



Maumee Valley Planning Organization

Austin Serna, Community Development Planner

Written Testimony on House Bill 110

Introduction

Chairwoman Gavarone, Vice-Chairwoman O'Brien, Ranking Member Maharath and members of the Senate Local Government and Elections Committee, it is an honor to come before you and provide a written testimony on House Bill 110. Maumee Valley Planning Organization is a non-profit government organization comprised of Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Paulding and Williams Counties. Our purpose is to provide management, planning and technical services to local governments in this five-county region and bring together local elected officials on a regular basis, giving them opportunity to form working relationships.

Today, I come before your committee to strongly consider a continuation of funding the H2Ohio initiative first introduced by Governor Mike DeWine in 2019. Our organization strongly recommends approving Section 343.30 of House Bill 110 and continuing the program through Fiscal Year 2021, 2022, and 2023. This program is critical to improving the State of Ohio and its waterways by combating severe issues such as: failing drinking water systems and failing wastewater and sewage treatment systems because of outdated infrastructure.

Importance of H2Ohio Program to Rural Communities

Maumee Valley Planning Organization aids rural communities on many different planning projects such as water and wastewater improvements. Small communities with a lack of proper resources rely on state and federal funding to update vital water or

wastewater treatment plant infrastructure. The following project examples show the importance of the H2O Program to Northwest Ohio communities.

Our organization is currently assisting the unincorporated Village of Kunkle, Ohio in Williams County with a wastewater collections system. The project is intended to improve the treatment plant that serves all residents in Kunkle. The current system was issued Findings and Orders by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency based on a sample survey conducted to determine the extent of health hazards present. Under the current system, residents have private wells and wastewater is discharged to individual on-site treatment systems that are in failing condition and inadequate. A recent report completed by the Jones and Henry Engineering Firm in 2017 noted elevated levels of fecal coliform contaminant in streams around Kunkle. The current Kunkle project includes constructing new gravity sewers, and a pump station to transport wastewater to the treatment site. Additionally, six-inch sanitary laterals are begin installed at each residence connecting to the sanitary sewer main line, a cleanout will also be installed on each lateral for ease of maintenance. Once the new wastewater treatment system is operational, all individual septic systems will be disconnected and abandoned.

This project had an estimated total cost of \$4,583,900. According to H2Ohio initiative's website, failing septic systems are part of what the program is designed to improve. In addition to this, the current system is outdated and deteriorated infrastructure that has failed. This community relied on a Community Development Block Grant, a U.S Army Corp of Engineers grant, an Ohio Environmental Protection Agency grant, a Water Pollution Control Loan Fund Principal Forgiveness Program, and a H2Ohio grant of \$500,000 to complete this project. Many other communities like Kunkle must rely solely on grants and loans to fund projects to conform with Ohio EPA standards and provide an adequate and sufficient wastewater system. Most importantly, our goal and mission are to reduce health and safety hazards to the citizens the community serves and the environment.

In the Village of Grover Hill, Ohio located in Paulding County, our agency is assisting to secure funds for a similar rehabilitation of the entire collection system and potentially treatment plant. This community has run into some other challenges that Kunkle did not exist in Kunkle. In addition to the lack of funding to complete the project, the village is under financial emergency by the State of Ohio and cannot accept any loans. Our organization is working aggressively with the village, county, and state to make sure this project can move forward. Like Kunkle, the Village of Grover Hill's residents have separate private wells and wastewater is discharged to individual, village owned septic tanks that are in failing condition and inadequate. These individual concrete septic tanks will be replaced with new plastic tanks at each property in the village limits. Additional improvements to the collections system being proposed are cleaning and lining of

manholes, adding two new manholes, and rehabilitating one lift station. The Village would also like to propose rehabilitating the treatment plant to make their entire wastewater system meet current engineering standards and codes by the Ohio EPA. The Village wants to ensure a better quality of life for its residents and promote health and safety across the community. This project is over 2 million dollars to fund and intends to apply for a Community Development Block Grant, a U.S Army Corp of Engineers grant and an Ohio Public Works Commission grant. To be able to improve the infrastructure of this community we will not be able to fund this project without a grant program like the H2Ohio initiative.

