



John R. Kasich, Governor
Mary Taylor, Lt. Governor
Craig W. Butler, Director

June 13, 2014

Issuance of a Limited Environmental Review
To All Interested Citizens, Organizations, and
Government Agencies

Village of Oak Hill
Water Meter Replacement Project
Loan No. FS390708-0004

The purpose of this notice is to advise the public that Ohio EPA has reviewed the referenced project and finds neither a Supplemental Study (SS) nor an Environmental Assessment (EA) is required to implement the project as discussed in the attached Limited Environmental Review (LER).

The proposed project involves replacing all the direct read water meters in the Village with drive-by meters. An LER was completed for this project as it will not individually, cumulatively over time, or in conjunction with other Federal, State, local, or private actions have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Consequently, a Finding of No Significant Impact is being issued for this project.

The Water Supply Revolving Loan Account program requires the inclusion of environmental factors in the decision-making process for project approval. Ohio EPA has done this by incorporating a detailed analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed action in its review and approval process. Environmental information was developed as part of the project general plan, and through the plan review process. Subsequent to the review, this Agency has found that the proposed action does not require the preparation of either an EA or an SS.

Our environmental review concluded that, because the proposed project is limited in scope and meets all applicable criteria, a Limited Environmental Review is warranted. Specifically, the project:

- has no significant adverse environmental effect,
- does not require extensive specific impact mitigation,
- has no effect on high value environmental resources,
- is clearly cost-effective,
- is not a controversial action,

- does not create a new, or relocate an existing discharge to surface or ground waters,
- will not create a new source of water withdrawals from either surface or ground waters, or significantly increase the amount of water withdrawn from an existing water source,
- 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.

The LER presents additional information on the proposed project, its costs and the basis for our decision. Further information can be obtained by calling or writing the contact person listed on the back of the LER.

Upon issuance of this determination, loan award may proceed without being subject to further environmental review or public comment, unless information is provided that determines environmental conditions on the proposed project have changed significantly.

Sincerely,



Alauddin A. Alauddin, Chief
Ohio EPA
Division of Environmental &
Financial Assistance

Attachment

Limited Environmental Review

A. Project Identification

Name: Village of Oak Hill
Water Meter Replacement Project

Address: Roy McCarty, Mayor
415 North Front Street
Oak Hill, Ohio 45656

WSRLA Loan: FS390708-0004

B. Project Summary

The Village of Oak Hill has applied to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency for financial assistance from the Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) program for its community-wide water meter replacement project.

The existing water meters are well beyond their useful life and are not functioning correctly, making it impossible to accurately measure water consumption and determine loss due to leakage. In 2013, the Village could not account for 39 percent of water use. In terms of water cost, the Village paid \$45,000 for lost water in 2013. The project will replace all 1,248 manual read water meters in the distribution system with drive-by radio read meters.

No significant adverse environmental impacts are expected. A map of the project area is attached to this LER.

C. Existing Conditions

The Village purchases water from nearby distribution systems to serve about 1,260 customers in the village and adjacent areas with a total population of about 1,600. Water is metered before entering each customer's property. The Village completed a \$1.3 million waterline project in 2012 that replaced 40% of the distribution system to reduce water loss. New meters are needed to accurately measure water consumption of each customer. In 2013, the Village purchased about 100,000 gallons from Jackson County Water System, and 94.7 million gallons from Scioto Water, Incorporated.

D. Project Description

The Village has already replaced a large part of its distribution system to reduce water loss. The no-action alternative is unacceptable because the village would continue to experience high, unaccountable water consumption. The selected

alternative of replacing the existing water meters with remote read meters in the same meter pit will minimize installation cost, eliminate the need to visually check each meter and ensure accurate billing.

Sizes and numbers of meters needed are:

- 5/8 inch – 1,210 (includes 10 spare meters)
- 1 inch – 15
- 2 inch – 15
- 2 inch compound – 15
- 4 inch – 1

E. Estimated Project Costs

The total cost of the project is \$362,230. Oak Hill anticipates receiving funding of \$138,794 from the Ohio EPA's WSRLA program, and a grant of \$223,436 from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). Based on the award of WSRLA small community affordability points, the Village qualifies for an interest-rate of 2% and a term of 15 years. Based on the two per cent rate, the Village will save approximately \$35,500 over the term of the loan through the WSRLA compared to the current market rate of 4.84%.

