



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

May 1, 2023

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**City of Columbus – Franklin County
PAWP Lime Staker & Soda Ash Feeder Replacement
Loan number: FS390274-0334**

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: Parsons Avenue Water Plant Lime Staker & Soda Ash Feeder Replacement

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

Loan Number: FS390274-0334

Project Summary

The City of Columbus in Franklin County has requested \$12,567,400 from the Ohio Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) for the replacement of aging and deteriorated water treatment equipment including lime slakers and soda ash feeders at the Parsons Avenue Water Plant (PAWP). All improvements will be made within 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. PAWP is a groundwater treatment plant with six total collector wells utilizing a high-quality aquifer source. It has a capacity of 50 million gallons per day (MGD) and an annual average daily flow of approximately 26 MGD.

The PAWP provides water to approximately 200,000 customers across a service area generally consisting of the south portion of Franklin County that includes a mixture of residential, commercial, and industrial users. Population projections from Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) indicate that the central Ohio area is expected to see significant population growth over the next 50 years; thus, water demands are anticipated to increase.

The PAWP was originally constructed in 1981 and is currently meeting all finished water regulatory requirements as well as maintaining an effective wellfield protection program despite development in the wellfield protection area. Recent improvements including replacement clarifier mechanisms, a new recarbonation system, updated HVAC system, and electrical improvements have improved the resiliency and reliability of the plant.

The PAWP has three lime paste slakers and two soda ash feeders available for process treatment. Two slakers were installed as part of the original plant construction in around 1980 and the third slaker was added in 2002. One soda ash feeder was installed as part of the original plant construction and the second soda ash feeder was installed with the 2002 improvements. Due to age and deterioration, all three lime slakers and two soda ash feeders are due for replacement.

Project Description

This project will replace the three existing lime slakers and two existing soda ash feeders at the Parsons Avenue Water Plant. This project will also include the replacement of lime feed and soda ash support systems such as the grit removal system, slurry mix tanks and mixers, the day bin activators, electrical feeds, instrumentation and controls, and the slurry pumps.

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 \$12,567,400 from the WSRLA. During the 20-year loan period, Columbus will save approximately \$1,937,063 by using WSRLA dollars at the standard rate of 2.58%, compared to the market rate of 3.83%. 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 \$544. Projected residential water bills with the implementation of this and other associated water projects are expected to increase to approximately \$630, 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 May 2023. Construction is expected to be completed by September 2025.

Public Participation

A public notice was posted on the City of Columbus' Public Utilities webpage detailing the proposed improvements to the Parsons Avenue 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 PAWP 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.

The proposed project involves seeking improvements to existing infrastructure that will improve the safety and reliability of the city's treated water supply. Evaluation of alternatives determined that replacement of this 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 increase water withdrawals, 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
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Exhibit 1: Project location map



Exhibit 2: Project location map

