



Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor
Anne M. Vogel, Director

July 10, 2023

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**City of Columbus – Franklin County
Hap Cremean Water Plant Lime & Soda Ash Dust Collection System Improvements
Loan number: FS390274-0386**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a water treatment equipment replacement project in Columbus which the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency intends to finance through its Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) below-market interest rate revolving loan program. The LER describes the project, its costs, and expected environmental benefits. Making available this LER fulfills Ohio EPA's environmental review and public notice requirements for this loan program.

Ohio EPA analyzes environmental effects of proposed projects as part of its WSRLA program review and approval process. We have concluded that the proposed project should not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. This project's relatively narrow scope and lack of environmental impacts qualifies it for the LER rather than a more comprehensive Environmental Assessment. More information can be obtained by calling or writing the person named at the end of the attached LER.

Upon issuance of this Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) determination, award of funds may proceed without further environmental review or public comment unless new information shows that environmental conditions of the proposed project have changed significantly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Courtright".

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

Attachment

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: Hap Cremean Water Plant Lime & Soda Ash Dust Collection System Improvements

Applicant: City of Columbus
910 Dublin Road
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Loan Number: FS390274-0386

Project Summary

The City of Columbus in Franklin County has requested \$2.4 million from the Ohio Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) for the replacement of aging and deteriorated water treatment equipment including the lime and soda ash offloading control system and dust collection system at the Hap Cremean Water Plant (HCWP). All improvements will be made within the footprint of the existing water treatment plant City of Columbus-owned property and are not expected to have any adverse environmental impacts. This project is part of the city's ongoing program to upgrade its treatment facilities to provide safe, efficient, reliable, and cost-effective operations to its approximately 1.2 million customers.

History & Existing Conditions

Columbus operates three large interconnected municipal water plants: Hap Cremean Water Plant (HCWP), Dublin Road Water Plant (DRWP), and Parsons Avenue Water Plant (PAWP). These plants collectively supply potable water to Columbus and the central Ohio metropolitan areas. HCWP is a surface water treatment plant utilizing Big Walnut Creek as its water source. It is rated for a maximum daily flow of 125 million gallons per day (MGD).

The HCWP uses lime and soda ash in their water treatment process for pH control and to reduce carbonate and non-carbonate hardness in the finished water. Dry lime and soda ash are delivered to the HCWP via pneumatic trucks and the materials are conveyed to four lime and two soda ash storage silos via individual 4-inch fill lines. A bin-vent style dust collector and a pressure/vacuum relief valve are located on the top of each silo. The original lime and soda ash system was installed in the 1950s and was updated with the existing bin-vent dust collectors and conveyance pipes in the 1980s. The system has degraded over time, with the conveyance pipes wearing out, and the dust collectors failing to meet original performance expectations.

The instrumentation and local controls associated with the truck offloading and chemical delivery require improvements. The abrasiveness of the chemical during pneumatic offloading has deteriorated the conveyance piping. The pressure/vacuum relief valves and dust collection systems have met their useful life and are not performing as intended, releasing undesirable amounts of lime and soda ash dust into the building during chemical offloading.

Project Description

This project will provide a new solids chemical handling system for truck offloading of lime and soda ash at the Hap Cremean Water Plant. It will replace the truck offloading piping, relief valves, instrumentation and controls, and bag collection systems and install an ambient dust monitoring system. The project will provide a more reliable delivery system for chemical offloading for the foreseeable future.

The construction footprint for this project will remain within the confines of the existing water treatment plant, thereby minimizing effects on environmental resources. The contractor is responsible for best management practices to control erosion and sedimentation and minimize the creation of dust.

Maps of the project location are provided in the exhibits below.

Implementation

Project Costs

Columbus plans to borrow \$2,400,000 from the WSRLA. During the 20-year loan period, Columbus will save approximately \$368,421 by using WSRLA dollars at the standard rate of 2.50%, compared to the market rate of 3.75%. WSRLA interest rates are set monthly and may change for a later loan award.

