



**October 31, 2023**

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

**Trumbull County Sanitary Engineer - Trumbull County  
Elm Road Waterline Improvements  
Loan Number: FS390079-0053**

The attached Environmental Assessment (EA) is for a waterline improvements 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 the WSRLA loan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Courtright".

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief  
Division of Environmental & Financial Assistance

Attachment

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

### **Project Identification**

Project: Elm Road Water Line Improvements

Applicant: Board of Commissioners of Trumbull County  
c/o Trumbull County Sanitary Engineer  
842 Youngstown Kingsville Road  
Vienna, Ohio 44473

Loan Number: FS390079-0053

### **Project Summary**

The Board of Trumbull County Commissioners has requested \$1.96 million in financial assistance from Ohio EPA's Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA). The total project is \$4 million. According to the county, this project involves the construction of approximately 10,000 linear feet (lf) of 10-inch water mainline extension to provide public water service to 34 residential and 27 commercial properties along Elm Road and Warren Meadville Road in Bazetta Township. A pump station will also be constructed to interconnect this service area with the county's Bazetta/Champion public water system (pws). See Figure 1 below for the project location. This proposed water line extension is needed to bring finished water to new water customers.

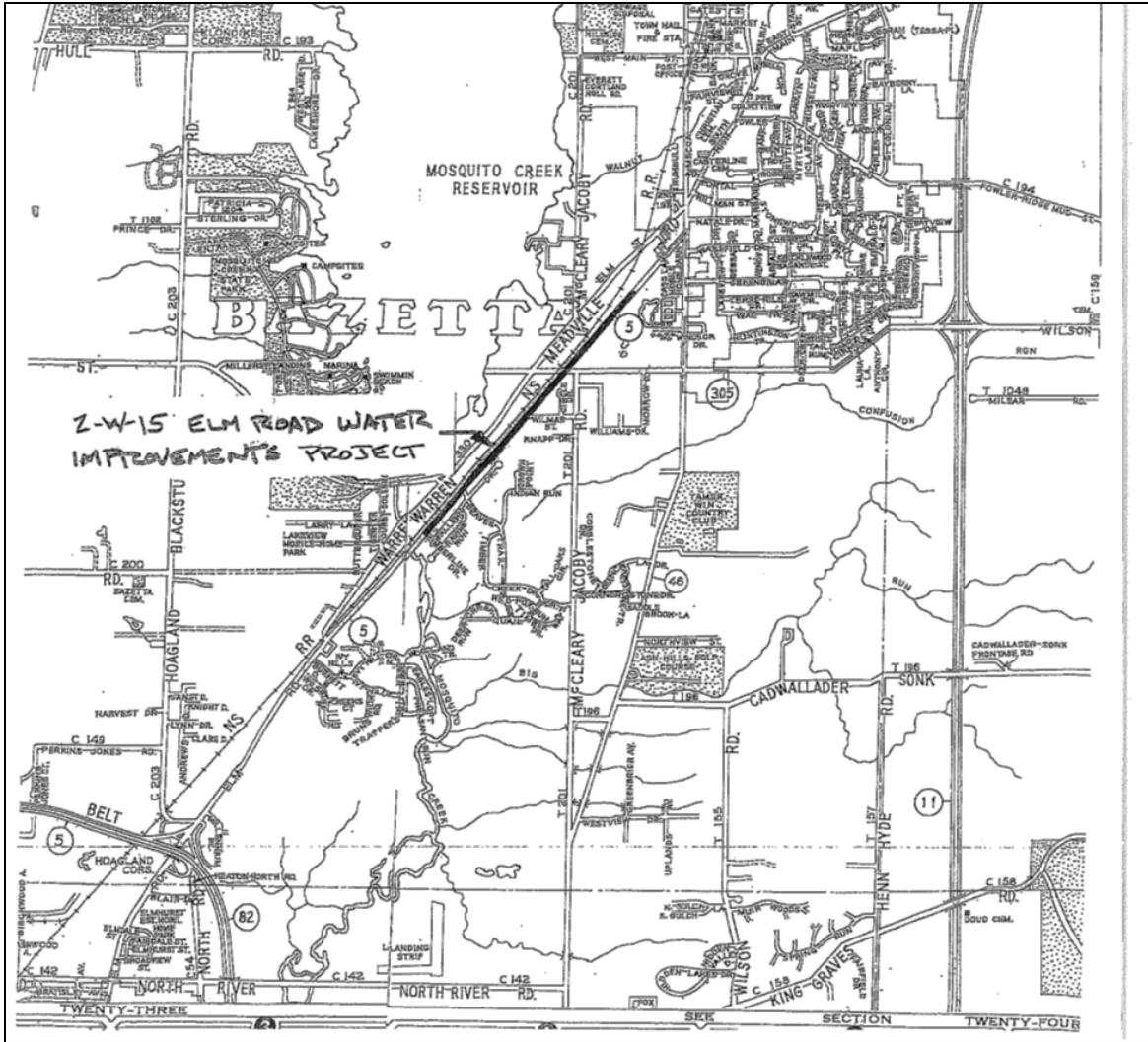
In terms of potential direct environmental impacts, Ohio EPA has reviewed the county's proposed water line extension project, including the two needed creek crossings, and determined there will be no significant adverse environmental impacts, as discussed in the conclusion.

