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WVSA project to protect Susquehanna

Bids are being sought for work designed to prevent sewage overflow into river.

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WILKES-BARRE – Bids are being accepted for the completion of a project to prevent the discharge of sewage into the Susquehanna River from the Ross Street pumping station during heavy rains.

The sanitary and storm sewer lines that feed into the station have been separated, said Tim Holden, project engineer with Michael J. Pasonick Jr. & Associates Inc.

In the second and final phase, the work entails directing “all the sanitary sewage into a separate line” that connects to the station and onto the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority’s treatment plant in Hanover Township, he said.

The WVSA’s system contains combined sewer and storm lines. When the lines are taxed by too much rainwater they overflow into the river or local creeks.

The combined sewer overflow serves as a safety mechanism to prevent the untreated wastewater from backing up in houses and businesses and flooding streets, according to the WVSA.

The WVSA on Wednesday issued an invitation to bid notice and set a deadline of March 10 to submit sealed proposals.

Holden estimated construction would begin in the second or third quarter of this year. Much of the work will be in the Ross Street area, he added.

The entire project is funded with state and federal funds, with 45 percent coming from the PennVest and 55 percent from a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant.

Holden said in order to protect the bid process he could not place a cost on the second phase of the project.

“The first was approximately \$2.5 million,” he said. “This is approximately that same size.”