



September 11, 2026

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**Village of Jefferson – Ashtabula County
Wastewater Equalization Basin
Loan Number: CS390475-0009**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a wastewater project in Jefferson which the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) intends to finance through its Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) below-market interest rate revolving loan program. The LER describes the project, costs, and expected environmental benefits. Making available this LER fulfills the 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 program review and approval process. We have concluded that the proposed project should not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3745-150-05, this project meets the criteria for an LER rather than the more comprehensive Environmental Assessment. More information can be obtained by contacting the person named at the end of the attached LER.

Upon issuance of this Final 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

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: Wastewater Equalization Basin

Applicant: Village of Jefferson
27 East Jefferson Street
Jefferson, Ohio 44047

Loan Number: CS390475-0009



Figure 1. Ashtabula County

Project Summary

The Village of Jefferson, in Ashtabula County (see Figure 1), requested funding from the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) for the Wastewater Equalization Basin project. The project involves the construction of an additional equalization (EQ) basin at the Jefferson Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to reduce the frequency and quantity of bypass events during heavy wet weather conditions. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated based on the nature and location of construction and proposed protection measures to be implemented as discussed in the conclusion.

History & Existing Conditions

Jefferson owns and operates a sanitary sewer collection system and WWTP that provides sanitary service to customers within the village. See Figure 2 for the location of the WWTP. The current population estimate for Jefferson is around 3,500. The Jefferson WWTP has an average daily design flow of 0.995 million gallons per day (MGD) and discharges treated effluent to Cemetery Creek per Jefferson's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. Peak daily flow to the WWTP is 5.3 MGD, which is largely attributed to significant levels of infiltration and inflow (I&I)¹ within their collection system.

The WWTP is equipped with a 365,000-gallon EQ basin. The EQ basin provides temporary storage of sanitary flows that exceed the treatment capacity of the plant, typically during heavy wet weather events when volumes of I&I are highest. The EQ basin is undersized and cannot adequately provide temporary storage for all wet weather flows. This has led to bypass events, or wet weather overflows, at the WWTP, which releases untreated sanitary flow mixed with stormwater to Cemetery Creek. Wet weather overflows are a threat to the environment and public health.

¹ Infiltration and Inflow (I&I): Infiltration is excess water entering a sanitary sewer system through leaking pipes and connections. Inflow is excess water entering a sanitary sewer system through improper connections such as downspouts and sump pumps.

Jefferson contracted a consultant to investigate and provide recommendations for alternatives to reduce or eliminate bypasses at their plant. Alternatives that were considered included 1) I&I removal throughout their collection system, 2) enhanced secondary treatment at their WWTP, and 3) expanded EQ capacity.

Jefferson has completed two prior sewer rehabilitation projects, which were effective in removing some I&I from their system. Despite seeing positive results, the village determined that I&I removal alone is not the most efficient or cost-effective solution for managing wet weather flows. Jefferson ultimately dismissed this alternative from consideration; however, the village intends to continue evaluating storm data and future feasibility of eliminating sources of I&I within their collection system.

Enhanced secondary treatment would involve constructing a fourth clarifier to match the three already in use at the WWTP. Jefferson ultimately determined that this would not adequately address their I&I capacity issue. Implementing this alternative would also increase the operation and maintenance for plant staff and be an underutilized asset during average daily flows.

Jefferson ultimately determined that expanding their EQ capacity is the most cost-effective alternative. This alternative is capable of providing the level of I&I capacity needed for the village's target metrics and will work efficiently with their existing EQ infrastructure.

Project Description

Jefferson will construct a second 365,000-gallon rectangular EQ basin adjacent to and matching the design of their existing EQ basin. It will be a precast post-tensioned EQ basin. The two basins will work in series meaning that the existing basin will fill first before activating the new basin. Completion of the project will effectively double the WWTP's EQ capacity.

Construction of the new basin will involve site preparation including excavation and subgrade preparation, as well as site piping modifications. Jefferson will also extend their existing asphalt service drive past the new EQ basin and to their existing maintenance garage as part of the project. Currently, their service drive in this area is gravel.