Conclusion:

Wrapping up my testimony today, I again mention the importance to preserving this initiative. As an organization that benefits communities in the Maumee River Watershed, we aid communities to improve the infrastructure that impacts the health and safety of all citizens. The two communities I mentioned above are not all that different in size and rely on many grant and loan programs to fund infrastructure projects that will ultimately benefit the residents in the community and the environment. However, the Village of Grover Hill is in a state of financial crisis and is relying on a program like H2Ohio to improve its vital infrastructure and correct its failing septic system issue. Both communities lack infrastructure that resulted in contaminants making its way into creeks and tributaries that flow to the Maumee River and then flow into Lake Erie. By funding this program through 2023, you will be ensuring that small communities in Ohio can improve critical infrastructure repairs and needs to their community. By providing adequate and safe disposal of wastewater and eliminating contaminants in our freshwater watersheds and wetlands we will provide a safer and cleaner environment for our citizens and other living organisms to live in.

REFERENCES

Executive

In House Finance

DNRCD23 Natural Resource General Obligation Bond Debt Service

Section: 343.20

Requires GRF appropriation item 725903, Natural Resources General Obligation Bond Debt Service, to be used during the FY 2022-FY 2023 biennium to pay all debt service and related financing costs on obligations issued under RC 151.01 and 151.05.

Section: 343.20

Same as the Executive.

DNRCD24 Oil and Gas Well Plugging

Section: 343.30

Requires Fund 5180 appropriation item 725677, Oil and Gas Well Plugging, to be used exclusively for plugging wells and properly restoring the land surface of idle and orphan oil and gas wells pursuant to RC 1509.071. Prohibits it from being used for salaries, maintenance, equipment, or other administrative purposes, except those costs directly attributable to the plugging of an idle or orphan well. Prohibits the line item from being used to transfer cash to any other fund or appropriation item.

Section: 343.30

Same as the Executive.

DNRCD25 H2Ohio Fund

Section: 343.30

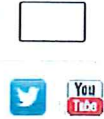
Allows the Director of DNR, on July 1, 2022, or as soon as possible thereafter, to certify to OBM an amount up to the unexpended, unencumbered balance of Fund 6H20 appropriation item 725681, H2Ohio, at the end of FY 2022 to be appropriated in FY 2023. Appropriates the certified amounts for FY 2023.

Section: 343.30

Same as the Executive, but subjects the reappropriation to Controlling Board approval.



Home About Divisions and Offices Do Business Citizens and Educators News How Do I? Contact



As a precautionary response to COVID-19, Ohio EPA is currently operating with most staff working remotely. If you are working with our staff on a current project and you know the name of the employee you are working with, email them at firstname.lastname@epa.ohio.gov or call them directly. The Agency website has contact information for every district, division, and office. To report a spill or environmental emergency, contact the spill hotline (800) 282-9378 or (614) 224-0946. This number should only be used for emergencies. For all other calls, please contact Ohio EPA's main phone line at (614) 644-3020 or the main line for the division or office you are trying to reach.

After March 23, our district offices and Central Office will be temporarily closed and will have increasingly limited ability to receive deliveries, plans, etc. All entities are encouraged to submit plans, permit applications, etc., electronically where there are existing avenues to do so, such as the eBusiness Center (eBiz). Please refer to the list of available services on the main eBiz webpage. We encourage you to make use of all that apply, even if you have not used eBiz in the past. Plans under 25 MB can be emailed. For large plans over 25 MB, entities should work with the reviewer/division to upload via LiquidFiles. Directions for submitting docs via LiquidFiles is available on YouTube. We apologize for the inconvenience and thank you in advance for your understanding. If you wish to send hard copies of documents to any of Ohio EPA's district offices, the best method to ensure we receive these documents is to send them via U.S. Mail. Since all offices are closed, deliveries outside of U.S. Mail (FedEx, UPS) will likely be returned because the offices are closed and deliveries cannot be made.

