

August 15, 2017

**Issuance of A Limited Environmental Review
To All Interested Citizens, Organizations, and
Government Agencies**

**Northwestern Water and Sewer District
Wood County**

**Hoytville WWTP Improvements
Loan Number CS391432-0109**

The purpose of this notice is to advise the public that Ohio EPA has reviewed the referenced project and finds neither a Supplemental Study (SS) nor an Environmental Assessment (EA) is required to implement the project as discussed in the attached Limited Environmental Review (LER). Consequently, a Finding of No Significant Impact is being issued for this project.

The Water Pollution Control Loan Fund program requires the inclusion of environmental factors in the decision-making process for project approval. Ohio EPA has done this by incorporating a detailed analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed actions in its review and approval process. Environmental information was developed as part of the facilities plan, as well as through the facilities plan review process. A subsequent review by this Agency has found that the proposed actions do not require the preparation of either an EA or an SS.

Our environmental review concluded that because the proposed project is limited in scope and meets all applicable criteria, an LER is warranted. Specifically:

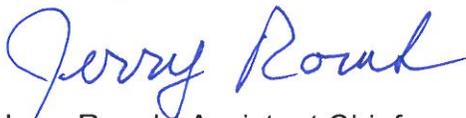
- The proposed project will have no significant adverse environmental effect, nor will it adversely affect any specific resource type.
- It will not require extensive general or specific direct impact mitigation.
- It will not affect current design flow value or the existing service area.
- It is clearly cost effective.
- It is not controversial.

- It will not result in an increase in the volume of discharge or loading of pollutants to receiving water or increase the withdrawal of additional water supplies.

The LER presents additional information on the proposed project, costs and the basis for our decision. Further information can be obtained by calling or writing the contact person listed on the back of the LER.

Upon issuance of this determination, loan award may proceed without being subject to further environmental review or public comment, unless information is provided which determines that environmental conditions on the proposed projects have changed significantly.

Sincerely,



Jerry Rouch, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental & Financial Assistance

Attachment

**LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
for
Northwestern Water and Sewer District
Wood County**

**Hoytville WWTP Improvements
Loan Number CS391432-0109**

**Applicant: Jerry Greiner, President
Northwestern Water and Sewer District
12560 Middleton Pike
Bowling Green, OH 43402**

Existing Need

The Northwestern Water and Sewer District (NWWSD), chartered under Section 6119 of the Ohio Revised Code, was organized in 1994 to assume the water and sewer operations of the Wood County Sanitary Engineer. The Hoytville wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), located in Jackson Township (see Figures 1 and 2), was constructed in 1989 and acquired by NWWSD in 2009. The plant is a three-cell controlled discharge lagoon system that discharges into Needles Creek only during high flow. It serves approximately 110 homes and the average design flow (ADF) is 0.036 million gallons per day (MGD). Ohio EPA data show an average flow of 0.946 MGD when discharging, 0.022 MGD on a daily average and a peak flow of 0.968 MGD during the period of 2004-2009. Wastewater collection is via a Septic Tank Effluent Gravity (STEG) system with small diameter gravity pipes and on-lot septic tanks to capture solids.

The Hoytville WWTP Improvements project, here forward referred to as the Hoytville project, primarily involves the existing access to the WWTP via a stone gravel drive off of Hoytville Road/Township Highway 123. This drive passes below CSX railroad tracks through a culvert and becomes inaccessible to vehicles during wet weather. Due to the culvert's size, this access is also unavailable to larger trucks and equipment even during dry conditions. NWWSD has repeatedly needed to gain permission from private property owners to access the WWTP for these reasons. Other maintenance and repair to the WWTP will be included in the project. The Hoytville project has a total cost of \$450,523, with construction scheduled to begin September, 2017 and to be completed in nine months.

Description of the Project

A 20-foot wide access road will be constructed on private properties adjacent to a current/former racetrack and a railroad right-of-way. Both have experienced extensive previous disturbances related to racetrack construction and operation and the elevated railroad bed borrow area, respectively. Other project improvements include: replacement of erosion control fabric and rip rap on the walls of the lagoons, improvements to the berm around and between the lagoons, installing an air release valve in the influent pump station, and repairing the existing WWTP security fence. The project will improve operation and security at the WWTP, as well as allow for improved access for routine maintenance. Construction activities will be located in previously-disturbed areas that support no wetlands, forested areas, or aquatic habitat.

