



REGION 3

PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103

PRELIMINARY FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

To: All Interested Persons

In accordance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 6 for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the EPA has completed an independent environmental review of the proposed project as described below and in its Environmental Assessment.

Project Name:	Wastewater Treatment System project
Project Applicant:	Broad Top Township 124 Hitchens Road, Defiance, PA 16633
Project Location:	Cypher Beach
EPA Community Grant Amount:	\$797,000
Estimated Total Project Cost:	\$885,985 and in-kind contributions

Background and Purpose

The Fiscal Year 2024 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 118-42) included congressional funding for water infrastructure projects to be awarded through the EPA's Community Grants Program. Broad Top Township, Pennsylvania was appropriated \$797,000 in State and Tribal Assistance Grant funding from the EPA for their Wastewater Treatment System project. To complete this proposed project, Broad Top Township will combine the EPA Community Grant funds with additional township funds and in-kind services.

Broad Top Township has selected the Village of Cypher Beach as the focus of its wastewater treatment improvement project because it is the last village in the township with ineffective wastewater treatment. This project aims to provide proper wastewater services to Cypher Beach, addressing the various malfunctioning systems that currently discharge pollution into the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River.

By implementing this project, Broad Top Township will promote efficient water resource management and protect the health and safety of its citizens. It will replace the existing inadequate wastewater treatment systems, which pose a pollution threat to both residents and downstream communities, with an affordable and effective wastewater treatment system managed and operated by the township. This will effectively eliminate the current pollution problem.

The completion of this project is expected to positively impact economic development by ensuring that properties comply with wastewater treatment requirements. It will remove a known source of pollution from shallow well water sources and the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River, which is a key resource for the Lake Raystown Resort area.

Additionally, municipalities located downstream of the project, including Hopewell Borough, Hopewell Township, Liberty Township, and Saxton Borough, will benefit from the reduction of pollution flowing into the river, aiding their aging communities.

Environmental Review

The EPA conducted an independent Environmental Assessment of the project and determined that mitigation measures are required to avoid impacts. These mitigation measures are described below and within the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) project environmental review receipt (PNDI-835941) prepared by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

- The natural flow regime and water quality in this watershed are important to maintaining habitats occupied by rare fish and mussels. It is recommended to take measures that maintain a natural flow regime, water quality, and avoid instream construction work to the maximum extent practicable. If instream work is anticipated, a mussel salvage is recommended using a qualified mussel surveyor to relocate mussels from the area of direct impact. Maintenance or restoration of the riparian corridor will aid in connecting habitats and improving water quality for fish and mussels. It is also recommended that a riparian buffer (100 to 300 feet, if possible) is retained (or restored, if not already present) on each side of the waterway (river, stream, creek). This buffer should be vegetated with native plant species. When adequately vegetated, this upland buffer will act to stabilize the streambanks (preventing or minimizing erosion), and filter pollutants (e.g., sediment, fertilizers, pesticides, road salt, oil). Where streambanks have become badly eroded (e.g., due to previous removal of native riparian vegetation), streambank fencing and/or bioengineering restoration techniques are recommended (geotextile, root wads, vegetative stabilization), rather than ripraping the streambanks; removing gravel bars; or attempting to dredge, ditch, channelize, or widen the stream. Stringent erosion and sedimentation controls should be used before, during, and after project implementation to ensure that sediment and contaminants do not enter any waterway(s) (rivers, creeks, streams, tributaries) or waterbodies (lakes, ponds).

The EPA has determined that environmental impacts are expected to be minimal if the mitigation measures identified are implemented. As such, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared. The EPA is issuing this preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to document this determination.

The EPA's preliminary determination will be made available for a 30-day public comment period as required by 40 CFR Part 6.203. All documents relative to this determination are available for review from the EPA's NEPA Compliance Database at: <https://cdxapps.epa.gov/cdx-enepa-II/public/action/nepa/search> and for public review at the EPA Region 3 office noted below and the Broad Top Township municipal office located at 124 Hitchens Road, Defiance, PA 16633.

Comments should be submitted via email to R3CommunityProjects@epa.gov or in writing to:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3
c/o Jeffrey Boylan
Water Division (3WD32)
1600 John F. Kennedy Blvd.
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2852

After evaluating any comments received, the EPA will make a final determination. This preliminary FONSI will become final after the 30-day comment period expires if no new significant information is provided to alter this determination.

Amie Howell, Chief
State Assistance and Partnership Branch
Water Division

January 26, 2026

Date issued