



**May 22, 2025**

**Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact  
To All Interested Citizens, Organizations, and Government Agencies**

**Trumbull County  
Pendleton/Gillmer Sanitary Sewer Improvements  
Loan Number: CS390079-0068**

The attached Environmental Assessment (EA) is for a sewer infrastructure improvement project in Trumbull County 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 EA describes the project, its costs, and expected environmental benefits. We would appreciate receiving any comments you may have on the project. Making available this EA and seeking your comments 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 program review and approval process. We have concluded that the proposed project should not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. More information can be obtained by contacting the person named at the end of the attached EA.

Any comments on our preliminary determination should be sent to the email address of the contact named at the end of the EA. We will not act on this project for 30 calendar days from the date of this notice. In the absence of substantive comments during this period, our preliminary decision will become final. After that, Trumbull County can then proceed with its application for the WPCLF loan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kathleen Courtright".

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief  
Division of Environmental & Financial Assistance

Attachment

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

### **Project Identification**

Project: Pendleton/Gillmer Sanitary Sewer Improvements

Applicant: Trumbull County  
160 High Street NW  
Warren, Ohio 44481

Loan Number: CS390079-0068



**Figure 1. Trumbull County**

### **Project Summary**

Trumbull County has requested approximately \$9.2 million from the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) for the Pendleton/Gilmer Sanitary Sewer Improvements project. The project involves eliminating failing household sewage treatment systems (HSTS) and constructing a central sanitary sewer collection system for 250 structures within the project area.

This project is eligible for a portion of the loan as WPCLF principal forgiveness, which will not need to be repaid. Due to the nature and location of construction, as well as proposed protection measures to be implemented, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated, as discussed in the conclusion.

### **History & Existing Conditions**

The Trumbull County Sanitary Engineering Department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of all publicly owned wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) and sanitary sewer collection systems located within the unincorporated areas of Trumbull County (Figure 1). Residential and commercial properties within the Meadowbrook area (Pendleton Road and Gillmer Road project area) are currently unsewered and served by HSTS that are failing and discharging untreated sewage into the Mahoning River. The Meadowbrook project area is located in Leavittsburg within Warren Township.

This project is the second of three projects to address an Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) consent decree area within the Leavittsburg area of Warren Township due to the failed off-lot HSTS. Additionally, the lack of a central sanitary sewer collection system has limited residential and economic development in the area.

See Figure 2 for the proposed service area for this project.

### **Population and Flow Projections**

A total of 250 structures will be serviced by this proposed project. Of the benefiting properties, 245 are residential, two are commercial, two are government buildings, and one is a farm. There are

approximately 163 vacant parcels within the boundaries of the project that may be developed into an additional 75 residential dwellings or commercial establishments after the project is complete.

Treatment will be provided at the new Meadowbrook Package Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) that is currently under construction (Meadowbrook Sanitary Sewer Improvements project). The average daily design flow at start-up is anticipated to be 0.10 million gallons per day (MGD) and is estimated to eventually reach 0.20 MGD, which is a sufficient capacity for the project area.

## **Alternatives**

Trumbull County considered two possible alternatives for serving the project area:

### *1. HSTS Replacements*

The criteria used by the Trumbull County Board of Health for approval of a HSTS include soil permeability, housing density, and lot size. Recent data suggests that at least 90% of the existing septic systems would fail the current treatment requirements established by the Board of Health.

Of the 250 existing structures that are currently serviced by HSTS within the project area, the majority will require off-lot discharge into existing ditches and storm sewers which will eventually enter waters of the state. Therefore, the majority of the new off-lot septic systems will require at a minimum:

- A settling tank with adequate depth and volume to separate and hold primary solids
- An aeration system to reduce the biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) of the waste stream
- Properly sized alternative sand filters to reduce suspended solids
- Disinfection utilizing a chlorination/dechlorination system

### *2. Conventional Collection System*

This alternative proposes the collection of sanitary flow from the project area by gravity sewer and directing it to the newly constructed package WWTP for treatment. This alternative includes approximately 28,500 linear feet (LF) of PVC collector sewer, two pump stations, 2,100 LF of sanitary force main, 250 service laterals in the public right-of-way, and approximately 90 precast concrete manholes.

