



May 9, 2024

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

**Trumbull County
State Road Water Regionalization Project
Loan Number: FS390079-0065**

The attached Environmental Assessment (EA) is for a drinking water infrastructure improvement and regionalization project in Trumbull County 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 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 WSRLA 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 a WSRLA loan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Courtright".

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental & Financial Assistance

Attachment

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Identification

Project: State Road Water Regionalization Project

Applicant: Board of Trumbull County Commissioners
160 High Street
Warren, Ohio 44481

Loan Number: FS390079-0065

Project Summary

Trumbull County has requested \$4.6 million in financial assistance from Ohio's Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) to extend water service to 113 properties along State Road and State Route 305 in Champion and Southington townships which currently lack public water and rely on private wells. The project is eligible for half of the project cost in the form of principal forgiveness, which will not need to be repaid.

Additionally, a water main will be constructed along with a pump station to regionalize the Braceville Township public water system (PWS) with the Bazetta/Champion PWS.

In terms of potential direct environmental impacts, Ohio EPA has reviewed the county's proposed water line extension project and determined there will be no significant adverse environmental impacts, as discussed in the conclusion. Any indirect impacts associated with the project's potential to serve new development are covered in the environmental impacts section of this document.

History & Existing Conditions

Trumbull County recently constructed a regionalization project to extend Trumbull County's Braceville Township PWS to supply the Village of West Farmington with drinking water. The source of supply water for the Braceville Township PWS is the City of Newton Falls. Newton Falls' water treatment process includes the use of chlorine and Trumbull County and West Farmington have both been cited by Ohio EPA for exceeding maximum contaminant levels (MCLs).

This project will result in changing the bulk water supplier for both systems from the Village of Newton Falls to the City of Warren. Warren currently provides bulk water for Trumbull County's Bazetta/Champion PWS. This project will not only solve the problem of the MCL violations but also regionalize Trumbull County's Braceville PWS with the Bazetta/Champion PWS. Trumbull County's Bazetta/Champion PWS will absorb the Braceville Township PWS once the interconnection between the two systems is complete. With the elimination of the Braceville Township PWS, Trumbull County will no longer be required to add chlorine to the Braceville system.

Additionally, there are approximately 113 properties that could be served by this project along the proposed route (see Figure 1). Extension of the county's water distribution system will allow properties to eliminate failing or insufficient wells, and open up opportunities for new development in the project area, given the proximity and access to major highways.