Local Economy

The current annual Columbus residential water bill is approximately \$547. Projected residential water bills with the implementation of this and other associated water projects are expected to increase to approximately \$620, or 1.1% of median household income (MHI) of Columbus, which is \$54,902.

By using WSRLA financing for this project, Columbus has minimized the economic impact on customers.

Project Schedule

The anticipated loan award will occur in July 2023. Construction is expected to be completed by May 2025.

Public Participation

A public notice was posted on the City of Columbus' Public Utilities webpage detailing the proposed improvements to the Hap Cremean Water Plant and contact information is provided for any public questions or concerns. Public participation is limited since construction will occur entirely within the secure area of the HCWP and will not impact the general public.

Ohio EPA will make a copy of this document available to the public on its web page: <https://epa.ohio.gov/divisions-and-offices/environmental-financial-assistance/announcements> and will provide it upon request to interested parties. Information supporting this Limited Environmental Review (LER) is available from the project contact named below.

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the criteria for an LER; namely, it involves rehabilitation of existing treatment works. Furthermore, the project meets the other qualifying criteria for an LER; specifically, the proposed project:

Has no significant environmental effect, no effect on high-value environmental resources, and does not require extensive specific impact mitigation.

Construction for the project is limited to the previously disturbed footprint of the existing water treatment plant, which lacks important environmental features. Standard construction best management practices will be required to control dust, sediment runoff, noise, and maintain safety.

Is cost effective and not controversial.

Evaluation of alternatives determined that replacement of deteriorated equipment was more cost effective than rehabilitation which may require continued maintenance in the future. Ohio EPA is unaware of any specific opposition to or controversy about this project that will maintain a treatment facility to ensure a continuous supply of potable drinking water to customers.

Does not create a new, or relocate an existing, discharge to surface or ground waters; will not create a new source of water withdrawals from either surface or ground waters; will not significantly increase the amount of water withdrawn from an existing water source; will not result in substantial increases in the volume of discharge or the loading of pollutants from an existing source or from new facilities to receiving waters; and will not provide capacity to serve a population substantially greater than the existing population.

This project involves the replacement of structural components within the footprint of the existing treatment plant. The project will not affect water withdrawals or discharges, nor serve a greater population.

Based upon the available planning information for this project and the materials presented within this LER, Ohio EPA concludes that the proposed project will not result in any significant adverse impacts to any environmental features. The project is expected to have no significant short-term or long-term adverse impacts on the quality of the human environment or on sensitive resources such as surface waters, coastal zones, riparian areas, floodplains, wetlands, state-designated scenic or recreational rivers, prime or unique agricultural lands, aquifer recharge zones, archaeologically or historically significant sites, or threatened or endangered species.

This project will improve the water treatment plant's ability to meet water supply needs and ensure a continuous supply of potable water to customers.

Contact Information

Kristin Parrish
Ohio EPA-DEFA
P.O. Box 1049
Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049

Email: kristin.parrish@epa.ohio.gov

Exhibit 1: Project location map

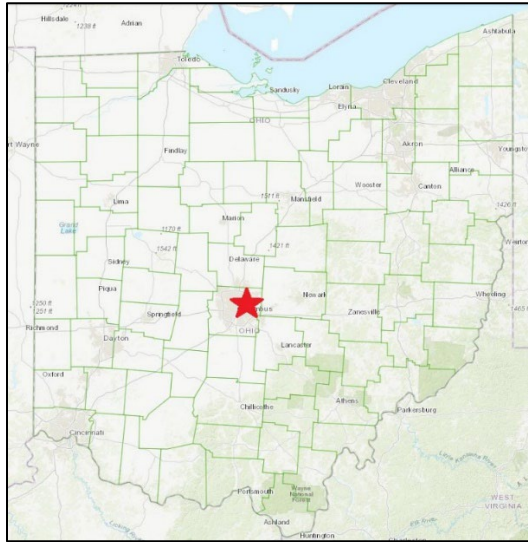


Exhibit 2: Project location map

