



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

December 27, 2021

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**Gallia County Rural Water Association – Gallia County
Johnson Ridge Storage Tank Improvements
Loan number: FS391410-0003**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a water storage tank construction project in Gallia 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 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 WSRLA 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,

Jonathan Bernstein

Jonathan Bernstein, Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

Attachment

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: Johnson Ridge Storage Tank Improvements

Applicant: Gallia County Rural Water Association
542 Burnett Road
Gallipolis, Ohio 45631

Loan Number: FS391410-0003



Figure 1. Gallia County

Project Summary

Gallia County Rural Water (GCRW), in Gallia County (Figure 1), has requested funding from the Ohio Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) to fund the Johnson Ridge Storage Tank Improvements project. This project is intended to increase water storage in the Johnson Ridge service area by constructing an additional standpipe-type storage tank.

History & Existing Conditions

GCRW is a not-for-profit water association that serves most of Gallia County and has distribution mains that reach into the surrounding counties of Vinton, Jackson, Lawrence, and Meigs. GCRW operates their own water treatment facility and provides water service to 10,000 customers through a distribution system of over 700 miles of 2- to 16-inch water mains, booster stations, and storage tanks. This project is aimed at correcting storage deficiencies in the Johnson Ridge service area of GCRW's distribution system.

The Johnson Ridge service area consists of approximately 428 rural residential customers and one school. Water storage is provided to this area by a 50,000-gallon (17,000 gallons of usable storage) standpipe-type storage tank, referred to hereafter as a standpipe, that was constructed in 1980. The Johnson Ridge standpipe receives flow from a booster station that has two pumps with a combined rating of 82 gallons per minute. This service area has an average daily demand of 62,000 gallons, which exceeds the storage capacity of the existing standpipe and requires the booster station to operate more than is desired to keep up with water demand.

Water storage is needed to maintain service to customers during maintenance of distribution components upstream of the standpipe. Adequate storage also provides time to react to and correct failures in the distribution system upstream of the standpipe, such as a break in the water main or failure of the booster station that feeds the standpipe. Additionally, inadequate storage can lead to water levels dropping excessively during high periods of demand, causing low water pressure and the potential for the need to issue a boil order.

For these reasons, there is a need to increase the usable water storage in the Johnson Ridge service area.

Project Description

This project involves the construction of a glass-lined standpipe-type storage tank adjacent to the existing standpipe on the Johnson Ridge tank site (Figure 2). The new standpipe will have a capacity of 314,000 gallons and be about 22 feet in diameter and 107 feet tall. Also included in this project is the installation of valves and boxes, a hydrant, 6-inch water main, chain link fencing and gate around the tank site, and other associated site work.

The existing Johnson Ridge standpipe will remain in service during and after construction, which will reduce the likelihood that customers will experience service interruptions. The existing standpipe will be evaluated at its next major maintenance cycle to determine the cost effectiveness of its continued maintenance and use.

The new standpipe will provide the capacity to serve the current average daily usage and potential changes in usage patterns and user growth across its long-life expectancy. Additionally, having two standpipes will allow for one to be taken out of service during maintenance or repair while the other remains active.



Figure 2. Johnson Ridge tank site (red)

Implementation

GCRW proposes to borrow the estimated amount of \$511,000 from the Ohio WSRLA to fund this project. GCRW qualifies for the standard WSRLA interest rate of 0.65% (interest rates are set monthly and may change for the requested February loan award). Assuming a loan term of 20 years, GCRW

could save approximately \$71,000 over the life of the loan compared to the current market rate of 1.9%.

The debt associated with this construction project will be recovered from user charges. The average annual water bill for residents served by GCRW, based on a monthly usage of 7,756 gallons, is \$780. This is 1.7% of the local median household income (MHI; \$44,858), which is greater than the Ohio average bill, \$639. GCRW does not intend to increase user rates because of this project.

Construction is expected to begin in early 2022 following loan award and be completed in late 2022.

Public Participation

GCRW's operating board reviews and provides info on customer policies at regular meetings that are open for customers to attend. An annual public meeting is held, at which GCRW provides a report on the summary of the prior year and anticipated plans. GCRW also provides information to customers through their website.

Ohio EPA is unaware of controversy about or opposition to this project. Ohio EPA will make a copy of this document available to the public on the following webpage and will provide it upon request.

<https://epa.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/epa/divisions-and-offices/environmental-financial-assistance/announcements>

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the project type criteria for a Limited Environmental Review (LER); namely, it is an action within an existing water distribution system, which involves the addition of a new standpipe-type storage tank at an existing storage site. Furthermore, the project meets the other qualifying criteria for an LER; specifically, the proposed project:

Will have no significant environmental effect, will have no effect on high-value environmental resources, and will require no specific impact mitigation. Construction will take place at the Johnson Ridge tank site, which is a non-wooded, maintained site that contains no suitable habitat for state and federally listed endangered and threatened species. There are no historic properties or previously recorded archaeological sites on the tank site. Due to previous disturbances associated with the existing standpipe, it is unlikely that this project will impact archaeological deposits. Additionally, there are no historic properties within view of the tank site. Standard construction best management practices will minimize temporary, short-term traffic, noise, dust, and erosion.

Is cost effective. Construction of the standpipe at another location, as opposed to at the Johnson Ridge tank site, would require a taller standpipe and additional water main leading to increased system complexity and higher costs. Construction of an elevated storage tank at the Johnson Ridge tank site, as opposed to a standpipe, is not necessary for the needed capacity and would be more costly. For these reasons, construction of a standpipe at the existing Johnson Ridge tank site was determined to be the technically and financially preferred alternative.

Is not a controversial action. This project will have no impact on residential water rates, and there have been no negative responses from residents adjacent to the tank site. As there is already a standpipe on the Johnson Ridge tank site, the construction of an additional standpipe will have minimal impact on the change in view of the site.

Does not create a new or relocate an existing discharge to surface or ground waters, does not create a new source of water withdrawals from either surface or ground waters, does not significantly increase the amount of water withdrawn from an existing water source, does not substantially increase the volume of discharge or 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 merely involves the construction of an additional standpipe that is sized appropriately to serve the current average daily usage of the Johnson Ridge service area. While the new standpipe will provide additional capacity to serve potential changes in usage patterns and user growth, GCRW does not anticipate significant growth in the Johnson Ridge service area. For these reasons, there will be no effect on existing water withdrawal, treatment, discharge, source, or service capacity

The planning review of the project identified no potentially significant short-term or long-term adverse impacts on the quality of the human environment or on sensitive resources (surface waters, coastal zones, floodplains, wetlands, state-designated scenic or recreational rivers, prime or unique agricultural lands, aquifer recharge zones, archaeological or historically significant sites, threatened and endangered species, or state and federal wildlife areas).

Contact information

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