



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

October 6, 2021

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**City of Columbus – Franklin County
Second Barrel Interconnector Augmentation
Loan number: CS390274-0402**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a sewer augmentation project in Columbus 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,

Kathleen Courtright, for

Jonathan Bernstein, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

Attachment

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Name: Second Barrel Interconnector Augmentation

Applicant: City of Columbus
910 Dublin Road
Columbus, OH 43215

Loan number: CS390274-0402

Project Summary

The City of Columbus in Franklin County has requested \$9,408,487 from the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) for the construction of a second barrel to augment the existing Interconnector Sewer for increased capacity near the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Plant. Construction will take place within the previously disturbed area of the First Barrel Interconnector Sewer and is not expected to cause adverse environmental impacts.

History and Existing Conditions

Columbus treats wastewater from 2,782 miles of sanitary sewers and 167 miles of combined sewers. The city treats the flow from the sewer system at their two wastewater treatment plants, the Jackson Pike Wastewater Treatment Plant (JPWWTP) and the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Plant (SWWTP). The JPWWTP has a design capacity of 68 million gallons per day (MGD) and a peak treatment capacity of 150 MGD. The SWWTP has a current design capacity of 114 MGD and a peak treatment capacity of 330 MGD.

The JPWWTP directs flow to the SWWTP through the Interconnector Sewer to convey flow that exceeds the JPWWTP treatment capacity. The Interconnector Sewer consists of a 13-foot diameter pipe for most of its length. On the west side of the Scioto River at the former interconnector pump station site, the sewer transitions to a 104-inch diameter pipe that maintains conveyance capacity due to the slope of the pipe. The sewer then transitions at the Interconnector Inlet Chamber (IIC) to three 72-inch diameter pipes to cross under the Scioto River. On the east side of the Scioto River at the Interconnector Outlet Chamber (IOC), the sewer transitions to a 104-inch diameter sewer, which is termed the "First Barrel". The First Barrel extends from the IOC to the SWWTP Influent Junction Chamber (IJC) located just upstream of the SWWTP Influent Screening Facility. In addition to the Interconnector Sewer, the IJC receives flow from the Big Walnut Outfall (BWO) sewer and the Big Walnut Augmentation/Rickenbacker Interceptor (BWARI) sewer. With the final segment of the Interconnector Sewer consisting of a 104-inch diameter pipe at a minimal slope, this segment creates a bottleneck that limits the sewer's total conveyance capacity.

Project Description

The Second Barrel Interconnector Augmentation project consists of installing approximately 2,300 linear feet of 104-inch diameter sewer, north of the First Barrel, from the Interconnector Sewer Outlet Chamber to the IJC. The new pipe will provide additional flow capacity to the SWWTP where

the sanitary sewage flows will be treated prior to being discharged to the Scioto River. It also includes rehabilitation of the IJC structure. The benefits of this project are mitigating sewer overflow activations in West Franklinton by increasing the sewer capacity in this area to a 10-year level of service and reducing water-in-basement occurrences.

The construction footprint for this project will remain within the confines of an open field that was previously cleared during the construction of the Field Barrel, thereby minimizing effects on environmental resources. The contractor is responsible for best management practices to control erosion and sedimentation and minimize the creation of dust during construction. No residents will be impacted by the project construction.

Maps of the project location are provided in the exhibits below.

Implementation

Project Costs

Columbus plans to borrow \$9,408,487 from the WPCLF. During the 20-year loan period, Columbus will save approximately \$1,291,466 by using WPCLF dollars at the standard rate of 0.48%, compared to the market rate of 1.73%.

Local Economy

The current Columbus residential sewer bill is approximately \$605/year. Projected residential sewer bills with the implementation of this and other associated wastewater projects are expected to increase to approximately \$720/year, or 1.4% of the median household income (MHI) of Columbus, which is \$51,612.

By using WPCLF financing for this project, Columbus has minimized the economic impact on customers.

Project Schedule

The anticipated loan award will occur in October 2021. Construction will start following loan award and is expected to be completed by July 2022.

Public Participation

A public notice was posted on the City of Columbus' Public Utilities webpage detailing the proposed construction project. Contact information was provided for any public questions or concerns.

Ohio EPA will make a copy of this document available to the public on its web page: <http://epa.ohio.gov/defa/ofa.aspx> (Under the "What's New" tab, scroll to: "Documents Available for Review and Comment - WPCLF Documents for Review and Comment") and will provide it upon request to interested parties. Information supporting this Limited Environmental Review (LER) is available from the project contact named below.

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the project type criteria for an LER; namely, it is an action for the minor modification of existing collection system. Furthermore, the project meets the other qualifying criteria for an LER; specifically, the proposed project:

- *Has no significant environmental effect, no effect on high value environmental resources, and does not require extensive specific impact mitigation.*

Construction for the project is limited to the previously disturbed footprint of the First Barrel Interconnector Sewer, where previous wetland mitigation and surveys for cultural resources have taken place. Standard construction best management practices will be required to control dust, sediment runoff, noise, and maintain safety. Although construction will occur within the floodplain, no new structures will be installed above the existing grade and the contractor will commit to take all necessary precautions to protect project work and equipment against flooding occurrences.

- *Is cost effective and not controversial.*

The proposed project is cost effective as it involves seeking modifications to the existing sewer system to increase the capacity of flow and mitigate the risk of sanitary overflows and costly backup events. Operation and maintenance costs to existing equipment will decrease at the completion of this project from the decrease in required labor and maintenance. Ohio EPA is unaware of any specific opposition to or controversy about this project.

