



Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor
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January 30, 2023

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**Village of Spencer – Medina County
Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements
Loan number: CS390876-0003**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a wastewater treatment plant improvement project in Spencer 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, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

Attachment

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements

Applicant: Village of Spencer
112 North Main Street
Spencer, Ohio 44275

Loan Number: CS390876-0003



Figure 1. Medina County

Project Summary

The Village of Spencer has requested funding from the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) to finance their Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements project. This project is intended to replace a variety of failing equipment at the village's wastewater treatment plant (WWTP).

History & Existing Conditions

The Village of Spencer in Medina County (Figure 1) operates its own wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and sewage collection system that was built in 1968 and discharges to Spencer Creek. In 1995, earthen lagoon basins for a single aeration tank and a single sludge holding tank were constructed. Both basins were lined with three feet of clay and the sludge basin was additionally lined with a synthetic fabric liner over the clay to theoretically make the basins watertight.

The south side slope of the sludge basin failed due to excessive moisture saturating the clay liner causing the clay to slip downslope into the bottom of the basin. Upon investigation of this failure, it was determined that the excessive moisture was not coming from the leaking liner in the sludge basin but rather from the aeration basin clay liner which had also failed, saturating the soil in between the two basins as well as the embankment to the south side of the aeration basin.

In 2015, the village replaced the aeration basin with three precast concrete aeration tanks and the plan was to repair the sludge basin after the saturated clay dries out. However, that was never done, and the sludge basin now needs to be repaired or replaced, along with the treatment plant's raw sewage pumps and return pumps that are nearing the end of their life expectancy. The village would also like to install meters in the plant to know how much sludge is being returned or taken out of the plant.

Project Description

The WWTP improvements will include the replacement of the existing sludge pond with two 12,715-gallon aerobic digesters, one 109,948-gallon sludge holding tank, and a new precast sludge pump transfer station. The existing raw sewage and sludge pumps will also be replaced. The project also includes adding meters to the system to measure how much sludge is being returned and removed, along with a new Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system and new air blowers. The project location is shown below outlined in red in Figure 2.

