



STAFF REPORT

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
MEETING DATE: JULY 20, 2026
FROM: DAN LAFONTAINE, PUBLIC WORK DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: CITY SANITARY SEWER MANAGEMENT PLAN (SSMP) ADOPTION

BACKGROUND: The City of Sutter Creek is required by the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to comprehensively update its Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP) every six years. This updated plan updates the City's operational framework to align with the current regulatory mandates of the Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Sanitary Sewer Systems (Water Quality Order No. 2022-0103-DWQ). Under State Water Board regulations, the City must re-certify a legally compliant SSMP every six years. Additionally, the City must perform internal program audits every three years to measure implementation effectiveness.

COLLECTION SYSTEM SSMP GOAL: Sutter Creek serves a population of 2,646 and operates 114,750 linear feet of wastewater collection infrastructure. The goal of this updated SSMP is to efficiently maintain and improve the system, minimize the frequency and environmental impacts of Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs), minimize inflow and infiltration (I&I), and provide adequate capacity for future growth. This report incorporates the specific findings of our internal program edits, highlights the reduction of historical spills due to recent capital investments, and outlines our upcoming compliance commitments.

DISCUSSION OF SSMP CHANGES: The July 20, 2026 SSMP upgrades satisfy the current requirements of State Water Board Order No. 2022-0103-DWQ. The finalized document incorporates updated protocols across eleven mandatory elements (major updates listed below):

- **Element 1 - Goals and Element 2 - Organization:** The plan formally establishes a clear chain of command under City Manager Tom DuBois. Due to small-staff limitations, Public Works Director Dan Lafontaine, P.E., serves as both the LRO and primary Data Submitter, with Consultant/City Sanitary Engineer Grant Reynolds, P.E., serving as the backup Data Submitter. Field operations are led by Chief Plant Operator (CPO) George Allen and operators Jeff Jolley and Corey Stone, who bring over 25 years of combined operational experience.
- **Element 4 - Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Program & Asset Mapping:** The City has fully transitioned to a digitalized computerized maintenance management system (CMMS). Field crews utilize mobile tablets to log preventative main line jetting, which is completed by internal staff over 90% of the time and reported monthly to the City Council. A sewer plug spare parts list was created for the sewer plug equipment and will be updated with purchasing dates and

timelines to purchase new critical spares. Mandatory geospatial service area boundary data was successfully submitted to the State Water Board prior to the December 31, 2025 deadline.

- **Element 6 - Overflow Emergency Response Plan:** The City's Spill Emergency Response Plan (ERP) was updated in 2024.
- **Element 7 - Sewer Pipe Blockage Control Program (FOG):** The City continues to enforce Ordinance 14.08, regulating grease removal devices across 11 listed downtown commercial food service establishments. Downstream sewer mains are cleaned annually. The current audit identified a gap in public outreach ; consequently, Public Works will establish a new public education program by January 2027, placing informative grease-disposal flyers on the City website and in public spaces. The list of businesses subject to Grease Trap Inspections was updated to show current business name and mailing address (if known).
- **Element 8 - System Evaluation, Capacity Assurance and Capital Improvement Projects (CIP):** To reduce system vulnerabilities and prepare for a future new WWTP, the City has aggressively targeted Inflow and Infiltration (I&I). Over the past three years, the City successfully completed over \$2.5 million in pipeline replacements, including major work at Sutter Oaks (2024) and seven targeted problem areas in 2025 (such as Raylan Drive, Dennis Street, and the Sutter Hotel/Fiefield Alley). For the summer of 2026, the City has committed over \$500,000 to replace three critical line sections running through or near the creek to explicitly mitigate the risk of surface water spills. A deficiency exists in the hydraulic capacity report that was last completed in 2002. Many changes to the collection system have been implemented but the study has not been redone due to the cost. The cost to update this study should be added to the next fiscal budget.
- **Element 9 - Monitoring, Measurement, and Program Modifications:** A major component of the updated plan is tracking baseline utility performance trends. Due to targeted CIP investments and flow monitoring data collected over the last three winters , Sutter Creek has achieved a substantial reduction in sewer system disruptions:

Performance Indicator	2007–2011 (Baseline)	2025 (Current)
Total Number of SSOs	18	5
Total Spill Volume (Gallons)	23,245	10,250
Volume Discharged to Surface Waters	20,400	6,000
Spill Volume Recovered (Gallons)	360	3,600
Overall Spill Recovery Percentage	2%	35%

SSO Rate (per 10 Miles / Year)	2.6	2.3
---------------------------------------	-----	-----

While overall SSO frequencies are declining, data from 2020 through 2024 highlighted an increase in the severity of spills reaching surface waters. This specific trend justified the \$500,000 summer 2026 creek line replacement project to build localized environmental redundancy.

- **Element 11 - Communication Program:** Communication has been updated to include the City digital communication methods including the City website, Facebook, Instagram, and constant contact. Traditional methods will also be used to convey non-emergency messages.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA): The adoption and update of this regulatory plan consist of planning studies, administrative updates, and information collection which do not involve any physical construction or expansion of an existing use. Therefore, this action is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 (Information Collection) and Section 15308 (Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment).

FISCAL IMPACT: The direct administrative and technical hours required to compile and finalize this 6-year update were funded via allocations in the Wastewater Enterprise Fund. Because operations are supported completely by sewer utility rate revenues, there is no impact on the City's General Fund.

Adopting this update protects the City from catastrophic fiscal liabilities. Under State Water Board Order No. 2022-0103-DWQ, failing to maintain a certified, legally compliant SSMP places the municipality in direct violation of state environmental mandates

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the City Council adopt Resolution No. 26-27-xx, approving the updated City of Sutter Creek Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP) dated July 20, 2026 and authorizing the Public Works Director, acting as the Legally Responsible Official (LRO), to electronically certify and submit the final document to the State Water Resources Control Board's CIWQS database.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. *Resolution No. 26-27-XX Approving the City of Sutter Creek SSMP Update*
2. *City of Sutter Creek Sewer System Management Plan (Final Draft - July 20, 2026)*