### **History & Existing Conditions**

The project area shown in Figure 1 is an unincorporated neighborhood in Trumbull County consisting of 34 residential and 27 commercial properties which currently rely on private wells and do not have centralized water service.

Trumbull County is responsible for providing central water service within unincorporated areas of the county, such as the portion of Bazetta Township shown above. The property owners along Elm Road in Bazetta Township submitted petitions to the Board of Trumbull County Commissioners. According to the county, the property owners in the project area petitioned the county because of the high sulfur, iron, and other minerals within their well water and the need to use bottled water for consumption. As a result, the county's sanitary engineer hired a consultant engineering firm to design the project in August 2018.

Based on discussions with communities that could provide water service to areas needing public water, the county chose the City of Warren to be the water supply provider for this project. Currently, Warren already provides bulk water to the remaining areas of the Champion/Bazetta Public Water System under a service area agreement.



**Figure 1. Project location**

**Population and Flow Projections**

The county's proposed project was designed to serve the 34 residential and 27 commercial properties as well as possible future development within the boundaries of the project area. On this basis, the county estimates that the population of the project area is about 625 people and that it should not increase very much over the next twenty years.

Should additional residential or commercial properties be developed after completion of the proposed water line extension project, there should be sufficient capacity in the proposed water line to provide these new residential and commercial customers with water service.

**Project Alternatives**

The county considered two options for this proposed water line extension project: No action or extending water to additional residents.

No action. This option would leave unaddressed the high sulfur, iron, and other minerals within their well water and the need for property owners to use bottled water for consumption instead. On this basis, it was not considered any further during the project planning period.

Extension of service. This option consists of constructing roughly 10,000 lf of 10-inch water mainline extension to provide public water service to 34 residential and 27 commercial properties along Elm Road and Warren Meadville Road in Bazetta Township. A pump station will also be constructed to interconnect this service area with the county's Bazetta/Champion public water supply. Finally, a master meter vault will be constructed immediately downstream of the connection to Warren.

### **Selected Alternative**

The county chose to extend service as described above. See Figure 1 above for the project area.

### **Implementation**

All told the total project cost is expected to be about \$4 million. The county has received \$1.3 million from the county commissioners in the form of an American Recovery Act grant, as well as \$750,000 in Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) grant funding.

To repay the WSRLA \$1.96 million loan, the county is proposing to levy special assessments against the project beneficiaries. Under the WSRLA program, the county currently qualifies for a regionalization discount which means 0% loan for the entire project.

Utilizing WSRLA funding will save the county about \$575,000 assuming a 0% interest rate when compared to the current market rate of 3.95%.

The current rate for water treatment and related services in Trumbull County is about \$5.75 per 1,000 gallons plus a \$2.00 replacement improvement fee which is charged monthly. On this basis, the average household using 60,000 gallons per year can expect an annual water bill to be \$365. As the median household income (MHI) of Trumbull County is currently \$47,800, the annual water bill represents 0.76% of the MHI. Under the county's proposed project schedule, WSRLA funds are expected to be awarded in December 2023, so that construction can commence soon thereafter. The county estimates that construction can be completed in about six months.

### **Public Participation**

This project is the result of petitions submitted by property owners in the general area to the Board of Trumbull County Commissioners in 2017. The county held a public hearing on August 3, 2023 and presented tentative assessments to the affected property owners. The county then determined that that 64.85% of the benefited property owners support the project (based on front footage) while 35.15% oppose the proposed project. Because a majority of the property owners (based on front footage) support the project, the county will advertise this project for bids and construct it. On this basis, the county appears to have adequately provided for public involvement during the planning for this project.

Ohio EPA will make a copy of this document available to the public on its announcement's web page (<https://epa.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/epa/divisions-and-offices/environmental-financialassistance/announcements>) for review and comment during a 30-day comment period and

will provide it upon request. A copy may also be posted at the county's offices, 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.

#### Archaeological and Historical Resources

All of the proposed construction will be completed within road rights-of-way or prior-disturbed areas. While there is one known archaeological site in the project area, the chosen water line extension project's alignment is not near these sites and will therefore not affect known archaeological and historical resources.

#### Aquatic Habitat and Surface Water Resources

The county's proposed project involves crossings of two streams and their associated habitats. In terms of potential impacts on the streams where the proposed crossing will occur, the county's proposed project is not expected to result in direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on aquatic habitats, and surface waters because the streams are small, and construction is expected to be completed in less than one day.

Furthermore, no temporary or permanent disposal of fill material in wetlands and streams will occur outside of the work rights-of-way. Finally, because contours in the project area will be restored, no permanent impacts of this proposed project on area surface water resources will occur.