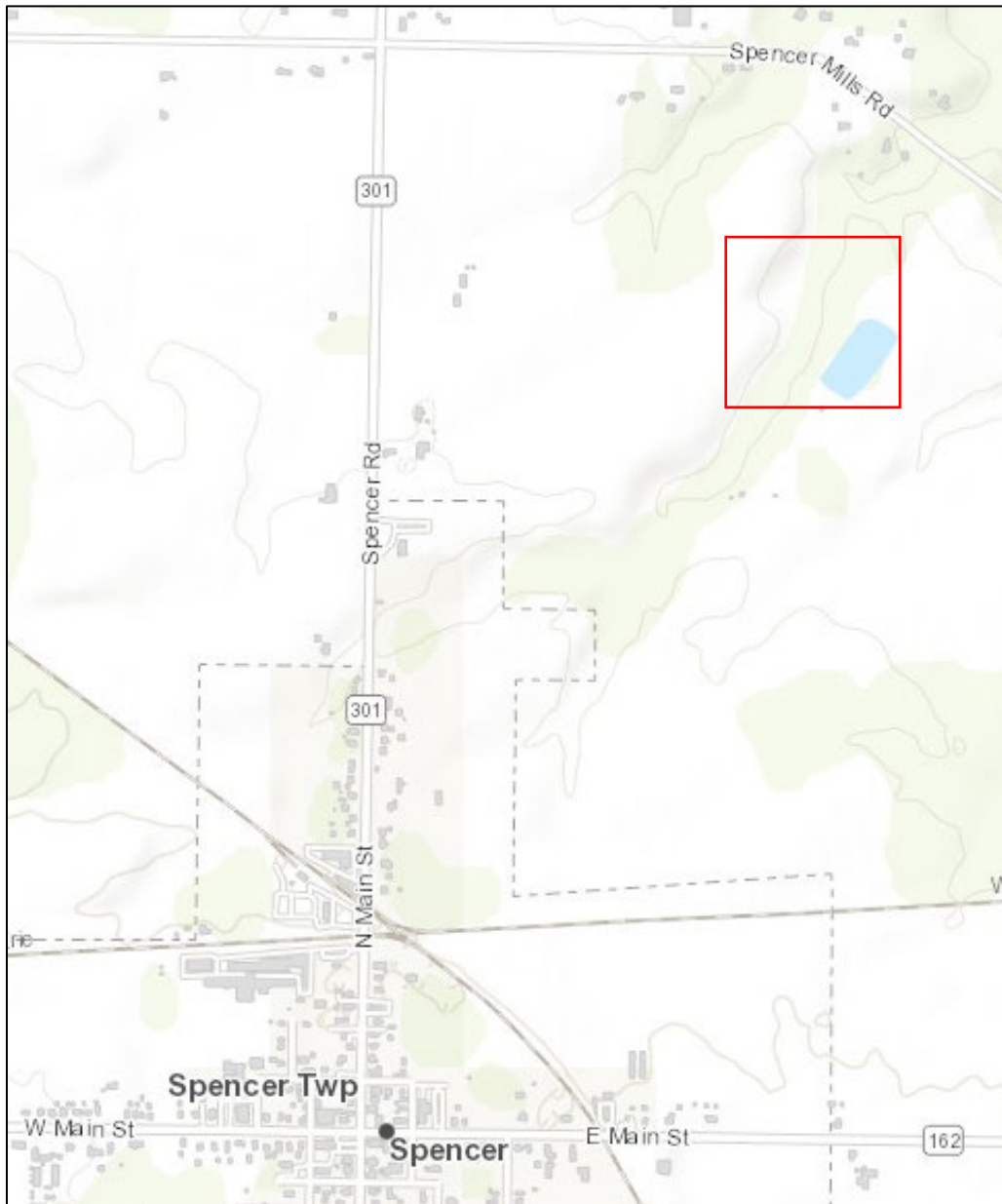


Figure 2. Project location

Implementation

The Village of Spencer proposes to borrow \$1,100,000 in Ohio WPCLF funding for this project. Their financing package also includes \$500,000 of state infrastructure grant dollars and \$500,000 from the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC). Spencer qualifies for a 0% hardship rate; assuming a 20-year loan, borrowing this amount in WPCLF dollars could save the village approximately \$495,000 over the life of the loan compared to the current market rate of 3.91%.

Spencer does not currently have any rate increases planned. They have already established a sewer surcharge that will be used as additional resources in funding sewer projects. Construction is scheduled to begin April 2023 and to be completed in approximately five months.

Public Participation

This project has been discussed at village council meetings open to the public.

Ohio EPA is unaware of opposition to or controversy about the project. Ohio EPA will make a copy of this document available to the public on its webpage: <https://epa.ohio.gov/divisions-and-offices/environmental-financial-assistance/announcements> and will provide it on request to interested parties.

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the criteria for a Limited Environmental Review (LER); namely, it is an action within an existing public wastewater treatment system, which involves the functional replacement of and improvements to existing mechanical equipment within a WWTP. Furthermore, the project meets the other qualifying criteria for an LER; specifically, the proposed project:

Will have no significant environmental effect, will require no specific impact mitigation, and will have no effect on high-value environmental resources because the construction will be taking place inside and just outside of an existing WWTP that has experienced previous excavation. There are no high-value environmental resources in this developed area.

Is cost effective, is not a controversial action, and will not provide capacity to serve a population substantially greater than the existing population because there is no viable alternative to replacing failing mechanical equipment inside a WWTP. Ohio EPA is unaware of controversy about or opposition to this project. As this project is purely mechanical replacement, service will not be extended in any way nor provide additional capacity.

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 because this project merely upgrades existing mechanical equipment in the WWTP and has no other effect on the city sewer system.

Based upon Ohio EPA's review of the planning information and the materials presented in this Limited Environmental Review, 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. This project will eliminate failing infrastructure at the Spencer WWTP, resulting in improved efficiency.

Contact information

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