



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

Jeffrey W. Cown, Director

Watershed Protection Branch

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

Newton County has made an application to the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA) and the Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division (EPD) for a loan through the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF). The loan will fund the expansion of the Cornish Creek Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and the demolition of the Williams Street WTP. The applicant has certified that the project is environmentally sound. As required by the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program Guidelines, an environmental review has been performed on the project described below:

Project Name:	Cornish Creek WTP Improvements and Williams Street WTP Demolition Project
Project Location:	11905 Alcovy Rd. Covington, Newton County, GA
Total Project Cost:	\$142,000,000
Anticipated DWSRF Loan Amount:	\$12,000,000

Project Description

The proposed project will occur within the existing water treatment plant (WTP). It involves upgrading and expanding Newton County's Cornish Creek Water Treatment Plant to support residential, commercial, and industrial growth. The project components include addition and expansion of the following systems: Ozone System and Contactor, Rapid Mix/Flocculation Basins, Sedimentation Basins, Filtration Basins, Clear Well, High Service Pumping Station, Recycle Pump Station, Chemical Addition Systems, Powdered Activated Carbon System, Control Building, and various site improvements. The goal of this project is to increase plant capacity, improving the treatment process and reduce plant operation and maintenance (O&M) costs.

The project also includes demolishing Williams Street WTP, which is nearing the end of its useful life, at a cost estimate of \$12 million. The planned upgrade and expansion of the Cornish Creek WTP will produce water at a lower cost. Additionally, recent sampling has detected PFAs/PFOs in Williams Street WTP clearwell finished water. Extensive sampling at the Cornish Creek WTP has shown no presence of PFAs or PFOs. Newton County plans to expand the Cornish Creek Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and centralize their water supply system to be served by a single treatment plant. This initiative will enhance public health by eliminating potential PFAs exposure, reduce power consumption, and lower operations and maintenance costs, ultimately conserving financial resources that would be required to operate two plants.

Anticipated Impacts

The proposed project will have minimal impact on the environment as construction and demolition will be limited to the existing project site. Based on responses from government agencies the proposed project will have minor impact on the environment, cultural resources, and residents within the service area. Due to the proposed proximity to the creek and adjacent wetlands, encroachments are not anticipated, but any

wetlands or buffer encroachments will be permitted through the US Army Corps of Engineers by a Professional Wetlands Scientist. All disturbed areas will be returned to their previous conditions, with forested wetlands restored to herbaceous wetlands post-construction by the project.

In regard to the expansion, Newton County's Cornish Creek Water Treatment Plant capacity must comply with the conditions set forth in EPD's pending Surface Water Withdrawal Permit. Failure to comply with the conditions in the pending surface water withdrawal permit will deem the project non-compliant.

A review of the Environmental Information Document for the proposed project has been performed by EPD's Drinking Water Permitting and Engineering Program. A copy of these documents is available for public examination upon request at EPD between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The addresses where a copy is available are listed below.

During the development and design of this project, Newton County has solicited public input. The project has undergone an Executive Order 12372 Review through the State agencies. No adverse comments were received from the State Historic Preservation Office (HPD), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Georgia Wildlife Resources Division. The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission indicated the project does not meet the threshold for a Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) review, unless new water supply intakes are constructed. In summary, no adverse comments have been received from the agencies, and no further environmental review is planned before releasing loan funds.

If there are no public objections, then this Notice of No Significant Impact (NONSI) will be adopted without further public notice and Georgia Environmental Protection Division Drinking Water Permitting and Engineering program will issue final approval of the project planning document. No further environmental review of the 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 thirty (30) days of the issuance date of this notice to:

Georgia Environmental Protection Division
ATTN: Tamika Samaroo, Environmental Engineer
Drinking Water Program
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, SE - Suite 1052 East
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-9000

After evaluating all comments received, EPD will make a final decision regarding approval of the project planning documents. No administrative action will be taken on the project for thirty (30) calendar days after issuance of this Notice.



Issue Date: 1/16/2025

Manny Patel
Drinking Water Program Manager
Watershed Protection Branch
Georgia Environmental Protection Division