



April 2, 2026

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

**Summit County
Q-165-1: Akron-Cleveland Road Sanitary Sewer Extension
Loan Number: CS390078-0127**

The attached Environmental Assessment (EA) is for a wastewater project in Summit County 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 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 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, the Summit County can then proceed with its application for the WPCLF loan.

Sincerely,

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

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental & Financial Assistance

Attachment

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Identification

Project: Q-165-1: Akron-Cleveland Road
Sanitary Sewer Extension

Applicant: Summit County
175 South Main Street
Akron, Ohio 44308-1314

Loan Number: CS390078-0127



Figure 1. Summit County

Project Summary

Summit County (see Figure 1) requested funding from the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) for the Q-165-1: Akron-Cleveland Road Sanitary Sewer Extension project. The project involves the installation of new gravity sanitary sewers to extend Summit County sewer service to an unserved portion of Boston Township. Providing sewer service to the area will allow property owners to eliminate household sewage treatment systems (HSTS) and will support a joint economic development district (JEDD) established by the City of Cuyahoga Falls and Boston Township. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated based on the nature of construction, thoughtful design, and proposed protection measures to be implemented, as discussed in the conclusion.

History & Existing Conditions

The City of Cuyahoga Falls and Boston Township entered into an agreement in 2004 to establish a JEDD, referred to as the Cuyahoga Falls-Boston JEDD. Implementation of the agreement did not occur until 2006 following township voters' approval and the subsequent levying of income earned by people working within the JEDD and net profits from businesses located in the JEDD. The JEDD encompasses an area located near the State Route 8 highway corridor north of Cuyahoga Falls city limits. The area contains approximately 250 acres, includes roughly 18,000 linear feet (LF) of frontages along Akron-Cleveland Road and Seasons Road, and is nearly 1.6 miles long north to south. See Figure 2 for an overview of the area contained within the JEDD. Income taxes earned in the JEDD are split 60-40 between Cuyahoga Falls and Boston Township, respectively. In exchange for this agreement, Cuyahoga Falls agreed not to annex any additional township land and to provide city water service to the area.

Boston Township and Cuyahoga Falls realize that bringing public water and sewer service to the area is critical for the success of the JEDD and the wellbeing of the residents and businesses located within. This is in consideration of both existing residents and businesses and anticipated potential future development interests in the area. The availability of land, convenient access to State Route 8, and the

established JEDD make the area enticing to developers. Boston Township and Cuyahoga Falls expect developers to take interest in the undeveloped portions of the JEDD once water and sewer services are available.

Cuyahoga Falls completed extending city water service to a point roughly 600 feet north of Geoppert Road in November 2022. Residents and businesses along the water main route have since had the opportunity to connect for public water services. Property owners in the JEDD currently utilize onsite HSTS for individual wastewater handling services. There is also a mobile home park in the area that operates a package plant authorized under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit, which provides wastewater treatment services for park residents. Ohio EPA encourages the elimination of private HSTS by connecting properties to public sewer systems, as well as regionalization of smaller treatment plants with larger systems. Doing so removes potential sources of contamination that can adversely impact the environmental and human health should HSTS or individual plants begin to fail.

Original plans for the JEDD included extending Cuyahoga Falls sanitary sewer services to the area as well; however, it was later realized that the area composing the JEDD is part of the Summit County Metropolitan Sewer District. Summit County is part of the Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning and Development Organization, which is the planning agency responsible for the areawide waste management treatment plan (i.e., 208 plan) for the counties of Summit, Portage, Wayne, and Stark. Summit County, as the sewer system authorized to serve the area, has agreed to extend their sanitary sewer system to serve the JEDD.

Summit County's sewer system nearest to the JEDD is along Seasons Road where the corners of the cities of Cuyahoga Falls, Stow, and Hudson, as well as Boston Township, meet. This existing gravity sewer conveys flow eastward to a pump station, which ultimately transports flow to the Fishcreek Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). This sewer is well positioned and capable of supporting the service extension necessary to serve the JEDD. Summit County intends to extend their system from this point as discussed later.

Population and Flow Projections

Summit County estimates that the proposed sewer extension will initially serve the equivalent of 118 residences equating to sanitary flows of 0.02 million gallons per day (MGD). There are also commercial properties in the area, which are expected to account for flows of 0.04 MGD, resulting in total expected start-up flows of 0.08 MGD. Complete development of the area could produce flows upwards of 0.1 MGD.