Ohio EPA News Releases



News Release Home

12/6/19
PUBLIC INTEREST CENTER, (614) 644-2160
MEDIA CONTACT: Heidi Griesmer
CITIZEN CONTACT: Mary McCarron

Ohio EPA Announces Funding for Williams County Infrastructure

Today, Ohio EPA announced an infrastructure project aimed at improving water quality as part of Gov. Mike DeWine's H2Ohio Initiative. Williams County will receive \$500,000 in H2Ohio funding for its project to construct a new wastewater collection and treatment system that will serve approximately 90 homes in the unincorporated area of Kunkle.

"Ohio's communities rely on clean drinking water and wastewater infrastructure to protect public health, which is why a main focus of my H2Ohio plan is addressing failing home sewage treatment systems and helping disadvantaged communities build infrastructure," said Gov. Mike DeWine. "This project will directly impact dozens of families, and I'm pleased that we're able to help this community."

The proposed project consists of approximately 10,000 feet of sewer along with a treatment lagoon to serve approximately 90 homes. Numerous home sewage treatment systems in the area have failed and Ohio EPA ordered the failing systems to be addressed. The treatment lagoon will be constructed just northeast of Kunkle and could help to serve the unsewered area of Alvordton in the future.

"Throughout the state, addressing failing home sewage treatment systems – either through providing funds for replacements or upgrades, or the extension of centralized sanitary sewers – is a key goal of H2Ohio," said Ohio EPA Director Laurie A. Stevenson. "Governor DeWine's H2Ohio plan will enable Ohio EPA to extend its principal forgiveness dollars to help more communities like Kunkle address their water and sewer needs."

The total project is estimated to cost approximately \$3.5 million. Nearly \$1 million in grant funding was provided by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. The H2Ohio funds will help support this project and make the project more affordable for the area. The project has secured \$1.38 million in principal forgiveness and the balance of the project will be covered by no interest loan funds, both from Ohio EPA's state revolving loan fund.

This is the second H2Ohio water infrastructure project announced by Ohio EPA in the past two weeks. The Village of Pomeroy is also receiving \$500,000 in H2Ohio funding for its project to extend sewer lines to approximately 80 homes with failing home sewage treatment systems. Additional projects will be announced in the coming weeks.

For more information on the overall H2Ohio water quality plan, visit h2.ohio.gov.

SEARCH NEWS RELEASES

Search...

NEWS ROOM

Public Notices

Director's Testimony

Media Kits

Contact Us
Non-emergency, General Questions,
Concerns/Complaints

**Get to the
Right Person Faster**

Spill Hotline
Report a spill, release or
environmental emergency

800-282-9378

DOCUMENT SEARCH
How to find files and records

Customer Support Center

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency was created in 1972 to consolidate efforts to protect and improve air quality, water quality and waste management in Ohio. Since then, air pollutants dropped by as much as 90 percent; large rivers meeting standards improved from 21 percent to 89 percent; and hundreds of polluting, open dumps were replaced with engineered landfills and an increased emphasis on waste reduction and recycling.

Categories: [Announcements](#), [Central Office](#), [District Location](#), [Northwest District](#)



NEWS CATEGORIES

- [Central Office \(33\)](#)
- [Testimony \(1\)](#)
- [Announcements \(20\)](#)
- [Legislation \(2\)](#)
- [District Location \(1489\)](#)
- [Central District \(181\)](#)
- [Northeast District \(470\)](#)
- [Northwest District \(350\)](#)
- [Southeast District \(224\)](#)
- [Southwest District \(246\)](#)
- [Statewide \(275\)](#)
- [Divisions \(1425\)](#)
- [Air Pollution Control \(121\)](#)
- [Drinking and Ground Waters \(150\)](#)
- [Surface Water \(432\)](#)
- [Environmental and Financial Assistance \(314\)](#)
- [Environmental Response and Revitalization \(155\)](#)
- [Materials and Waste Management \(119\)](#)
- [Environmental Education \(323\)](#)
- [Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention \(74\)](#)
- [Draft and Proposed Rule Changes \(34\)](#)
- [Grants \(273\)](#)
- [Special Interests \(184\)](#)
- [Shale Drilling \(8\)](#)
- [Recycling \(42\)](#)
- [Voluntary Action Program \(94\)](#)

