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Bellville to Improve Wastewater Treatment with Ohio EPA Funds

Bellville is upgrading its wastewater treatment to make the overall process more effective, including removing more ammonia, to improve water quality and reduce nutrients in Clear Fork Mohican River, thanks to an interest-free loan from Ohio EPA.

The loan is financing equipment to generate oxygen to better remove fats, oil and grease, increase ammonia removal and decrease the aeration required for sludge digestion. The new equipment will address permit violations, odors and maintenance issues at the wastewater treatment plant.

Clear Fork Mohican River is a high-quality stream. Removing more ammonia from the treatment plant's discharge will protect this important resource and help meet Ohio's goal of reducing nutrients in streams and lakes. Ammonia is a nitrogen compound that contributes to excess nutrients in surface waters that can lead to harmful algal blooms (HABs).

This loan comes from the \$100 million in zero-interest loans Ohio EPA is offering this year to help wastewater systems reduce the levels of phosphorus and other nutrients they discharge that can contribute to HABs.

Created in 1989, the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) provides below-market interest rate loans for communities to improve their wastewater treatment systems. The zero interest rate on this \$478,669 loan will save Bellville \$176,640 compared to a conventional, market-rate loan.

Besides improvements to publicly owned treatment works, WPCLF loans have been provided for agricultural best management practices, home sewage system improvements, landfill closures and water quality-based storm water projects. The WPCLF provides technical assistance to public wastewater systems in a variety of areas from the planning, design and construction of improvements to enhancing the technical, managerial and financial capacity of these systems. WPCLF loans also make possible the restoration and protection of some of Ohio's highest quality water bodies through the fund's Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program.

Ohio EPA's revolving loan funds are partially supported by federal grants and designed to last indefinitely through repayment of loans and investments in bonds. The loan program is managed by Ohio EPA's Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance, with assistance from the Ohio Water Development Authority. Ohio EPA is responsible for program development and implementation, individual project coordination, and environmental and other technical reviews/approvals of projects seeking funds. The Ohio Water Development Authority provides financial management of the fund.

More information about the WPCLF is available at:
epa.ohio.gov/defa/EnvironmentalandFinancialAssistance.aspx.