Sanitary flows from the area will be conveyed to the Fishcreek WWTP. Fishcreek WWTP has an approved operating capacity of 8 MGD and treats an average daily flow of 4.5 million gallons. The plant has sufficient free capacity to handle flows from the JEDD. The plant discharges treated effluent to the Cuyahoga River.

Alternatives

Summit County and Cuyahoga Falls both have existing sanitary sewer infrastructure near the project area that could be extended to serve the Cuyahoga Falls-Boston JEDD. While both systems could viably serve the area, Summit County is the designated entity responsible for serving the area, and all parties involved agree with Summit County doing so. For these reasons, Summit County's project as proposed, and Summit County being the service provider for this area, is the most logistical and cost-effective alternative.

Selected Alternative

Summit County will install an estimated 4,036 LF of 12-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe sanitary sewer westward on Seasons Road and northward on Akron-Cleveland Road and 89 LF of 8-inch PVC sanitary sewer across Seasons Road. The design also includes 21 precast concrete manholes, 34 service stubs for future lateral connections, and associated appurtenances. The sewers will be installed via a combination of open trenching and jack-and-bore method. Jack-and-bore will be used in areas where the sewers and stubs cross roadways, as well as at one location where the sewer crosses beneath a large stormwater culvert.

The sewer route will begin at the extent of Summit County's existing sewer located on Seasons Road and terminate approximately 400 feet north of Goeppert Road. See Figure 2 for an overview of the sanitary sewer route. The route primarily follows public rights-of-way along Seasons Road and Akron-Cleveland Road; however, the sanitary sewer follows a utility easement between these two roads rather than connecting via Wyoga-Lake Road. This was determined necessary as routing the sewer along Wyoga-Lake Road would require the sewer to be installed unfeasibly deep, thereby requiring the extent of the sewer upstream to also be installed significantly deeper.

The mobile home park package plant is located at the north end of the service area to be served by this sewer extension. The sewer extension will make possible the connection of the mobile home park to public sanitary sewer service and subsequent decommissioning of the plant. The sanitary sewer extension is designed to allow future extensions northward along Akron-Cleveland Road to serve further north portions of the JEDD.

Implementation

The total estimated project cost is \$3.5 million. Summit County requested \$2,115,000 from the Ohio WPCLF at the regionalization rate of 0% to finance a portion of the project. Borrowing this amount in WPCLF monies could save Summit County roughly \$1,104,000 over the 20-year loan term compared to the current market rate of 4.46%. Summit County will fund the remaining project cost using \$185,000 financed by Boston Township and \$1.2 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding from the county.

The debt associated with the project will be recovered from monthly user charges. The sewer charges for Summit County are driven by the total indebtedness of the system and annual operation and maintenance costs. Summit County last raised rates by 6.5% at the beginning of 2026, and they report

that future rate increases between 2027 and 2031 will be inflationary based. Summit County charges customers based on metered water usage or by flat rate in the case of customers whose water consumption is not measured by meter readings. The average annual sewer bill for Summit County customers who have a metered water usage of 4,000 gallons is \$702. This represents 1.02% of the median household income for Summit County (MHI; \$68,360) and is greater than the Ohio average annual sewer bill of \$528.

Construction is anticipated to begin following loan award and take eight months to complete.

Public Participation

Summit County provides resources and information on proposed and ongoing wastewater projects to customers via the Summit County Department of Sanitary Sewer Services webpage and on Summit County's website. Summit County Council meets every other Monday at 4:30 in council chambers. These meetings are open to the public, and agendas and minutes for the meetings are available on the county's website. Summit County has discussed the Q-165-1: Akron-Cleveland Road Sanitary Sewer Extension project at these meetings. Summit County has also hosted scheduled planning meetings directly with property owners throughout the design process of the project in a cooperative effort in determining the final project design. Property owners wishing to connect or required to connect to Summit County's sanitary sewer system are responsible for paying a sanitary sewer tap-in fee and the costs of abandoning HSTS and installing sanitary sewer laterals to connect to the sewer system. Summit County has informed property owners of this during these meetings.

The Boston Township Board of Trustees have also extensively discussed the details regarding the Cuyahoga Falls-Boston JEDD at public meetings and in conversations directly with property owners. Additionally, Boston Township has posted information on their website, and local news articles have covered progress of the JEDD.

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

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.

