



December 19, 2025

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**Tuppers Plains and Chester Water District – Athens and Meigs Counties
State Route 248 and Bashan Road Water Line Improvements
Loan number: FS391356-0021**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a water line improvements project in Athens and Meigs Counties, which the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) intends to finance through its Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) below-market interest rate revolving loan program. The LER describes the project, costs, and expected environmental benefits. Making available this LER fulfills the 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 program review and approval process. We have concluded that the proposed project should not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3745-150-05, this project meets the criteria for an LER rather than the more comprehensive Environmental Assessment. More information can be obtained by contacting the person named at the end of the attached LER.

Upon issuance of this Final 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Courtright".

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: State Route 248 and Bashan Road Water Line Improvements

Applicant: Tupper Plains and Chester Water District
39561 Bar 30 Road
Reedsville, Ohio 45772

Loan Number: FS391356-0021

Project Summary

The Tupper Plains and Chester Water District (TPCWD) has applied to the Ohio Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) for \$1,783,861 for the replacement of 17,000 linear feet of water line, 120 service line replacements, and new meter pits along State Route 248 and Bashan Road. This area is experiencing water loss due to leaks and low water pressure. This project aims to ensure rural Meigs County residents have access to clean and available drinking water (See figure 1).

History & Existing Conditions

TPCWD in Athens and Meigs counties provides public drinking water to a population of approximately 16,087 (Figure 1). TPCWD owns and operates a water treatment plant (WTP) in Long Bottom which draws drinking water from six wells. The system includes 20 water storage tanks, 13 booster stations, and 600 miles of water lines to distribute drinking water to its customers. The current average water usage is approximately 1.1 million gallons per day.

The growth of the water system since its beginning in 1969 has left many of the water mains undersized for the population served. The project area is experiencing low-pressure zones caused by these undersized water lines and inadequate flow due to breaks and leaking, resulting in frequent boil advisories. Without water meters, TPCWD is unable to monitor and diagnose water loss as well. Residential water service lines are aged and are likely another source of water loss. TPCWD contends with zones of low pressure during peak demand; but also during average demand in some locations. Upsizing and replacing aged and failing water mains are necessary to solve these issues. Additionally, a portion of the water main on Success Road contains asbestos cement and must be replaced.