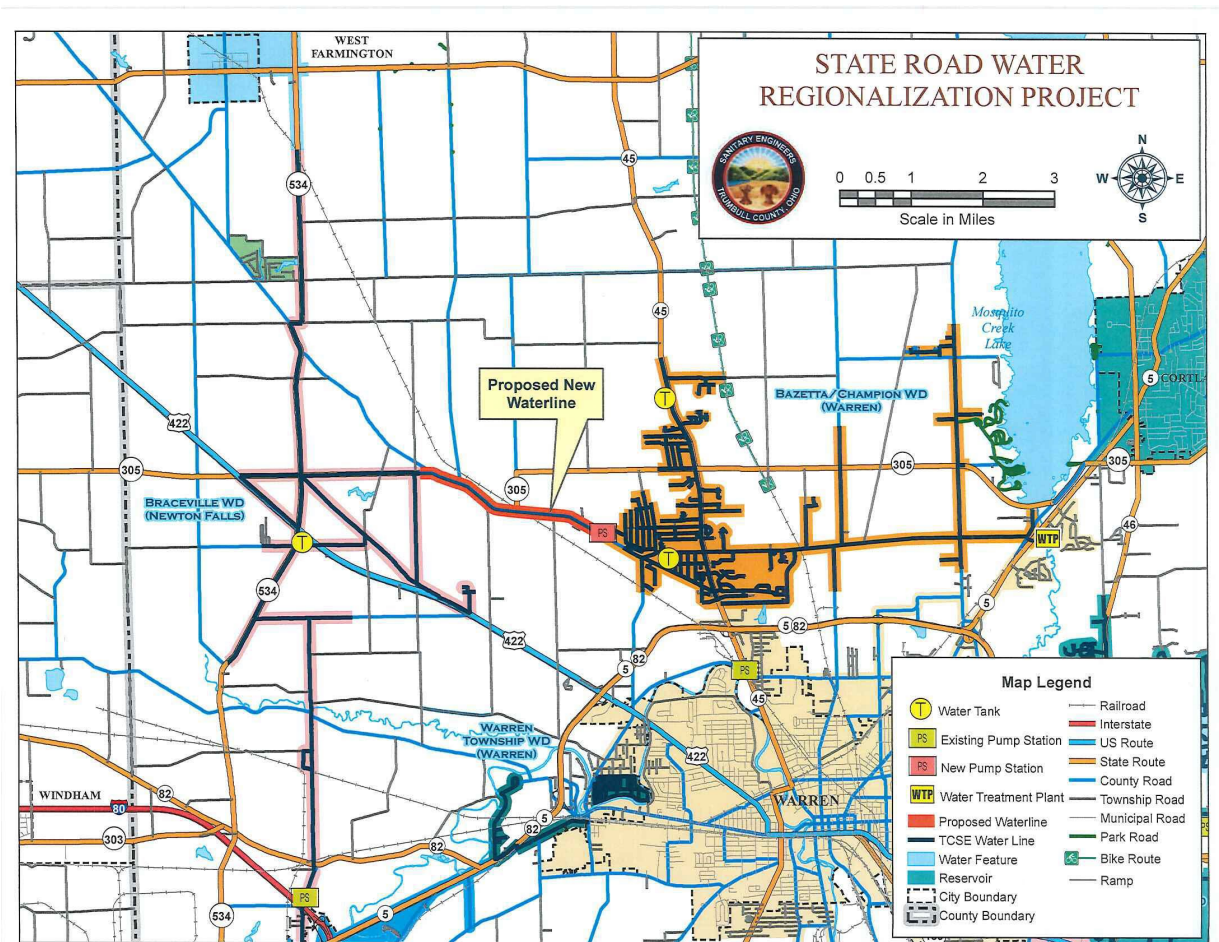


Figure 1. Project area map

Population and Flow Projections

The City of Warren has informed the county they have adequate capacity to supply the Braceville system and the West Farmington system. There are 113 properties that will be served by the proposed project with a population of about 1,000 people in the project area. Of these 113 properties, all of them will be served upon project completion.

Alternatives

The county considered two alternatives during this proposed project. These included a no-action alternative and the proposed alternative to serve the project shown in Figure 1.

Selected Alternative

Since no-action is not feasible, the second alternative was chosen by the county for this project which consists of constructing approximately 19,525 linear feet of a 10-inch-diameter and 2,985 linear feet of 8-inch water main together with a booster pump station. The project will begin at the terminus

of the Bazetta/Champion PWS near the intersection of State Road and Glenn Avenue in Champion Township and extend west along State Road and State Route 305 to a connection point of the Braceville Township PWS near the intersection of State Route 305 and Barclay Messerly Road. The pump station will be constructed near the intersection of State Road and Oakhill Drive in an old railroad easement (see Figure 2). Additionally, an extension with the existing Bazetta/Champion PWS will be constructed to loop two dead end water mains near the intersection of State Route 305 and Alva Avenue.

