



Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor
Laurie A. Stevenson, Director

August 31, 2020

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**Village of Laurelville, Hocking County
Laurelville Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements
Loan number: CS390508-0003**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a wastewater treatment project in Laurelville which the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency intends to finance through its Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) 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 WPCLF 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,

Jonathan Bernstein

Jonathan Bernstein, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

Attachment

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: Laurelville Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements

Applicant: Village of Laurelville
P.O. Box 393
Laurelville, OH 43135

Loan Number: CS390508-0003

Project Summary

The Village of Laurelville in Hocking County has requested financial assistance from the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) to upgrade its aged wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). All work will be in the existing WWTP facilities and lagoons and will affect no important environmental features.

History & Existing Conditions

Laurelville owns and operates a sanitary sewer system and 200,000 gallons-per-day lagoon WWTP (Figure 1) that was constructed in 1980 and serves approximately 600 people in Laurelville and adjacent Adelphi. The WWTP discharges treated wastewater to Brimstone Creek, which is in full attainment of the biological criteria of its "Warmwater Habitat" designation in the Ohio Water Quality Standards. The facility has long been unable to meet winter ammonia limits in effluent and still cannot achieve those limits after several modifications including the addition of enhanced aeration and biofilters. Additionally, the synthetic liners in the lagoons are deteriorated due to age. A recent engineering evaluation recommended rehabilitating the lagoon system and adding tertiary treatment for ammonia removal.

Project Description

Laurelville intends to improve the WWTP (Figure 2) by replacing deteriorated lagoon liners (after removing and disposing of accumulated sludge) and upgrading the aeration system in two lagoons; installing a new headworks station with a mechanical screen for influent wastewater and a polishing reactor for treated wastewater ammonia reduction; replacing the chlorine disinfection system with ultraviolet light (UV) disinfection; and pump station upgrades. Two tertiary sand filters (converted lagoons) and the headworks comminutor will be demolished.

Aeration upgrades include installing a proprietary diffused aeration system consisting blowers, diffusers, and in-basin piping; modular insulated floating cover; and baffles.

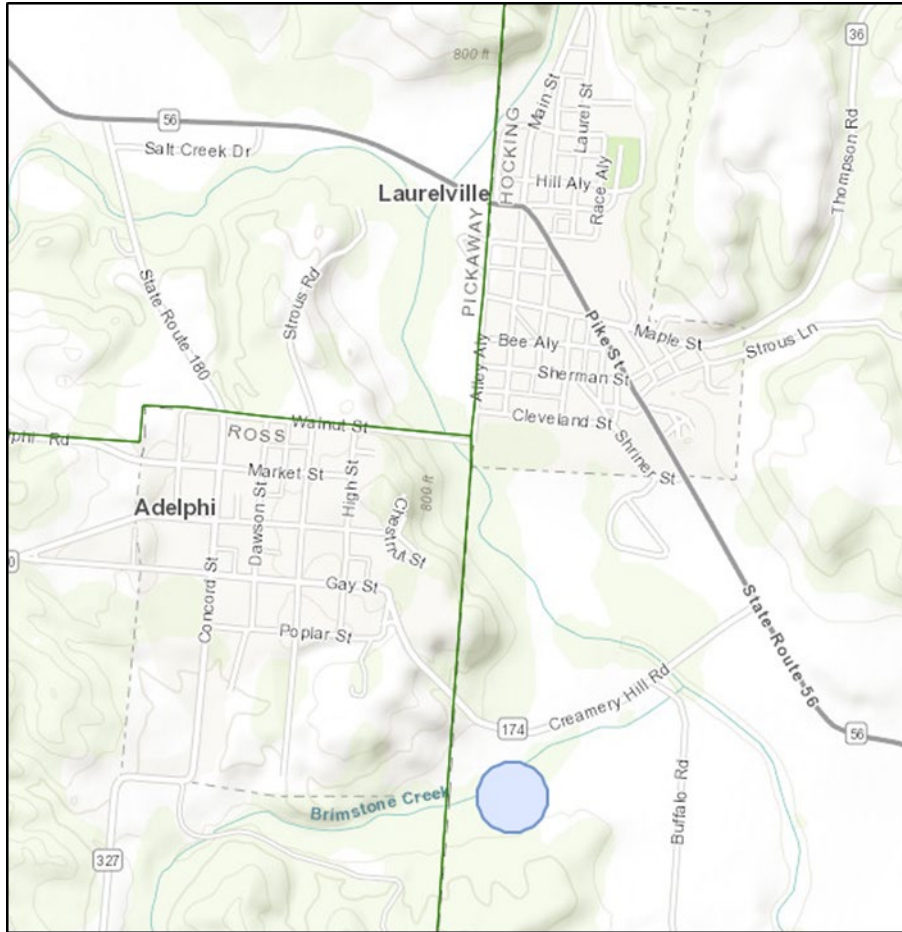


Figure 1 - Project Location (blue circle)