## **Selected Alternative**

The proposed project is Alternative Two; the construction of the conventional gravity sanitary sewer collection system. This recommended alternative is the most economical and environmentally conscious approach to satisfy the needs of the affected residents.

The gravity sanitary collection system will consist of 22,439 LF of 8-inch sanitary sewer, 1,553 LF of 10-inch sanitary sewer, 1,471 LF of 12-inch sanitary sewer, and 1,814 LF of 4-inch force main to serve the project area along the following roadways; Gillmer Road, Riverview Drive, Bachert Road, Park Road, Mahoning Street, Pendleton Road, Turner Road, Meadowbrook Drive, Bechtel Road, Orris Road,

Burwell Road, McConnel Road, Briggs Road, McManus Road, Bishop Road, Mateer Road and Winters Road. Two new pump stations will also be constructed on Bachert Road and Park Road.

### **Implementation**

The total cost for this project is \$13.8 million. Trumbull County is eligible to receive \$369,300 of their WPCLF loan in the form of principal forgiveness, with the remainder \$8.8 million at 0% regionalization interest rate. With this favorable financing, Trumbull County will save \$8,062,551 compared to financing the entire loan amount at the market rate of 4.72% for a 30-year loan period.

Additionally, Trumbull County is eligible for a Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grant (OSG) through U.S. EPA for \$3.6 million, \$620,000 from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), \$750,000 from the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) and \$300,000 from Department of Development.

The debt associated with this construction project will be recovered from user charges. Trumbull County 2025 sewer rates will increase by \$0.25 in the year 2026. The 2025 average monthly residential sewer bill in Trumbull County will be \$40.14 (\$481.69 annually). This is 1% of the median household income for Trumbull County (MHI;50,258) and is less than the Ohio average annual sewer bill of \$489.95.

Construction will begin after loan award in July 2025 and is estimated to be completed by May 2026.

### **Public Participation**

Public participation includes presenting the project at the Trumbull County Commissioner's meetings. Meetings are open to the public and are held every Wednesday. The meetings are also livestreamed on Zoom through the county website. Commissioner meeting minutes and legislation can be found on the county's website. Additionally, a public hearing for this project will be held in May 2025 with an approximate 30-day public comment period. All costs expected to be incurred by all property owners will be disclosed in the public hearing notices mailed to each property owner.

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

### **Environmental Impacts**

The project has the potential to affect the following features, but the effects will be reduced or mitigated to acceptable levels as explained below.

#### **Aquatic Habitat/Surface Water Resources**

One stream crossing will be necessary below the Mahoning River. The force main crossing under the Mahoning River will be achieved via horizontal directional drilling (HDD) and achieve a minimum of

five feet of clearance below the river bottom. Sediment and erosion controls will be used during the construction to minimize run-off from construction-related activities. Areas disturbed by the project will be stabilized and restored after the construction. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts to surface water are expected from the proposed project

#### Local Economy

By using favorable financing, Trumbull County has minimized the project cost and economic impact to their residents. Removal of HSTS will be the responsibility of the homeowners. Grant programs are available to assist low-income residents.

#### Noise, traffic, safety, and aesthetics

Only the construction phase of the project trenching under the roadway and stream will involve heavy machinery that can emit temporary daytime noise. Some traffic interruptions may occur; however, most work will be occurring within the right-of-way. It will be the contractor's responsibility to implement construction best management practices to limit erosion, sediment, noise, dust, traffic disruptions, and like factors throughout the duration of the project. Disturbed surfaces will be restored upon construction completion.

#### Terrestrial Habitat, Fish and Wildlife, and Endangered Species

Trumbull County will only remove trees during the regular clearing dates of October 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> to protect federally listed endangered and threatened bat species. Some tree removal may occur within the right-of-way when installing the force main.

#### Unaffected Features

The following resources are not present and therefore will not be impacted by this project: Air Quality, Archaeological and Historical Resources, Coastal Zones, Farmland Protection, Floodplains, Ground Water Resources including Sole Source Aquifers and Source Water Assessment and Protection areas, Land use, Wetlands and Wild and Scenic Rivers. Additionally, there will be no change in current Energy Use as it pertains to public space, nor will there be any impacts to drinking water.