Tags

[WPCLF](#) [WSRLA](#) [Lake Erie](#) [OLEC](#) [OEEF](#)
[recycling](#) [environmental](#) [education](#)
[careers](#) [STEM](#) [state](#) [implementation](#) [plan](#)
[redesignation](#) [Voluntary Action Program](#)
[\(VAP\)](#) [brownfields](#) [public](#) [meeting](#)
[Future](#) [City](#) [Encouraging](#) [Environmental](#)
[Excellence \(E3\)](#) [hazardous](#) [waste](#) [permit](#) [air](#)
[permit](#) [solid](#) [waste](#) [permit](#) [efficiency](#) [401](#)
[certification](#) [watershed](#) [reports](#) [diesel](#)
[wastewater](#) [permit](#) [fish](#) [consumption](#) [advisory](#)
[storm](#) [water](#) [TMDL](#) [dredging](#) [drinking](#) [water](#)
[scrap](#) [tire](#) [litter](#) [prevention](#) [water](#) [quality](#)



Google Translate

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
Phone: (614) 644-3020 ~ Contact Us

11/3/2020

Ohio EPA News Releases | Ohio EPA Announces Funding for Williams County Infrastructure

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1049, Columbus, OH 43216-1049
Street Address: 50 West Town Street, Suite 700, Columbus, OH 43215
Report a Spill, Release or Environmental Crime
(800) 282-9378 or (614) 224-0946

[Mike DeWine, Gov.](#) | [Laurie A. Stevenson, Director](#) | [Divisions and Offices](#) | [ADA and Nondiscrimination](#) | [Privacy Statement](#) | [Contact](#) | [Employee Login](#)

Ohio's Needs

OHIO'S NEED

Communities throughout the state

face real and different water challenges

Water is vital, yet communities throughout the state regularly face challenges such as algae blooms, failing septic tanks, nutrient pollution, and threats of lead contamination.

Harmful Algal Blooms

Although most blooms on Ohio's lakes and reservoirs are green algae and not harmful, there are some that have the ability to produce toxins called harmful algal blooms (HABs). More info on HABs can be found at the [Ohio EPA](#). In addition, the state published recreational advisories for HABs at the [Ohio Department of Health](#).

Nutrient Pollution

Nutrient pollution is caused by too much nitrogen and phosphorus in waterways. Nutrients are elements that all living organisms need to grow, however too much in the water can contribute to harmful algal blooms, as well as other issues. More information on nutrient pollution and how the state is addressing the issue can be found at the [Ohio EPA](#) and the [Ohio Lake Erie Commission](#).

Failing Septic Systems

Septic systems treat wastewater from household plumbing fixtures (toilet, shower, laundry, etc.) through both natural and technological

processes, typically beginning with solids settling in a septic tank, and ending with wastewater treatment in the soil via the drain field. Most septic systems fail because of inappropriate design or poor maintenance. These conditions can cause hydraulic failures and contamination of nearby water sources. The most serious documented problems involve contamination of surface waters and groundwater with disease-causing pathogens and nitrates. Other problems include excessive nutrient discharges into sensitive waters, which increases algal growth and lowers dissolved oxygen levels. More information on sewage treatment systems can be found at the [Ohio EPA](#).

Lead Contamination

Lead is a toxic metal that can be harmful to human health even at low exposure levels. It can enter drinking water when plumbing materials that contain lead corrode, especially where the water has high acidity or low mineral content that corrodes pipes and fixtures. The most common sources of lead in drinking water are lead pipes, faucets, and fixtures. Lead is persistent, and it can bioaccumulate in the body over time causing physical and behavioral effects especially in pregnant women, infants, and young children. In children, low levels of exposure have been linked to damage to the central and peripheral nervous system, learning disabilities, shorter stature, impaired hearing, and impaired formation and function of blood cells. More information on lead can be found at the [Ohio EPA](#).

© Ohio Departments of Natural Resources, Agriculture, and
Environmental Protection.