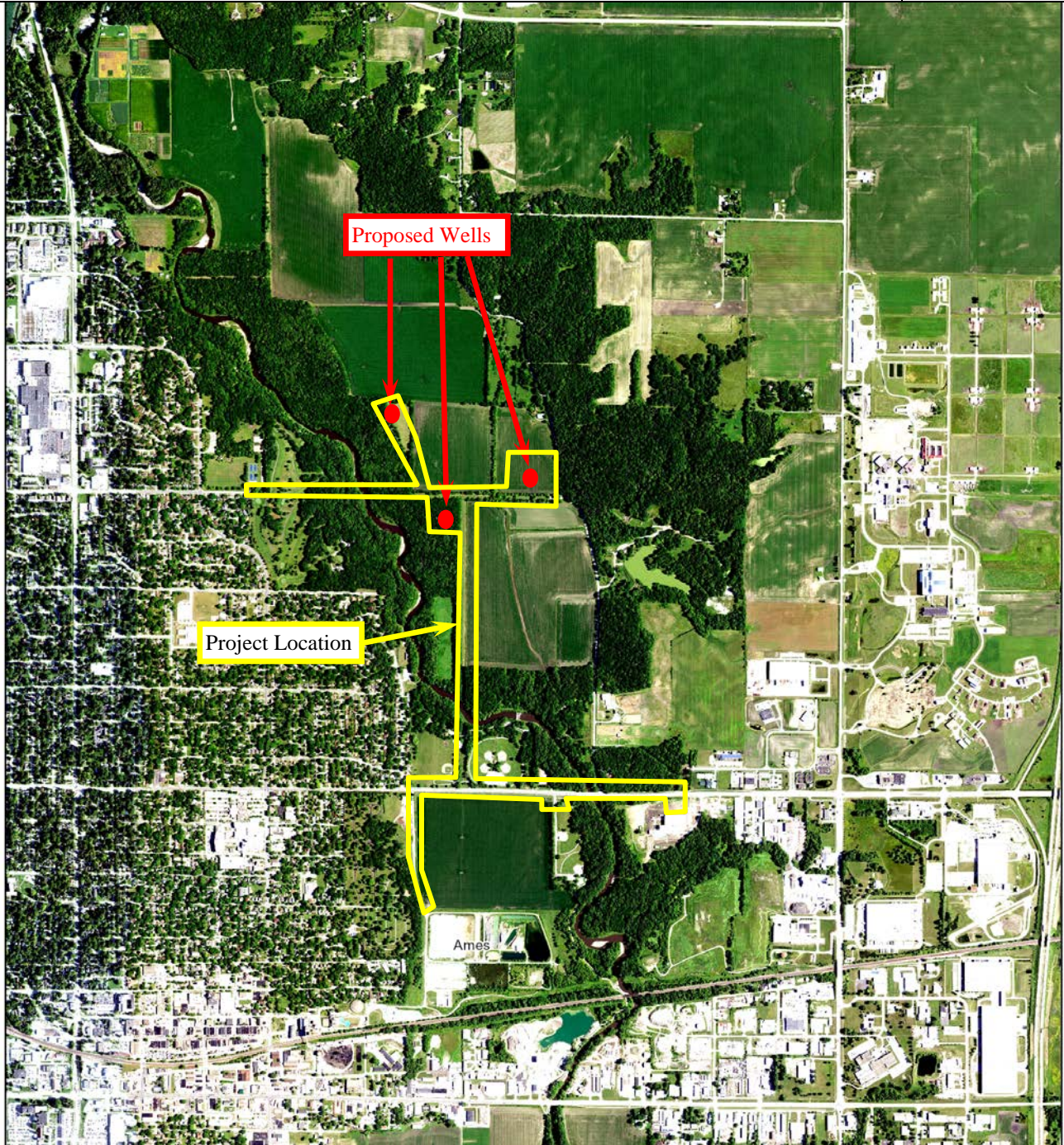


State Revolving Fund
502 East 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0034

Location information provided by HDR
2017



North



Aerial Photograph

Ames Drinking Water Infrastructure Upgrade
Ames, IA



State Revolving Fund
502 East 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0034