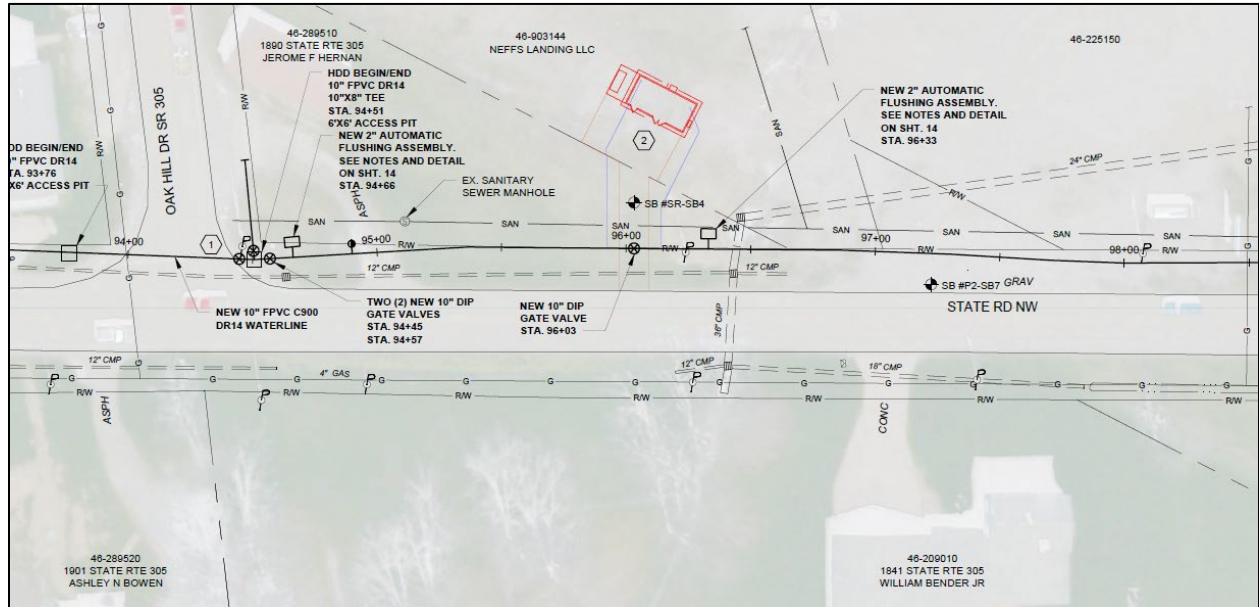


Figure 2. Pump station location, indicated by red outline

This proposed project will result in the combination of Trumbull County's Braceville Township PWS and Trumbull County's Bazetta/Champion PWS; the Braceville PWS will be demolished. In terms of construction, 500 linear feet of water main will be installed using open-cut trenching techniques, while 17,000 linear feet will be installed using horizontal directional drilling techniques. With the exception of the pump station construction, the work will take place entirely within the right-of-way in previously disturbed locations with existing utilities.

Implementation

Total project costs are \$4.9 million, of which all but \$350,000 in American Rescue Protection Act (ARPA) and \$15,000 in local funds is expected to be funded through the WSRLA program. Of this amount, the county is eligible for 50 percent in principal forgiveness funds and the balance in a 0 percent interest rate loan.

The average residential customer will pay \$65.71 per month (\$778.52 annually) for water service. or about 1.5 percent of the county's median household income of \$50,258.

Residents will also be responsible for the cost to properly abandon their current water source and construct a small-diameter water line from the curb box to their structure. The county's current permit fee for a standard house connection is \$429 and auxiliary water sealing permit is \$85.

Under the county's proposed project schedule, WSRLA funds are expected to be awarded in June 2024. The county estimates that construction can be completed in about fifteen months.

Public Participation

The project's public hearing was held on May 1, 2024. Given that the county coordinated directly with residents in the project area and received feedback about water service, Ohio EPA has determined that no additional public review and comment on the proposed project is necessary. All potentially interested parties appear to have been given adequate opportunity to review and comment on this project and its costs.

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. A copy may also be posted at the county's administration building and on its web site (if available).

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.

Air Quality, Safety, and Aesthetics

By controlling noise from construction equipment and limiting the use of equipment to daytime hours, Ohio EPA expects that the county's contractor will not adversely affect the environment. Further, the aesthetics of the project area will be returned to previous condition after construction is completed.

The detail plans and specifications include the language needed to protect the public and contractors during the construction of this project.

Archaeological and Historical Resources

There are a number of historical buildings and cemeteries in the project area. However, after consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Ohio EPA determined these resources should not be impacted. The project is almost entirely within the right-of-way in previously disturbed areas, and when nearing a historical cemetery, the water line will be moved to the opposite side of the road. The pump station will be placed in the site of a previous railroad and should not contain any historical resources.

Endangered Species, Fish and Wildlife

Seven federally listed species may be present in Trumbull County's project area. Of these species, two are federally endangered (Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat), two are proposed endangered (tricolored bat and salamander mussel) two are federally threatened (eastern massasauga rattlesnake and round hickorynut mussel), and one is a candidate species (monarch butterfly). Ohio EPA determined that these seven species will not likely be adversely affected by the proposed project's construction due to the lack of suitable habitat and by limiting tree clearing to the time of year when the bats are absent. More specifically, since any tree removal will occur between October 1 and March 31, this project will have no effect on any federal listed bat species.

Surface Water Resources and Wetlands

There is one intermittent stream in the project area. Additionally, a delineation showed low-quality wetlands in a number of ditches along the road throughout the project area (see Figure 3). To avoid impacting this stream and the wetlands, horizontal directional drilling will be used, or the water line will be moved to the opposite side of the road.



Figure 3. View of wetland along State Road

Unaffected resources

The resource attributes that will be not significantly adversely impacted during construction include coastal zones, energy, floodplains, ground water resources, prime farmland, recreational land, aquatic and terrestrial habitat, sole source aquifers, and wild and scenic rivers.

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. The proposed water main is not expected to result in any significant adverse indirect or cumulative impacts on these resource attributes.

Contact information

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