

County Asked to Bypass Bidding to Keep Waste Project Moving

By Melissa Cassutt Jackson Hole Daily | Posted: Tuesday, September 8, 2015 4:30 am

The chief of the county's waste division plans to ask county commissioners today to bypass the bidding process for a fire suppression system needed to redevelop the Horsethief Canyon facility.

While the cost of installing a fire suppression system was included in the project's overall budget, the system was not specifically assigned to Driggs, Idaho-based MD Nursery and Landscaping, which was awarded a contract to build the trash transfer facility.

Because the bidding process can take at least two months, awarding the work to the current contractor would allow the project to continue to move forward, said Heather Overholser, chief of the Teton County Integrated Solid Waste and Recycling Division.

The project's budget allocated \$400,000 for the fire suppression system. Overholser asks that \$350,000 be added to the current contract, which would cover systems in both the transfer station and the weigh station.

The remaining funds would be allocated to different parts of the project, she said.

"I don't think we'd necessarily be getting better pricing if we bid it out at this point," she said.

The redevelopment project started this summer. It was mandated by the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality. The old landfill was leaching toxins. The project involves building a new trash transfer station and weigh station as well as capping and closing the old landfill and developing a composting facility. It is expected to cost approximately \$20 million and take about five years.

This request does not increase the overall project budget. Overholser said she would not be surprised if budget increases were necessary in the future. The nature of the project makes it difficult to estimate costs, she said.

"We're not going to know precisely how much waste is there and exactly the extent of it until we actually start digging," she said. "It doesn't seem like there was a lot of rhyme or reason to burying the waste decades ago."

County commissioners meet at 9 a.m. today at 200 S. Willow St.