Implementation

The total estimated project cost is \$2,008,800. Jefferson requested \$500,000 from the WPCLF at the hardship rate of 1% to finance a portion of the project. Borrowing this amount in WPCLF monies could save Jefferson roughly \$207,000 over the 20-year loan term compared to the September market rate of 4.44%. Jefferson reports that they will fund the remaining project cost using \$672,000 in local funds, \$536,800 provided by the Ohio Public Works Commission, and \$300,000 provided by the Appalachian Regional Commission.

The debt associated with the project will be recovered from monthly user charges. The sewer service charges for Jefferson are driven by the total indebtedness and annual operation and maintenance

costs for the village's sewer system. Jefferson most recently increased their sewer fees by 3.5% in 2026 per their existing rate schedule, which includes an annual increase of 3.5% per year. This annual increase is subject to review by village council and the village administrator each year. Based on a monthly water usage of 4,000 gallons, the current rate results in an average residential sewer bill for those served by Jefferson of about \$469. This represents 0.87% of Jefferson's median household income of \$53,333 and is lower than the Ohio average annual sewer bill of \$528.

Construction is anticipated to begin following loan award and take 12 months to complete.

Public Participation

Jefferson Village Council meets on the first and third Monday of every month at which ongoing and planned wastewater projects are discussed. Jefferson reports that they have discussed the Wastewater Equalization Basin project at these meetings. Council meeting minutes and video recordings of these meetings are available on the village's website.

Ohio EPA is unaware of any controversy about or opposition to this project. The Limited Environmental Review (LER) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) will be posted on the Ohio EPA Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance website. Additionally, the LER and FNSI have been provided to Jefferson to be made available according to their public notification procedures.

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the criteria for an LER; namely, it is an action within an existing public wastewater treatment system, which involves infrastructure improvements. Furthermore, the project meets the other qualifying criteria for an LER; specifically, the proposed project:

Will have no significant environmental effect and will require no specific impact mitigation. All construction activities will take place on secure, maintained Jefferson WWTP property. These activities pose little to no likely threat to environmental resources and subsequently require no specific impact mitigation. The contractor will be responsible for implementing all necessary construction best management practices (e.g., erosion and sediment control, noise and dust minimization, proper storage and handling of materials, worker and public safety, site security, and legal disposal of waste and excess materials) throughout the duration of construction to avoid or minimize all short-term impacts to the area.

Will have no effect on high-value environmental resources. Construction activities are limited to secure, maintained Jefferson WWTP property. A portion of the proposed new section of asphalt service drive falls within the designated zone of the 100-year floodplain. Work within this area is minimal, and localized flooding will not be impacted by this work. There are otherwise no unique, valuable, or environmental resources in the construction area.

Is cost effective. As discussed previously, Jefferson considered several alternatives to reduce the frequency and capacity of bypasses at their WWTP and ultimately determined that expanding their EQ capacity to be the most cost-effective option.

Is not a controversial action. The nature of the project is such that there will be no significant adverse impact on customers or the environment, and no controversy has been reported. User rates will not be impacted by the project, and customer sanitary sewer service will remain unchanged during construction.

Does not create a new or relocate an existing discharge to surface or ground waters and 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. The new EQ basin will in no way modify these listed features. Rather, completion of the basin will reduce the occurrence of bypasses from the WWTP, thereby decreasing the amount of untreated sanitary flows mixed with stormwater discharges to area waterways from the plant.

Will not provide capacity to serve a population substantially greater than the existing population. Design of the new basin is strictly based on the need for additional EQ capacity at the Jefferson WWTP to reduce bypass occurrences.

Based upon Ohio EPA's review of the planning information and the materials presented in this LER, we have concluded that there will be no significant adverse impacts from the proposed project as it relates to environmental features. This is because these features do not exist in the project area, the features exist but will not be adversely affected, or the impacts will be temporary and mitigated.

Jefferson designed the project to be effective and affordable, the results of which will reduce the occurrences of bypasses at their WWTP, providing greater protection for the environment and public health.

Contact Information

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Figure 2. Jefferson WWTP