

**NOTICE OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT  
TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES, GROUPS AND PERSONS**

The Etowah Water & Sewer Authority has made an application to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division (EPD), and the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) for a loan through the State Revolving Fund (SRF). The initial phase of the project consists of upgrades at the existing Dawson Forest Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) to produce a higher quality effluent and to expand the capacity of the facility from 1.0 MGD to 1.25 MGD. The second phase of the project consists of a new discharge of 2.5 MGD to the Etowah River. The applicant has certified that the project is environmentally sound. As required by the Federal Clean Water Act, an environmental review has been performed on the project described below:

Project Name:	Etowah Water & Sewer Authority Dawson Forest WRF New 2.5-MGD Phased Discharge GEFA Loan No. CW-2023-032
Project Location:	City of Dawsonville, Dawson County, GA
Total Project Cost:	\$23,107,899
Anticipated SRF Loan Amount:	\$10,000,000

**Project Description**

The Etowah Water & Sewer Authority is proposing upgrades to the existing 1.0-MGD Dawson Forest WRF land application system and a new discharge to the Etowah River up to 2.5 MGD. The project will accommodate flow/population projections for the area. For Phase I the upgraded 1.25 MGD facility will include influent pump station modifications and influent EQ modifications, along with a new post equalization basin, flocculation basin, disk filtration, UV disinfection, and post aeration tank. When demand dictates, the facility will be expanded to 2.5 MGD with new SBR Basins, additional disks for disk filtering, additional UV disinfection modules, a new aerobic digester and a new liquid feed system. Sludge will be treated in an aerobic digester and dewatered before being transported to a private composting facility. The proposed project will also involve two new ¼-in fine screens upstream of the SBRs, a Parshall Flume downstream of the post-aeration tank, a new gravity sewer outfall, and a new bulk alum feed system will be installed during Phase I. A reuse water system is also planned at the WRF to reduce the potable water usage and costs.

### **Anticipated Impacts**

The proposed project will serve Dawson County. The project will provide reliable treatment and effluent quality for the anticipated future population.

Minor negative temporary impacts may include noise, dust and erosion/sedimentation associated with construction activities. Best Management Practices will be in place during construction. The project will be located in 100-year floodplain as indicated by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) map. However, the scope of work taking place in the floodplain consists of installation of sewer lines and will not impact the floodplain. Detailed mitigation measures will be described in the construction documents (plans and specifications) for the project. The USFWS recommends any tree-clearing be done from October 15<sup>th</sup> through April 1<sup>st</sup> in order to avoid impacts to protected bats.

The project will take place primarily on property of the Authority and previously disturbed land and no impacts to existing buildings are anticipated as a result of the project.

The current rates for wastewater may increase as a result of the project pending completion of a rate study.

No anticipated adverse secondary impacts are associated with the project. Consequently, a preliminary decision not to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement has been made.

The reason for the decision not to prepare such a statement is as follows: Project activity is not anticipated to result in adverse environmental impacts beyond those that can be easily mitigated with minimal extra expense or delay in project implementation.

### **Public Notice**

A public information meeting was held on December 15, 2021 to discuss the proposed project. No adverse comments were received during the 30-day advertisement period or during the meeting.

An Environmental Review Record concerning the proposed project has been made by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division that documents the environmental review of the project and provides more detail explaining why an environmental impact statement is not required. The Environmental Review Record is on file at the Division's address listed below. A copy of the Environmental Review and Planning Document (ERPD) is available for public review upon request at an accessible location for the public during business hours and at the Division between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

No further environmental review of this project is proposed to be conducted prior to the release of loan funds.

All interested agencies, groups and persons supporting or disagreeing with this decision are invited to submit written comments within 30 days of the issuance date of this notice via email to [ethan.rhine@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:ethan.rhine@dnr.ga.gov) or to the following address:

Environmental Protection Division  
Watershed Protection Branch  
Wastewater Regulatory Program  
ATTN: Ethan Rhine  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive  
Suite 1470A East  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

After evaluating the comments received, a final decision regarding the loan will be made. No administrative action will be taken on the project for thirty (30) calendar days after issuance of this Notice.

Loan Recipient: Etowah Water & Sewer Authority  
1349 Martin Road  
Dawsonville, GA 30534

Issue Date: 12/14/2023



---

Jeffrey W. Cown  
Director  
Environmental Protection Division