The Village intends to repay the loan from water user charges. Based on information in the loan application, the average revenue from a residential customer in 2013 was \$283 per year. The anticipated additional user cost due to the project is \$9.40 per year for a total annual cost of \$292.40. This represents 0.9% of the Village's median household income (MHI) of \$32,344, less than the Ohio average of 1.14% of the state MHI for water service. With the help of the below-market WSRLA interest rate and ARC grant for this project, water service should remain affordable for the typical residential water user. The village reviews its rate structure annually to determine whether there is a need to increase user charges.

F. Project Schedule

The Village opened bids for the project in April 2014, and expects the loan to be awarded in late June 2014. Implementation of the project will commence shortly after the WSRLA loan award, and take approximately one year to complete.

G. Public Notification

The project has been discussed at the Village's semi-monthly public board of affairs and council meetings for the past year. The council meetings are covered by the Jackson County Times Journal. In addition, property owners will be contacted to notify them of water service interruption. Ohio EPA is not aware of any significant opposition to the project. Based on the foregoing,

the Village's public information and participation activities are considered sufficient.

The Village will place a notice of the availability of this Limited Environmental Review (LER) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) decision on its website. Ohio EPA will also make these documents available on its website at: (<http://epa.ohio.gov/defa/EnvironmentalandFinancialAssistance.aspx>) under the "What's New" tab in the "WSRLA Documents for Review and Comment" list.

H. Planning Information

Planning information for the proposed water meter replacement project was reviewed by Ohio EPA's Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance and Division of Drinking and Ground Water. Review by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) was not necessary because the project involves no change to any buildings or other structures, and no historic resources are present in the area of potential effect, which would be the small area in and around the meter pits. No review by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources was necessary because the project area is fully developed and disturbance from the proposed project will be restricted to the existing meter pit areas. Ohio EPA is not aware of any controversy or opposition concerning the project.

I. Conclusion

As a minor upgrading of the existing water system entailing functional replacement of existing equipment, the proposed water meter replacement project qualifies generally for a Limited Environmental Review because it will not individually, cumulatively over time, or in conjunction with other government or private actions, have a significant adverse effect on the quality of the human or natural environment. The project also meets the following additional criteria for a LER:

Has no significant environmental effect; has no effect on high value environmental resources; and therefore does not require extensive specific impact mitigation –

The project merely replaces existing water meters with remote read water meters in the same pit and requires no significant excavation or change to any structure.

Is cost-effective and is not a controversial action -

The project planning information projects that a small rate increase may be necessary due to the cost of the project. Increased revenue from accurate customer water use measurement is expected. Ohio EPA is unaware of opposition or controversy concerning the project.

Will not provide capacity to serve a population substantially greater than the

existing population; 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 -

The proposed project consists only of replacing existing water meters and purchasing a small number of spare meters to meet the needs of current customers. No expansion of the service area will result from the project, as the population of the Village has shown decreases over each of the last three 10-year census intervals. The Village does not operate a water treatment plant, so it has no involvement in decisions concerning treatment facilities, though this project should not affect service capacity, discharge locations, or discharge parameters at other facilities.

Does not create a new source of water withdrawals from either surface or ground waters, or significantly increase the amount of water withdrawn from an existing water source -

As noted above, the Village does not own a water treatment facility, so the project will not directly affect water withdrawal sources or amounts. While local demand has increased slightly from year to year, probably due to connections in the service area outside the village, the Village has reduced overall water consumption by replacing a large part of its distribution system and plans additional replacement of waterlines. Reductions in loss should more than compensate for any slight increase in demand, so the outside suppliers will not need to increase water withdrawals due to the project.

The planning activities for the project have identified no potentially significant adverse impacts. The project is not expected to have any significant short-term or cumulative long-term, direct or indirect adverse impacts on the quality of the human environment or on sensitive resources. Disturbance, if any, will be limited to a small area around the existing meter pits. The project will allow more accurate and efficient measurement of customer water use and help the Village to determine the sources of remaining leakage loss, which it then hopes to address.

J. For further information, please contact:

Joe Jellick
Ohio EPA - DEFA
P.O. Box 1049
Columbus, OH 43216-1049
(614) 644-3667
joe.jellick@epa.ohio.gov