Endangered Species and Terrestrial Habitat

The project is located within the known ranges of several state and federally listed threatened and endangered bat species including the Indiana bat, the northern long-eared bat, the tricolored bat, and the little brown bat. During the spring and summer (April 1 through September 30), these species

predominantly roost in trees behind loose and exfoliating bark, in crevices and cavities, and in leaf clusters. These species are also dependent on forest structure surrounding roost trees.

There are an expected 27 trees of various sizes that will be removed along the proposed sanitary sewer route. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) recommends that removal of trees greater than or equal to 3-inches in diameter only occur between October 1 and March 31 for protection of these species. Summit County agreed to restrict clearing of trees meeting this criterion during the recommended timeframe. Summit County must coordinate with the USFWS and ODNR first for further guidance should the need arise to conduct tree removal outside of the recommended period.

Air Quality, Noise, Traffic, Safety, and Aesthetics

The contractor will be responsible for implementing all necessary construction best management practices (e.g., erosion and sediment control, noise and dust control, proper storage and handling of materials, worker and public safety, site security, traffic maintenance, property owner notification, legal disposal of waste and excess materials) throughout the duration of the project to avoid or minimize all short-term impacts to the area.

Surface Water Resources, Wetlands, and Aquatic Habitat

Summit County hired a consultant to perform a surface water delineation of wetlands and waterbodies within the project area. The purpose was to determine the extent and quality of surface waters within the project area that may require regulatory permitting. Several types of wetlands were identified including palustrine emergent, palustrine forested, and palustrine scrub-shrub wetlands. These wetlands are primarily located adjacent to Seasons Road and Akron-Cleveland Road. One ephemeral stream was also delineated. Ephemeral streams are dependent upon surface runoff and only convey flow during and after rainfall. The portion of the ephemeral stream within the project area is culverted.

The location and nature of the sanitary sewer installation require work in small sections of these wetlands along the proposed route. Some of these wetlands have since been modified due to clearing activities in the area following the delineation, which has reduced the amount of wetlands that will be impacted by the sanitary sewer extension project.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is responsible for administering the Section 404 program under the Clean Water Act. This includes processing permit applications and issuing final authorizations under its regulations for activities involving construction within the Nation's waters, including wetlands that meet requirements to be considered part of the Nation's waters.

Summit County submitted the surface water delineation to the USACE, who in turn determined that the wetlands and stream falling within the project area are waters of the Nation and that work included in the project meets the criteria for Nationwide Permit (NWP) No. 58. This determination was based on USACE's conclusion that construction will have no unacceptable environmental effects. Summit County is required to comply with the conditions outlined within their issued NWP, which includes protection measures for portions of wetlands to remain unaffected, as well as other

environmental resources that may be present, throughout the duration of construction taking place within the areas of the wetlands. Summit County must restore the geographic contour elevations of disturbed areas of wetlands to preconstruction conditions upon project completion per the NWP criteria.

The design of the sanitary sewer route, implementation of jack-and-bore where feasible, and protection measures to be implemented will reduce the permanent impacts to wetlands in the area.

Local Economy

Summit County meets regularly with the Summit County Health Department and reports that the Q-165-1: Akron-Cleveland Road Sanitary Sewer Extension project has been discussed between the two on numerous occasions. It is Summit County's understanding that the health department will pursue mandatory connections once sanitary sewer is available in the project area.

Property owners wishing to or required to connect to Summit County's sanitary sewer system are responsible for paying a sanitary sewer tap-in fee, which is calculated at \$10.68 per day with a minimum total tap-in fee of \$4,274. Property owners will also be responsible for the cost of abandoning HSTS and installing sanitary sewer laterals to connect to the Summit County sewer system. The average cost to complete this work is between \$5,000 and \$10,000; however, this can vary depending on the size of the existing HSTS, distance of the home to the utility connection point, depth, soil conditions, and other site-specific considerations. Connection and related fees are available on Summit County's website: [Sanitary Sewer Services Rate Adjustments : Summit County, Ohio - Executive Office](#).

Unaffected Resources

The following resources are not present and therefore will not be impacted by the project: Coastal Zones, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Groundwater Resources including Sole Source Aquifers and Source Water Assessment and Protection Areas, Safe Drinking Water, Floodplains, Archaeological and Historical Resources, Regional and Local Energy Demands, and Farmland. Likewise, the project will have no impact on land use as it pertains to public recreational space.

Conclusion

Based upon Ohio EPA's review of the planning information and the materials presented in this EA, 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.