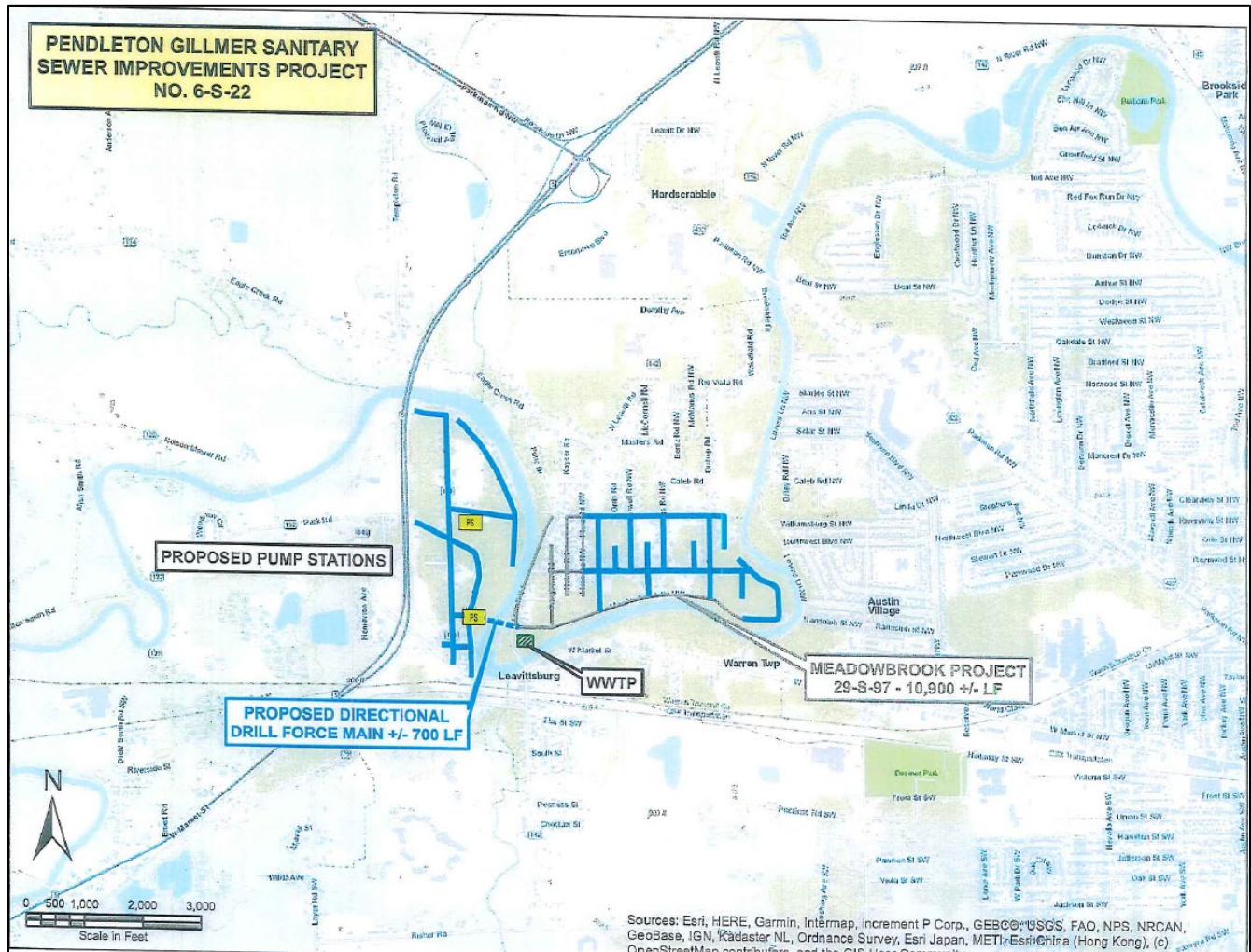
#### **Conclusion**

Based upon Ohio EPA's review of the planning information and the materials presented in this Environmental Assessment, we have concluded that there will be no significant adverse impacts from the proposed project as it relates to the environmental features discussed previously. 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. Completion of this sewer extension project will provide service to an unsewered area, also improving water quality for the current residents.

#### **Contact information**

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Ohio Environmental Protection Agency  
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**Figure 2. Proposed project area**