- *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.*

This project involves the addition of a Second Barrel to increase conveyance capacity for current wastewater needs. The project will not increase wastewater discharges, nor provide capacity to serve a greater population. There will be no change in pollutant loading. Rather, the project will eliminate the risk of sanitary sewer overflow events.

Based upon the available planning information for this project and the materials presented within this LER, Ohio EPA concludes that the proposed project will not result in any significant adverse impacts to any environmental features. The project is expected to have no significant short-term or long-term adverse impacts on the quality of the human environment or on sensitive resources such as surface waters, coastal zones, riparian areas, floodplains, wetlands, state-designated scenic or recreational rivers, prime or unique agricultural lands, aquifer recharge zones, archaeologically or historically significant sites, or threatened or endangered species.

This project will improve Columbus' sanitary sewer collection system by providing additional capacity to eliminate overflows and water-in-basement occurrences that could endanger human health and the environment.

Contact

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Exhibit 1: Project location map



Exhibit 2: Project location map

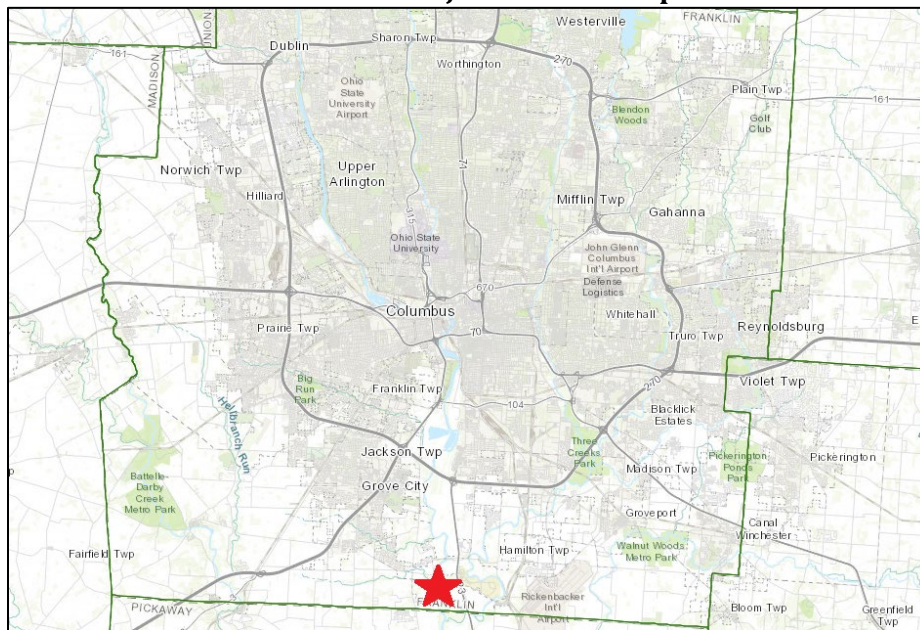


Exhibit 3: Aerial imagery of project location

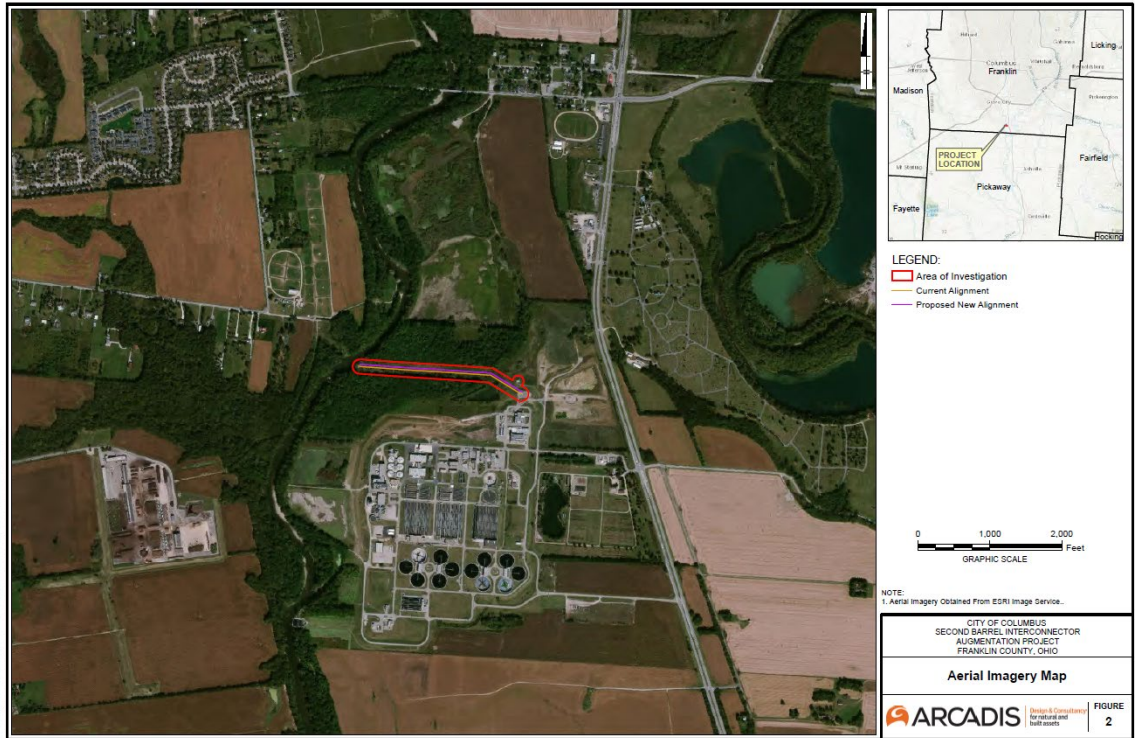


Exhibit 4: Diagram of addition of Second Barrel to existing Interconnector Sewer