Summit County designed the project to be effective and affordable, the results of which will make public sanitary sewer services available to currently unserved individuals and support the goals of the JEDD created by Cuyahoga Falls and Boston Township. Project completion will also provide environmental benefits by providing a means to eliminate private HSTS and a package plant.

Contact Information

Brody Betsch
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
50 West Town Street, Suite 700
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Email: brody.betsch@epa.ohio.gov

Phone: 614.644.3710

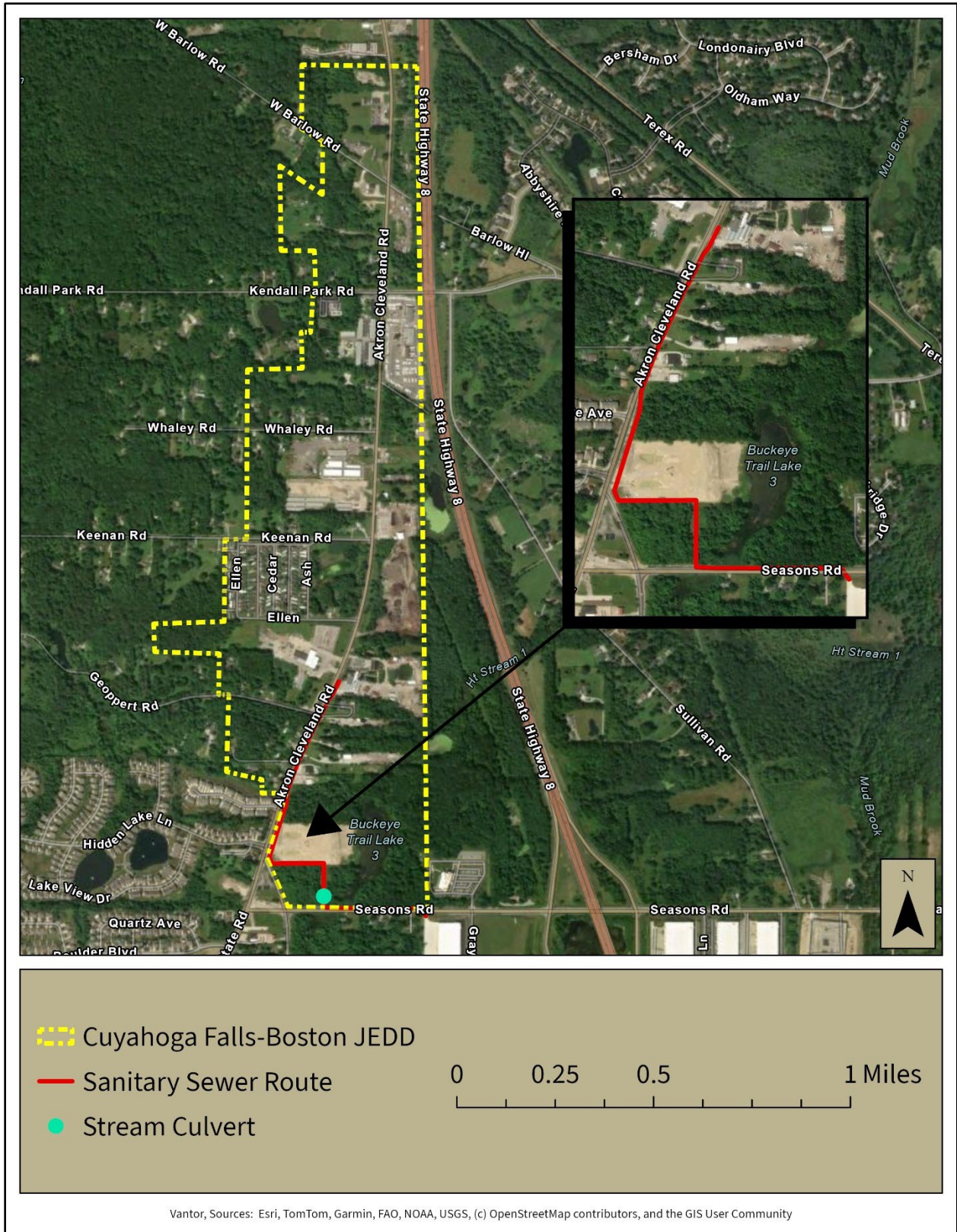


Figure 2. Cuyahoga Falls-Boston JEDD and project area