#### Endangered Species and Fish and Wildlife Resources

This project was reviewed for impacts on federally listed endangered and threatened species. Based on this review, three species of bats (Indiana, northern long-eared, and tricolored), one species of bird (whooping crane), one reptile (eastern massasauga rattlesnake) and one insect species (Monarch butterfly) were identified.

No trees should need to be removed for this project. But if tree removal is needed, it should occur between October 1<sup>st</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup> to avoid adverse effects on the federally listed Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and the state-listed tricolored bat. Further, Ohio EPA conducted a desk top hibernacula assessment and found that no mines, which could provide hibernacula for bats during the winter months, are present in the project area.

In terms of the habitat needs of whooping cranes (such as wetlands for nesting and farm fields adjacent to area streams and wetlands), none of this species habitat needs appear to be present in the project area. A similar conclusion was also reached for the eastern massasauga rattlesnake. Next, regarding the monarch butterfly, which requires milkweed plants for its life cycle, there does not appear to be any suitable habitat present in the immediate project area. Finally, Ohio EPA consulted with ODNR on the proposed project and determined that no adverse impacts to the following five state listed endangered and threatened species: eastern massasauga, spotted turtle, eastern hellbender (a large fully aquatic salamander that relies on cold water habitat streams), northern brook lamprey (which also requires cold water habitat), and northern harrier will occur.

Since the streams in the project area are warmwater habitat streams, this precludes the two listed aquatic species from being present in the project area.

### Floodplains

As noted above, temporary disturbances to the two small streams and their adjacent floodplains will occur to complete the construction of this proposed project. By limiting construction to road rights-of-way areas, as well as prior disturbed areas between road rights-of-way, as well as prohibiting any temporary or permanent disposal of fill material in floodplains without a permit, Ohio EPA expects that no significant, adverse long-term impacts will occur. This will be accomplished by the contractor restoring contour elevations in the project area. On this basis, direct, short-term impacts of this proposed project on area floodplains will occur, but are not expected to result in significant, adverse environmental impacts on these surface water features.

### Prime Farmland, Land Use, and Terrestrial Habitat

These resource attributes were considered during planning for the proposed project. Based on the results of these reviews, Ohio EPA has concluded that no adverse impacts on prime farmland, land use, and terrestrial habitat will occur. Because nearly all of the project area is prime farmland and only a small area of land is needed for the proposed project 's construction, the direct impacts (e.g., temporary loss) on this resource will be short term and insignificant. On this basis, Ohio EPA has concluded that, although a small area of prime farmland will be crossed by the proposed raw water line extension, there will be no significant, direct, adverse impacts on this attribute.

In regard to terrestrial habitat, Ohio EPA has also concluded that there should be no adverse direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse impacts on this resource attribute. This conclusion was reached primarily because the majority of the land in the project area has been prior converted to uses other than supporting trees and other native vegetation. Overall, the direct and indirect impacts on these resource attributes have been shown to be relatively insignificant. Further support for this conclusion is based on the fact that no street trees will need to be cut down and removed from the project area for it to be constructed.

### Air Pollution, Noise, Traffic, Safety, and Local Aesthetics

Temporary construction impacts on air quality, noise, dust, traffic, will be minimized. In particular, the detail plans and specifications will need to indicate that air pollution and noise will be reduced, for example, by providing construction equipment with proper intake silencers and mufflers and limiting construction activities to daytime hours. Further, air emissions will be limited by making sure that all construction equipment has proper emission control devices and that they are properly maintained. Any unpaved areas will be wet down (as necessary) during construction to minimize dust generation. Finally, traffic control and safety of the public will be accomplished by requiring that one-lane of traffic must be maintained, that emergency vehicles have access to the construction sites, and that other traffic control practices in the detail plans are followed. Overall, by completing the village's county's proposed project, local aesthetics are expected to be maintained, if not improved.

### Local economy

Following connection to the county's water distribution system, residents will begin paying a monthly water bill. Additional charges will include a one-time tap-in fee of \$1,850 per dwelling and a cost to install a water meter, service lines from the public water line to the meter box and from there to the inside of the building.

### Unaffected features

Based on the project's scope and location, the county's proposed project will have no effect on wetlands, ground water resources, coastal areas, or wild and scenic rivers. These environmental attributes are not in the immediate project area.

### 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.

Overall, the proposed project is expected to provide a more reliable source of drinking water for the new customers in the project area by extending water service.

### Contact Information

Kevin Hinkle  
Ohio EPA, Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance  
PO Box 1049  
Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049

Email: [kevin.hinkle@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:kevin.hinkle@epa.ohio.gov)

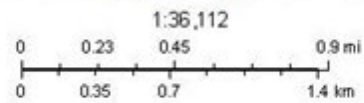
# DEFA Planning Project



9/20/2023, 1:29:30 PM

Wetlands (only show when zoomed in)

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Riverine



Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, METNUSA, EPA, USDA

Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, METNUSA, EPA, USDA | USGS TNM - National Hydrography Dataset, Data Retrieved July, 2023 | District of Geologic Maps | Ohio EPA | District of

Figure 2. Streams and wetlands in the project area, line showing water line extension on Elm Road