Implementation

NWWSD will receive a \$450,523, 20-year, zero-percent hardship interest rate loan from the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) for this project. The loan includes \$364,650 of principal forgiveness (principal that does not need to be repaid). NWWSD will recover debt associated with the project from a general maintenance fund serving the entire district, which means that the sewer rate paid by the project's 110 customers will not change to pay for the project. NWWSD qualifies for a WPCLF 20-year, zero-percent

hardship interest rate for this community and project. The 2017 monthly residential sewer rate project area is \$74.02 (\$888.24 annually), based on an average monthly usage of 1,037 cubic feet. This is 2.22 percent of the median household income (MHI) of \$40,000. While this rate is high compared to the state average, this rate is reflective of a wastewater system with a small user base and low MHI, and is in line with what customers in Hoytville have paid historically.

Receiving principal forgiveness for the majority of the project and borrowing the balance at zero-percent will save NWWSD over \$524,000 over the life of the loan compared to borrowing the total project cost at the current market rate of 3.14 percent.

Public Involvement

NWWSD has a long history of working with the general public and local public officials when proposed projects are to be located in their community. This project has been discussed at NWWSD Board meetings, has been detailed on NWWSD's website and has been advertised for bids. Advance notice to residents in the form of a letter will precede construction. NWWSD is aware of no controversy surrounding this project. For a project of such limited scope and impact, this is considered adequate public involvement.

Conclusion

The Hoytville WWTP Improvements project constitutes a general project type (minor upgrades and rehabilitation to existing treatment works) that qualifies for a Limited Environmental Review. Specifically, it meets the following criteria.

It will not affect any special resource type. The construction will be limited to the previously disturbed areas and the existing WWTP. There will be no effects to the following: floodplains, wetlands, surface water, endangered/threatened species or their habitat, state and federally designated wild and scenic rivers, recreational rivers, or wildlife areas, and archaeological, historic or cultural resources.

It will not require specific impact mitigation. Noise will be controlled with silencers on mobile equipment. Dust and odors will be controlled and air quality will be protected with emissions controls on mobile equipment and with the use of street sweeping and dust suppressants, as applicable.

It is clearly cost-effective. The proposed maintenance and improvement activities will ensure proper WWTP operation, and allow NWWSD to safely and effectively monitor and manage the facility. Furthermore, receiving a principal forgiveness loan for the majority of the project and borrowing the balance at zero-percent will save NWWSD over \$524,000 over the life of the loan.

It is not controversial. No local rate increase will be associated with the debt repayment. It will generate no excessive population growth, nor will it have significant adverse environmental effects that could raise public concern. The rates that NWWSD applies to its general service area are affordable.

It does not involve a new or relocated discharge to surface or ground water, involve any increase in volume of discharge or loading of pollutants from an existing source or new facilities, or provide capacity to serve a design population substantially greater (thirty percent) than the current design population. The project does not require the expansion of Hoytville's wastewater treatment facility beyond its current design capacity, the installation of a satellite treatment facility, or other action that could increase discharges or add or relocate discharge points. Increases in pipe capacity or service extensions into undeveloped areas have not been included in the projects. Thus, the projects will not result in adverse secondary (development-related) environmental impacts, such as farmland or wetland conversion for building purposes.

The planning activities for the proposed sewer rehabilitation project have identified no potentially significant short-term adverse impacts to the quality of the human environment or sensitive resources (floodplains, wetlands, surface water, endangered species or their critical habitat, cultural properties, raw water supplies, scenic or recreational rivers, air quality, farmland, or state and federal wildlife areas). Impacts related to dust, noise and odors will be temporary and well controlled during construction.

The project will yield environmental and human health benefits by maintaining proper functioning of the existing WWTP and minimizing nutrient discharges to Needles Creek, which is tributary to the Portage River and Western Lake Erie Basin. WWTP nutrients, including nitrogen and ammonia, contribute to the production of harmful algal blooms (HAB) and their toxins in the Portage River and Western Lake Erie Basin.

For further information, please contact:

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Figure 1: General project location (in red)



Figure 2: Project location