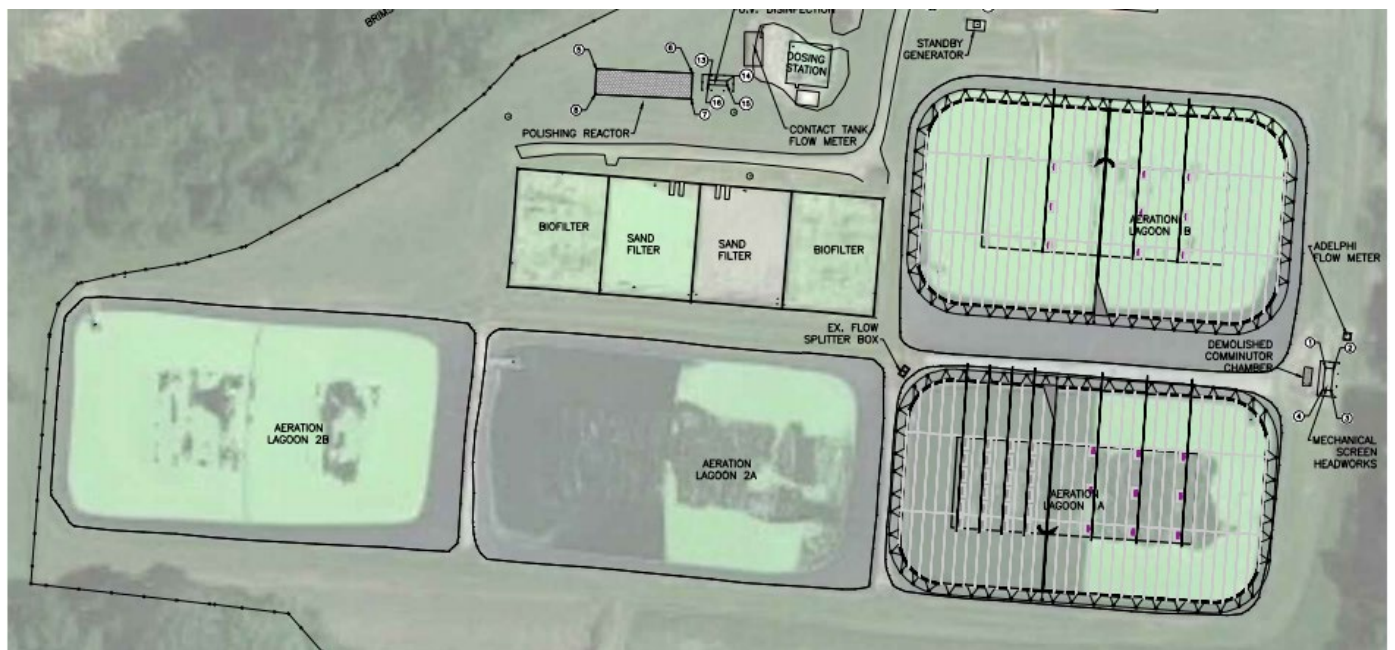


Figure 2 - WWTP Improvements

Implementation

Laurelville will combine a \$1,000,000 grant from the Ohio Public Works Commission and a \$750,000 grant from the Community Development Block Grant program with approximately \$727,000 borrowed from the WPCLF to finance project design and construction costs. Laurelville qualifies for the 0% “Hardship” interest rate for the requested 30-year loan and will save approximately \$241,000 by using WPCLF financing at this interest rate compared to the market rate, 1.98%.

Construction will start in late 2020 and be completed by early 2022.

To prepare for this project debt, Laurelville in March 2020 raised sewer rates 27% with ongoing annual 2.0% increases to ensure adequate wastewater system funding. The typical residential annual sewer bill when this project is complete will be \$350, which is 1.3% of local median household income (MHI; \$27,656) and compares favorably to the state average \$715 and 1.3% of Ohio MHI.

Laurelville minimized the project cost to residents and the impact to the local economy by developing a favorable funding package with more than two-thirds of the cost in grants and the remainder as a 0% loan.

Public Participation

Residents were aware of Village Council’s approval of the sewer rate increase in March 2020 through regular posting of the legislation. Ohio EPA is unaware of controversy about or opposition to the project.

Ohio EPA will make a copy of this document available to the public on its web page (<https://epa.ohio.gov/defa/ofa#169638769-wpclf-documents-for-review-and-comment>) and will provide it on request.

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the project type criteria for a Limited Environmental Review (LER); namely, it is minor upgrading of existing treatment works including, but not limited to, minor rehabilitation of existing facilities, functional replacement of existing mechanical equipment or structures, and construction of new ancillary facilities adjacent or appurtenant to existing facilities that meets the other qualifying criteria for an LER. Specifically, the proposed project:

Will have no effect on high-value environmental resources, will have no significant environmental effect, and will require no specific impact mitigation because all work is in the existing WWTP on mowed lawn, in lagoons, or mechanical upgrades or replacements with no important environmental resources disturbed.

Is cost-effective and not a controversial action because engineering evaluation guided the choice of modifications and upgrades and replacements generally cost less than constructing a new WWTP. Residents have known of the enacted rate increase, and no controversy about or opposition to the project is evident.

Does not create a new, or relocate an existing discharge to surface or ground waters, 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 because the project merely upgrades the existing WWTP for effective operation with no change to its permitted design flow volume.

Contact information

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