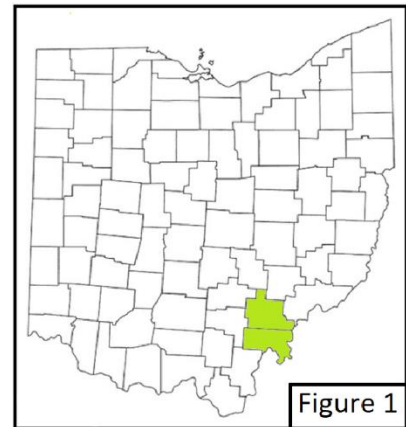


Figure 1

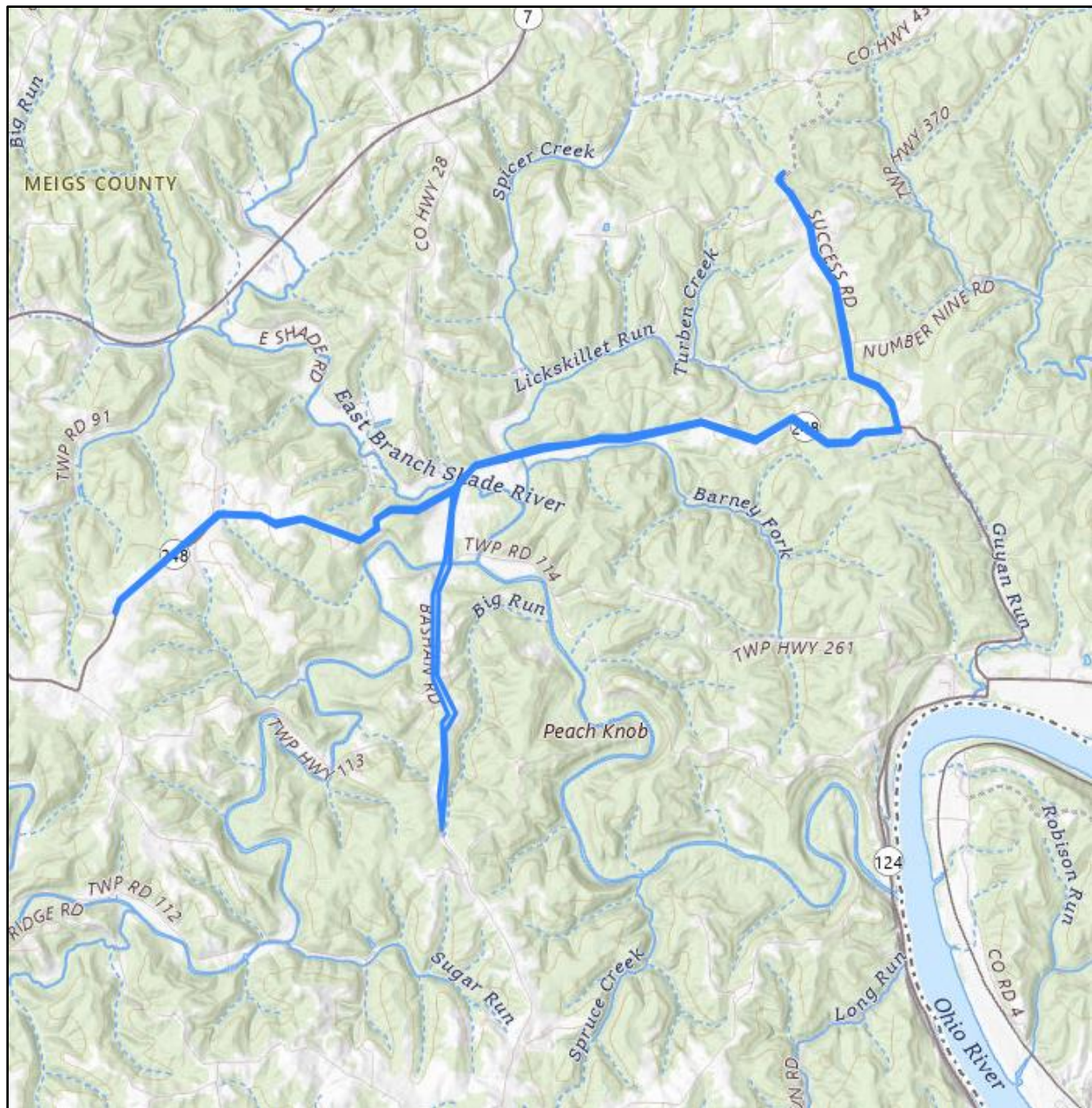


Figure 2. Map of project area, along Bashan Road, Success Road, and State Route 248

Project Description

The project will replace approximately 49,000 feet of water main along Success Road, State Route 248, and Bashan Road (see Figure 2). This project will correct the issues for the entire water system by replacing a large section of the existing 12-inch and 14-inch asbestos cement main feed line from the WTP to the main storage tank location (Success Road water storage tanks) with new, larger 18-inch PVC water main. This will increase the capacity of the main feed line, solving low-pressure issues and preparing for possible future growth of the system. The existing 10-inch asbestos cement water main along State Route 248 will be replaced with new larger 12-inch PVC water main. The 6-inch asbestos

cement water main along Bashan Road will be replaced with larger 10-inch PVC water main. These upsized water mains will greatly increase the hydraulic grade and provide adequate flow to the recently constructed Warehouse Road and Bashan booster stations.

These improvements will also include replacement of approximately 120 water service taps, service lines, and meter pits, while utilizing any existing newer meters replaced in 2019. In addition, this project includes two sub-meter vaults on main water lines to monitor and minimize lost water in the mid-points of long water mains.

Implementation

TPCWD has requested \$1,783,861 from the WSRLA for the proposed water main improvements at the standard interest rate, currently at 3.41%. The district will also receive \$750,000 from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). During the 30-year WSRLA loan term, TPCWD will save approximately \$1,236,000 using these funding sources funding compared to the December market interest rate of 4.71%.

The last water rate increase was 2.4% in 2025, with no monthly rate increase planned for 2026 or 2027. The Rural Community Assistance Program (RCAP) is currently performing a rate study and anticipates a 3-4% water rate increase after 2027. After the most recent rate increase, residential customers pay \$43.47 monthly, or \$522 annually. The estimated median household income (MHI) for a resident of Athens County is \$48,750 and of Meigs County is \$46,255. The average annual water bill amounts to 1.1% of the MHI.

Assuming loan award in January 2026, construction will begin shortly thereafter with expected completion within 18 months.

Public Participation

TPCWD has discussed the project at their regular public board meetings which are held on the second Monday of each month. They include water infrastructure improvement projects in their yearly water consumer confidence report.

Ohio EPA is unaware of any controversy about or opposition to this project. The Limited Environmental Review (LER) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) will be posted on the Ohio EPA Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance website. Additionally, the LER and FNSI have been provided to the TPCWD to be made available according to their public notification procedures.

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the criteria for an LER; namely, it is an action within an existing public water distribution system, which involves the functional replacement of and improvements to existing infrastructure. 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 have no effect on high-value environmental resources. The water line project will occur along the roadway, under the road, and within the existing utility corridors adjacent to the roadway and will not impact valuable natural resources. The project may require a small number of trees to be removed and will be done so during the tree-clearing window from October 1 to March 30, to prevent impacts to threatened and endangered bat species who use trees for habitat and foraging. All stream crossings will be made underneath by horizontal directional drilling to avoid impacting aquatic habitat and wildlife.

Is cost effective and is not a controversial action because TPCWD will save a substantial amount of money by financing the project cost with WSRLA funding. They are minimizing the cost to their customers and do not need to raise the water rate for this project.

Does not create a new, or relocate an existing discharge to surface or groundwaters, or significantly increase the amount of water withdrawn from an existing water source, or substantially increase the volume of discharge or loading of pollutants from an existing source or from new facilities to receiving waters. The project will not affect discharges to surface or groundwaters, or discharge or loadings of pollutants to receiving waters. The replacement of water main will not change source water withdrawals.

Will not provide capacity to serve a population substantially greater than the existing population. No new service connections will be made for the project. The project will only replace existing water lines and service taps.

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 environmental features. 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.

These improvements will strengthen the water system by replacing water distribution infrastructure, correcting pressure problems, and providing stable water service.

Contact Information

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